

V57.0283 Topics  
Spring 2009  
MW 11-12.15 pm

Instructor: Kostis Smyrlis  
Office: KJCC 715  
email: ks113@nyu.edu

## **HISTORY OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE II 10TH - 15TH CENTURIES**

A survey of Byzantine history from the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century to the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453. It traces the recovery and decline of the Byzantine empire examining the major political, social, economic, and cultural developments. It focuses on topics such as the Byzantine church and monasticism, the evolution of the economy, the cultural and artistic revivals of the middle and late periods, the Western presence and influence in late Byzantium, and the rise of the Ottomans.

### **1) Jan. 21: Introduction; The Beginnings of the Macedonian Dynasty**

*Reading:* Gregory, *A history of Byzantium*, Ch. 10 (pp. 217-36).

### **2) Jan. 26, 28: The Apogee of Byzantine Power: Basil II; The Revival of Learning**

*Readings:* Gregory, *A history of Byzantium*, Ch. 11 (pp. 237-46); P. Magdalino, 'The Medieval Empire (780-1204)', in Mango, *OHB*, pp. 175-181; C. Mango, 'The Revival of Learning', in Mango, *OHB*, pp. 214-29.

*Sources:* Liudprand of Cremona, *The embassy to Constantinople*, pp. 152-56;  
Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, pp. 7-14, 64-77 (ch. 13).

### **3) Feb. 2, 4: Crisis and Transformation in the 11th Century (1025-1081)**

*Readings:* Angold, *The Byzantine Empire*, pp. 24-55; Gregory, *A history of Byzantium*, Ch. 11 (pp. 246-56).

*Source:* Michael Psellos, *Fourteen Byzantine rulers*, pp. 238-54 (Constantine Monomachos), 302-14 (Isaac Komnenos), 350-66 (Romanos IV Diogenes).

### **4) Feb. 9, 11: The Byzantine Church and Monasticism**

*Readings:* Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire*, pp. 297-349; Mango, *Byzantium*, pp. 115-24.

*Sources:* Foundation charter of Evergetis monastery: Thomas and Hero, no. 22 (pp. 454-506; you may skim pp. 454-71).

Feb. 16: Holiday (Presidents' Day)

### **5) Feb. 18, 23: The Dynasty of the Komnenoi (1081-1203)**

*Readings:* Angold, *The Byzantine Empire*, pp. 115-35, 181-225, 295-315; Gregory, *A history of Byzantium*, Ch. 12 (pp. 257-79); P. Magdalino, 'The Medieval Empire (780-1204)', in Mango, *OHB*, pp. 182-96.

**6) Feb. 25, Mar. 2: Change in Byzantine Culture, 11th-12th Centuries**

*Readings:* Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture*, pp. 24-119.

*Sources:* Foundation charters of the monasteries of Attaleiates (Thomas and Hero, no. 19, pp. 326-27; chs. 12-13, 22-24, 39-41), Pakourianos (ibidem, no. 23, pp. 507-8; ch. 26), and Kecharitomene (ibidem, no. 27, pp. 649-50; chs. 3, 5, 7-10, 14, 17-24, 31, 59-64, 71-80).

**7) Mar. 4, 9: Byzantium and the West, 11th-12th Centuries**

*Readings:* Angold, *The Byzantine Empire*, pp. 157-70, 226-40; Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, pp. 124-44.

*Sources:* Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, pp. 27 (Robert Guiscard), 247-86 (1<sup>st</sup> Crusade); Niketas Choniates, *O city of Byzantium*, pp. 35-39 (2<sup>nd</sup> Crusade), 113-16 (Manuel and the Latins).

FIRST EXAM: MARCH 11

Mar. 16, 18: Spring Recess

**8) Mar. 23, 25: The Fourth Crusade and the Fragmentation of the Empire; The Byzantine Successor States (1204-1261)**

*Readings:* Angold, *The Byzantine Empire*, pp. 316-28; idem, 'Byzantium in exile', in Abulafia, *NCMH V*, pp. 543-63; Gregory, *A history of Byzantium*, Chs. 12 (pp. 279-81) and 13 (pp. 282-92).

*Source:* Niketas Choniates, *O city of Byzantium*, pp. 294-327.

**9) Mar. 30, Apr. 1: The Palaiologoi: from Reconquest to Civil War (1261-1355)**

*Readings:* Angold, 'Byzantium in exile', in Abulafia, *NCMH V*, pp. 563-68; Gregory, *A history of Byzantium*, Chs. 13 (pp. 292-97) and 14 (pp. 298-308); Ostrogorsky, *History*, pp. 450-65, 478-533.

*Sources:* George Akropolites, *The history*, pp. 339-88; Foundation charters of St Michael and St Demetrius monasteries: Thomas and Hero, nos. 37 (pp. 1207-8, 1215-17), 38 (pp. 1237-39, 1241-49).

**10) Apr. 6: Culture in the Komnenian and Palaiologan Periods**

*Readings:* Browning, *The Byzantine Empire*, pp. 190-219, 254-92; Ševčenko, 'Palaiologan Learning', in Mango, *OHB*, pp. 284-93.

**Apr. 8: Art in the Komnenian and Palaiologan Periods**

*Reading:* Lowden, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, pp. 348-424.

**11) Apr. 13, 15: The Byzantine Economy, 10th-15th Centuries**

*Readings:* Laiou, 'The Byzantine Economy', pp. 1145-64; Mango, *Byzantium*, pp. 50-59, 81-87.

*Sources:* McGeer, *The Land Legislation of the Macedonian Emperors*, pp. 37-60.

**12) Apr. 20, 22: Western Presence and Influence in Late Byzantium; The Rise of the Ottomans**

*Readings:* M. Balard, 'Latins in the Aegean and the Balkans in the fourteenth century', in Jones, *NCMH VI*, pp. 825-38; D. Jacoby, 'The Latin empire of Constantinople and the Frankish States in Greece', in Abulafia, *NCMH V*, pp. 525-42; E. Jeffreys and C. Mango, 'Towards a Franco-Greek Culture', in Mango, *OHB*, pp. 294-305; I. M. Kunt, 'The Rise of the Ottomans', in Jones, *NCMH VI*, pp. 839-63.

**13) Apr. 27, 29: The Final Decline and Fall of the Byzantine Empire (1355-1453)**

*Readings:* Gregory, *A history of Byzantium*, Chs. 14 (pp. 308-24), 15 (pp. 325-39).  
*Source:* Doukas, *Decline and fall of Byzantium*, pp. 203-41.

SECOND EXAM: MAY 4

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Class attendance  
Participation in the discussion of the sources (30%)  
First exam (30%)  
Second exam (40%)

Required book (available at the bookstore): Gregory, *A history of Byzantium*  
Course pack, available at the "Advanced Copy Center", 552 La Guardia Pl.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**Reference**

A. Kazhdan et al., *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (New York, Oxford, 1991); also available at: [www.oxford-byzantium.com](http://www.oxford-byzantium.com)

**Sources (in translation)**

George Akropolites, *The history*, trans. R. Macrides (Oxford, 2007)  
Niketas Choniates, *O city of Byzantium*, trans. H. J. Magoulias (Detroit, 1984)  
Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, trans. E. Dawes (London, 1928)  
Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De adminstrando imperio*, ed. G. Moravcsik, trans. R. J. H. Jenkins (Budapest, 1949; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Washington, 1967)  
Doukas, *Decline and fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, trans. H. J. Magoulias (Detroit, 1975)  
Liudprand of Cremona, *The embassy to Constantinople and other writings*, trans. F. A. Wright (London, 1993)  
E. McGeer, *The Land Legislation of the Macedonian Emperors* (Toronto, 2000)

- Michael Psellos, *Fourteen Byzantine rulers: the Chronographia*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter (Baltimore, 1966)
- J. Thomas and A. Constantinides Hero, eds., *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 5 vol. (Washington, 2000; also available at [www.doaks.org/etexts.html](http://www.doaks.org/etexts.html))

### **Secondary Literature**

- D. Abulafia, ed., *The New Cambridge Medieval History (NCMH)*, V: c.1198-c.1300, (Cambridge, 1999)
- M. Angold, *The Byzantine Empire 1025-1204: A Political History* (London, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1997)
- R. Browning, *The Byzantine Empire* (New York, 1980)
- T. E. Gregory, *A history of Byzantium* (Malden, 2005)
- J. M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford, 1986)
- M. Jones, ed., *The New Cambridge Medieval History (NCMH)*, VI: c.1300-c.1415, (Cambridge, 2000)
- A. Kazhdan and A. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley, 1985)
- A. Laiou, 'The Byzantine Economy: An Overview', in *The Economic History of Byzantium*, 3 vols., A. Laiou, ed. (Washington, 2002; also available at [www.doaks.org/etexts.html](http://www.doaks.org/etexts.html)), pp. 1145-1164
- J. Lowden, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (London, 1997)
- C. Mango, *Byzantium. The Empire of the New Rome* (London, 1980)
- C. Mango, ed., *The Oxford History of Byzantium* (Oxford, 2002): *OHB*
- G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (New Brunswick, 1969)
- S. Runciman, *The Eastern Schism* (Oxford, 1955)