



## **The Byzantine and Ottoman Mediterranean, 300-1700**

New Course Justification

**Elizabeth Terry-Roisin**

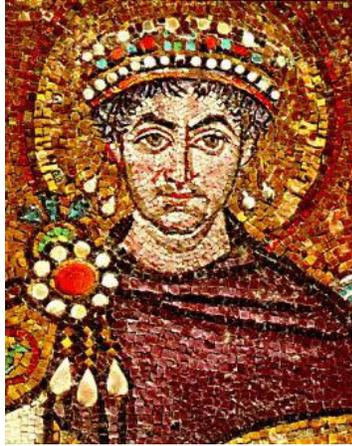
I was hired by the History Department in 2019 to teach early modern Europe, Spain, and the Mediterranean world. So far, I have taught pre-modern and modern European survey courses, as well as courses on Spain and on the Renaissance and Reformation, and social and cultural history. I plan to teach my new courses on knighthood and on Burgundy and Nasrid Granada soon as well. My training from UC Berkeley is in early modern Europe and medieval Europe, one of the medievalists who trained me was a Byzantinist, and I have taken coursework in Ottoman history. Building on that knowledge, I taught a Byzantine and Ottoman Empires course in 2017 when I was Visiting Assistant Professor at Austin College. I am proposing to teach this course again, from a Mediterranean perspective, here at FIU. Students taking this course could consider it part of FIU's established emphasis on Spanish and Mediterranean Studies.

This course introduces students to a topic that many of them may not have heard of or have been exposed to before—the history of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. It assigns an excellent book by Judith Herrin that uses material culture, places, and objects to tell the history of Byzantium, with chapters on Justinian's Hagia Sophia church, and the theological controversy over icons. Students practice reading, discussing, and analyzing primary sources such as those of Procopius and by Anna Comnena, one of the most significant female historians of the Middle Ages, as well as a biographical account of the life of an Ottoman nobleman in the seventeenth century. Students will learn about the Eastern Mediterranean for its own sake, but also as a region deeply imbedded in the history of Europe, making contributions to the Renaissance movement, Italian merchant history, Spanish imperial history, Islamic history, and Mediterranean history more broadly. This is the sort of upper-division undergraduate class which I hope will inspire students to study abroad and to learn more about places and times that are different from their own.

About a decade ago, the History Department at FIU offered EUH 4300: Byzantine History, and this course aims to bring it back, but to also refresh it by adding the Ottoman Empire in the early modern period, and new scholarship and perspectives from Mediterranean studies. Teaching it will continue my contribution to the department as an historian of the Mediterranean world. My new course begins in 300 and ends in 1700, which means that it covers Late Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the early modern Mediterranean, 1500-1700. Thus, it compliments Ottoman offerings in religious studies, as well as a current offering from my medievalist colleague Tovah Bender, EUH 4384: The Premodern Mediterranean, which does not cover the early modern Mediterranean, and according to its description has a stronger focus on economic history and on the “three continents” of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Mine will have a much stronger focus on the East, and on the imperial and political history of Byzantium and of the Ottoman Empire, to 1700. Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Elizabeth Terry-Roisin  
Assistant Professor  
History Department, FIU

**EUH 4XXX: The Byzantine and Ottoman Mediterranean, 300-1700**

TuTh 11-12:15pm  
MMC Classroom x

This new course covers the history of the Eastern Mediterranean world, from the time of the emperor Constantine in the fourth century, to 1700, covering Late Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the early modern period. Students will read and analyze the *Secret History* of the reign of Justinian and Theodora, written by Procopius, as well as an extraordinary twelfth century chronicle by Anna Comnena. Students will discuss key events such as the Fourth Crusade, when Venetians and other Western Christians attacked Constantinople in 1204, and the successful siege of Constantinople by the Ottomans in 1453. Themes which will be discussed are the development of Byzantine (Orthodox) Christianity, the continuity of Roman imperial institutions and Greek cultural heritage. Students will examine the rise of the Ottomans and their successful conquest of the Byzantines, and the creation of their powerful Mediterranean empire which rivaled that of Spain. Students will read excerpts (on Canvas) from books on Ottoman history, and the biography of an Ottoman nobleman from the seventeenth century. The Byzantines and Ottomans drew from Roman precedent, and their combined sixteen centuries of rule influenced the histories of the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Russia. This topics course will be taught as a seminar, with occasional lectures given and images shown. Students will be required to come to class ready to discuss the readings. There will be no exams, but three primary source writing assignments, three quizzes, and a final research presentation about an Ottoman Sultan.

**Books to Purchase**

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition

Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*

Procopius, *Secret History* (Penguin)

Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad* (Penguin)

Robert Dankoff, *The Intimate Life of an Ottoman Statesman, Melek Ahmed Pasha (1588-1662: As Portrayed in Evliya Celeb's Book of Travels)*

## Requirements

### 25% Participation

Participation includes attendance, effort in class discussion and/or office hours, and completing assignments on time. You need to do the readings and come to class to succeed. Class will be a mixture of lectures and discussions based on the readings. Students who do not turn in all three primary source assignments will not get higher than an 85 B in Participation.

### Primary Source Analysis

5% Procopius Source Assignment I

5% Anna Comnena Source Assignment II

5% Ottoman Biographical Source Assignment III

### Quizzes and Presentations

5% Map Quiz

20% Byzantine Empire Quiz

20% Ottoman Empire Quiz

20% Final Research Presentation on an Ottoman Sultan

### Readings Policy

Please try to purchase your books from the FIU Store. You are **required to purchase hard copy books for this class** and **not** the Kindle Editions, so that you can properly cite page numbers, not “locations,” which differ based on device, in your written assignments.

### Notes on *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*

Please treat Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire* as your textbook—take it with you to the library or coffee shop, highlight it, and write questions and comments in the margins. I recommend purchasing a spiral notebook with 3-5 sections in it. Make one section the place where you take notes on each chapter of *Byzantium*, and another section the place where you take notes in class. There are many ways to successfully take notes on the book, including writing timelines for each chapter. I encourage you to find your own way of note taking. To succeed in this class, you will need to take notes on this and the other readings.

### Course Objectives:

- Learn about and be able to explain some of the key developments in Byzantine, Ottoman, and Mediterranean History between 300 and 1700 AD. (**Content Knowledge**)
- Have a clear understanding of what was “medieval” about Byzantium and “early modern” about the Ottoman Empire, and why historians have created these time periods. (**Periodization**)
- Become more experienced in understanding, analyzing, evaluating, and comparing written arguments including historical chronicles and biographical primary sources (**Critical Thinking, Writing**)
- Students will write a research report about an Ottoman Sultan that is biographical but also an evidence-driven presentation (**Research**)

## Support for Students

### Your Instructor

I am here to help you succeed in this class, and I am happy to answer any questions you might have. **If you have any general questions regarding the course, please consult this syllabus first. If your question still has not been answered, you are welcome to e-mail me, and I will try and help you.**

### The History Tutors

The History Tutors are an excellent resource provided by the Department of History to help students taking history courses with their writing assignments. There are several history graduate students working in the department's main office (DM 390) whose job it is to tutor history students. **I highly recommend that you make an appointment with The History Tutors when you are working on your writing assignments.** To set up an appointment, please visit <https://history.fiu.edu/tutoring>

### The Center for Academic Success

If you need help or advice with study skills, preparing for the midterm, active reading, taking notes on your readings, and other study skills, make an appointment with a Study Tutor here: <http://learningcenter.fiu.edu>

### The Center for Excellence in Writing

I recommend making an appointment with a tutor to help with writing your papers in this course, in addition to coming to see me in office hours or send me a message with a question. They can help with your papers (as can the History Tutors). You can make an appointment with a Writing Tutor at <http://writingcenter.fiu.edu>

**Note to Students with Disabilities:** If you have or believe you might have a disability-related need for modification or reasonable accommodations in this course, contact the Disability Resources Center. <http://drc.fiu.edu/> I am very happy to work with you and with them to accommodate you in the best way possible.

**Accommodations:** If you foresee any possible problem meeting any of the requirements of this course—including attendance and prompt submission of assignments—please see me as soon as possible. **It is easier for everyone to address an issue before it becomes a problem.**

**In Case of Campus Emergencies:** In case of emergency, the instructor will communicate with the class via email. Please make sure your contact information is up to date in my.fiu.edu and if possible, check the course website for additional information. <http://dem.fiu.edu/types-of-emergencies/index.html>

### Student Responsibilities

**Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and to honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning.**

**Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.**

As historians and students of history, it is our responsibility to attribute the knowledge and arguments of others to their rightful owners, to not steal them by presenting them as our own. The Dutch historian Johan Huizinga, in his book of essays, Men and Ideas, wrote that

Research, critical sifting, publication, interpretation, and synthesis remain the undisputed domain of well-trained scholarly workers. But the great image of the past which lies behind or hovers above all that work is definitely the concern of everyone.<sup>1</sup>

Because these are Huizinga's words, not mine, I must quote and attribute them to him, with a footnote. When I say that Huizinga made a contribution to historical scholarship on the late Middle Ages, as well as to the field of cultural history, I should also cite which books of his I am referring to.<sup>2</sup>

**Scholastic Dishonesty:** According to the FIU student handbook (p. 11) "In meeting one of the major objectives of higher education, which is to develop self-reliance, it is expected that students will be responsible for the completion of their own academic work." Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarizing (representing someone else's work as your own), cheating on assignments or examinations, or engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work. **If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism, see me.**

## Course Schedule

### THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

#### Week 1: The City of Constantine

Aug. 28 Lecture: Introduction to Byzantine and Ottoman Studies

**READINGS:** *Empires in World History*, "Imperial Trajectories" (Canvas)

Aug. 30 Discussion of **READINGS:** Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*

Introduction, pp. xiii-xxiii

Foundations of Byzantium, The City of Constantine, Constantinople, the Largest City in Christendom, The East Roman Empire, pp. 1-32

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<sup>1</sup> Johan Huizinga, Men and Ideas: History, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Translated by James S. Holmes and Hans van Male (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 40.

<sup>2</sup> Johan Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of the Forms of Life, Thought and Art in France and the Netherlands in the XIVth and XVth Centuries, Translated by F. Hopman (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1924).

## **Week 2: The Christian Religion, Greek Culture, and the Roman Imperial Framework**

Sept. 4 Discussion of **READINGS**: Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*

Greek Orthodoxy, The Church of Hagia Sophia, The Ravenna Mosaics  
Roman Law pp. 33-79

Sept.6 Lecture: Justinian and Heraclius

(Start reading **Procopius, Secret History** for next week)

## **Week 3: Justinian, Heraclius, and the Rise of Islam**

Sept. 11 Discussion of **READINGS**: Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*, The Bulwark against Islam, Icons, a New Christian Art Form, pp. 83-104

Sept. 13 Discussion of **READINGS**: **Procopius, Secret History** (entire)

### **Procopius Source Assignment I DUE Midnight Sunday**

## **Week 4: Byzantium and the Slavs, Iconoclasm**

Sept. 18 Discussion of **READINGS**: Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*, Iconoclasm and Icon Veneration, A literate and articulate society, pp. 105-130

Sept. 20 Lecture: Iconoclasm

St. Cyril and Methodios: Apostles to the Slavs, pp. 131-138

## **Week 5-6: The Imperial Court**

Sept. 25 Discussion of **READINGS**: Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*, Greek Fire, The Byzantine Economy, Eunuchs, The Imperial Court, Imperial Children, Born in the Purple, pp. 141-191

Sept. 27 Discussion of **READINGS**: Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, pp.1-135

Oct. 2 Discussion of **READINGS**: Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad* pp.135-217

Oct. 4 Discussion of **READINGS**: Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*

Mount Athos, Venice and the Fork, Basil II, The Bulgar Slayer

Eleventh Century Crisis, Anna Komnene, A cosmopolitan society, pp. 192-251

### **Anna Comnena Source Assignment II DUE Midnight Sunday**

## **Week 7-8: Late Byzantium**

Oct. 9 Lecture: Mediterranean Culture in the Twelfth Century

Oct. 11 Lecture: Byzantium and the Crusades

Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*

The Fulcrum of the Crusades, pp. 255-266

Oct. 16 Lecture: Byzantium and the Renaissance/Review Session

Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*

The Towers of Trebezond, Arta, Nicaea and Thessalonike, Rebels and Patrons, pp. 266-298

Oct. 18 **Byzantine Empire QUIZ**

## THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

### Week 9: The Mamluks and the Seljuk Turks

Oct. 23 Lecture: Introduction to Ottoman History

Oct. 25 Discussion of **READINGS**: Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, pp.1-61 (Canvas)

### Week 10-12: The Fall of Byzantium and the Rise of the Ottomans

Oct. 30 Discussion of **READINGS**: Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*

Better the Turkish Turban than the Papal Tiara, The Siege of 1453 Conclusion, The Greatness and Legacy of Byzantium pp. 299-336

Lecture: Mehmet II and Suleyman the Magnificent

Nov. 1 Presentation in class by College librarian on library research.

#### Research Question and Abstract DUE Midnight Sunday

Nov. 6 Discussion of **READINGS**: Women in the Ottoman Empire, Leslie Pierce, *The Imperial Harem* (Selections on Canvas)

Nov. 8 Lecture: The Ottomans against Spain and the “Holy League”

Nov. 13 Discussion of **READINGS**: Robert Dankoff, *The Intimate Life of an Ottoman Statesman, Melek Ahmed Pasha (1588-1662: As Portrayed in Evliya Celeb’s Book of Travels)*

#### Ottoman Biographical Source Assignment III DUE Midnight Sunday

### Week 13-16: The Ottoman Empire 1500 to 1700

Nov. 15 Lecture: The Sixteenth Century

Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, pp.61-86 (Canvas)

Thanksgiving Break: Nov. 20-Nov. 26

Nov. 27 Lecture: The Ottoman Empire to 1700

Nov. 29 **Ottoman Empire QUIZ**

Dec. 4 **Final Research Presentation on an Ottoman Sultan DUE in class**

Dec. 6 Final Discussion: The Byzantine and Ottoman Mediterranean

Dec. 11 No Final Exam

**\*Professor reserves the right to modify the syllabus**