HI 378 ARMENIA FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE MIDDLE AGES
Class meetings: Mon Wed Fri 1:25–2:15pm
Room: CAS B25B

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Office hours: Mon 11:00am–12:30pm | Wed 2:30–4:00pm | or by appointment
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Unless otherwise noted, your instructor checks his emails at least once a day.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the student to the history of Armenia from antiquity to the middle ages. We pay close attention to four major themes: the recurring East–West geopolitical / geoeconomic competitions between the neighboring empires for regional hegemony, with enormous consequences for Armenia; the transformations of Armenian culture at various points in time; the nature and quality of the nation's leadership (for example, the monarchies and nakharars or nobility), especially in times of partition between major powers; and the struggles for political and cultural survival.

We begin the course by reviewing the major theories of the origins of the Armenian people. We examine the formation of the Armenian state under the Ervandunis (585–200 BC), and the cultural environment and the geopolitical situation inherited from the Urartian kingdom in the region of Lake Van. We examine the domestic situation in Greater Armenia and Minor Armenia during the Artashesian era (189 BC–AD 12), and the foreign policies pursued by the elites in both regions.

We pay special attention to the impact of the major powers (for example, Rome, Byzantium, Persia) on the Arshakuni monarchy (AD 12–428), during whose reign the Armenian government is believed to be the first in the world to adopt Christianity as the state religion. We examine in some detail the Armenian conversion to Christianity in the fourth century and the adoption of the Armenian alphabet in the fifth during the Arshakuni period.

Armenian historiography regarding the conversion to Christianity and the adoption of the alphabet is deeply rooted in theologically based narratives blurring the line between history and mythology. We analyze a sample of these mythologies and the extent to which they reflected and/or influenced the development of Armenian culture, as we address two fundamental and closely
related questions regarding the Arshakuni kingdom: 1) Why did the government adopt a new religion as official policy? 2) Why did the government adopt a new alphabet?

The Arshakuni period was followed by the marzpanate period when Persian or Armenian governors appointed by the Sasanid government ruled Armenia (428–640). This period in turn was followed by the Arab invasions and Muslim rule (640–884). The Armenian monarchy reemerged under the Bagratuni dynasty (850–1045), but political disunity and territorial divisions rendered the land vulnerable to Seljuk and other foreign invasions and led to the dissolution of the kingdom.

Some members of the Armenian nobility, who had entered into service for the Byzantine empire, assumed the responsibility of guarding Cilician borders against Muslim attacks. After the Seljuks defeated the Byzantine army at the Battle of Manzikert in 1071, the Rubenian and Hetumian dynasties emerged as the rulers of the Armenian kingdom in Cilicia (1199–1375). We explore the achievements and failures of the Cilician kingdom. The military and political successes and the rapid economic development of Cilicia as a strategic region in international trade enhanced the international prestige of the kingdom. Despite its successes, however, the Cilician kingdom failed to develop sufficient military capability to withstand the challenges posed by the Crusaders, the Mongols, and the Mamluks.

This course also surveys some of the most important primary sources in Armenian history from the earliest oral traditions and epic tales regarding the origins of the Armenian people to the conquest of Armenian lands by the invading foreign armies. We read representative samples from Agathangelos and Movses Khorenatsi (the latter referred to as patmahayr or the “father” of Armenian historiography) in the fifth century (or later), Anania Shirakatsi and Sebeos in the seventh century, Grigor Narekatsi in the tenth century, Nerses Lambronatsi in the twelfth century, and the philosophical writings of Hovhannes Vorotnetsi and Grigor Tatevatsi in the fourteenth century. Their literary pieces reflected their personal experiences and the historical periods in which they lived. Their works also represented various political movements and ideological trends.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

The following books are available for purchase at the BU bookstore and placed on reserve at the Mugar Library:


The following two volumes containing primary sources are not available at the bookstore but are placed on reserve at the Mugar Library:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The final course grade will be assessed on the basis of the following:

- Attendance & participation 20%
- Midterm exam 25% due: Wednesday, March 15
- Term paper: Book Review Essay & presentation 25% due: Wednesday, April 19
- Final exam 30% due date: scheduled final exam day [TBA]

Attendance & Participation (20%)
Attendance and participation are essential and will be evaluated based on the student's contribution to class discussions. In addition, as part of their attendance and participation, students are required to do short presentations based on the assigned readings.

Midterm Exam (25%) 1,800 words; Final Exam (30%) 2,500 words
The midterm and the final are take-home exams. For each exam, a week in advance prior to the due dates your instructor will hand out a set of questions based on the assigned readings and class lectures. The final exam is comprehensive and covers the material presented in lectures and the readings during the course.

Both exam essays must integrate material from the material covered in the assigned readings and lectures if the student wishes to receive an “A” on these papers. Each essay should not include more than three short quotes.

The midterm and the final exam essays do not require outside research. However, if you do use sources other than the assigned readings in this course, be sure to include documentation in footnotes or endnotes. There is no need for footnotes/endnotes for the books used in this course; instead, insert references (in parentheses) in the text of your paper—for example: (Hovannisian 150). Full bibliographical information should appear at the end of each essay.

Term Paper: Book Review Essay (25%) 3,500 words
The book review essay compares and contrasts three books on the same subject. Full bibliographical information of the reviewed books should appear at the end of the paper. If you do use other sources, be sure to include documentation in footnotes or endnotes. There is no need for footnotes / endnotes for the books being reviewed; instead, insert references (in parentheses) in the text of your paper. A book review guide appears at the end of this syllabus.

Presentation of Term Paper
Each student will have an opportunity to present her/his term paper in class for about 15–20 minutes. There are several important reasons for this assignment. First, class presentations provide an opportunity to share your findings with the other members in the class. Second, you learn how to present papers before your colleagues at professional meetings and scholarly conferences (for example, the American Historical Association, the American Political Science
Association). Finally, class presentations encourage students—as leaders-in-training—to practice and improve on their public speaking skills. The development of both written and oral communication skills is an essential part of education, and the more you practice these skills, the more successful you will be in your career.

**Note on Extensions & University Academic Conduct Code**
Extensions for written assignments are strongly discouraged and will be allowed in extremely urgent emergencies only and with adequate documentation. Otherwise, 10 points will be subtracted from the grades for each day delayed after the scheduled due dates.

Students must adhere to all university standards of academic conduct. Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Students violating the rules of academic conduct will automatically fail the course. All such cases will be referred to the Dean's Office. Please consult the Boston University Academic Conduct Code, copies of which are available in CAS 105 or at http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/.

**Students with Documented Disabilities**
If you have a disability that requires extra time for assignments, or any other accommodations, please bring a note from the BU Office of Disabilities Services by January 27, 2017.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Fri. Jan. 20**

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

**Week of Jan. 23**

ORIGINS OF THE ARMENIAN PEOPLE
Origins of the Armenian People: Three Paradigms
Hewsen, in *AP*, Ch. 1, pp. 1–17
Hacikyan, *HAL*, vol. 1, Intro., Oral Tradition & Epic Tales, pp. 17–32

**Week of Jan. 30**

URARTU AND ITS KINGDOM (870–590 BC)
Russell, in *AP*, Ch. 2, pp. 19–35
Payaslian, Ch. 1, pp. 3–11
Hacikyan, *HAL*, vol. 1, Ara & Shamiram, pp. 35–42

**Week of Feb. 6**

ERVANDUNIS: THE FIRST ARMENIAN DYNASTY (585–200 BC)
Payaslian, Ch. 1, pp. 11–14
Hacikyan, *HAL*, vol. 1, Tigran & Azhdahak, pp. 43–52

**Monday, Feb. 6**, book review essay topics due

**Week of Feb. 13**

THE ARTASHESIAN DYNASTY (189 BC – AD 12)
Garsoian, in *AP*, Ch. 3, pp. 37–62
Payaslian, Ch. 1, pp. 14–26
Hacikyan, *HAL*, vol. 1, King Artashes, pp. 52–62
Week of Feb. 20  THE ARSHAKUNI DYNASTY AND THE ARMENIAN GOLDEN AGE (AD 12–428)
Garsoian, in AP, Ch. 4, pp. 63–93
Payaslian, Ch. 2, pp. 27–40
Hacikyan, HAL, vol. 1, S. Partev & M. Mashtots, pp. 107–09, 111–15

Monday, Feb. 20, classes suspended; Tuesday, Feb. 21, scheduled as “Monday”

Week of Feb. 27  ARMENIAN MYTHOLOGY AND HISTORY
Hacikyan, HAL, vol. 1, on Mythology, pp. 63–73; The Conversion to Christianity, pp. 76–81; The Adoption of the Armenian Alphabet, pp. 83–91; Armenian Golden Age, pp. 93–105; Agathangelos, pp. 117–48

Monday, Feb. 27, book review essay outline and bibliography due

Week of Mar. 6 Spring recess

Week of Mar. 13  ARMENIA UNDER PERSIAN AND BYZANTINE RULE (428–640)
Garsoian, in AP, Ch. 5, pp. 95–115
Payaslian, Ch. 2, pp. 40–47
Hacikyan, HAL, vol. 1, Yeghishe, pp. 239–66

Wednesday, March 15, Midterm Exam due

Week of Mar. 20  ARMENIA UNDER ARAB DOMINATION (640–884)
Garsoian, in AP, Ch. 6, pp. 117–42
Payaslian, Ch. 2, pp. 47–50

Week of Mar. 27  THE BAGRATUNI DYNASTY & THE MEDIEVAL KINGDOMS (850–1071)
Garsoian, in AP, Ch. 7, pp. 143–85
Payaslian, Ch. 3, pp. 53–73
Class presentations begin

Week of Apr. 3  THE END OF THE ARMENIAN KINGDOMS IN ARMENIA
Garsoian & Thomson, in AP, Chs. 8–9, pp. 187–98; 199–239
Payaslian, Ch. 3, pp. 73–75

Week of Apr. 10  THE RISE AND FALL OF THE ARMENIAN KINGDOM IN CILICIA (1050–1375)
Bournoutian, in AP, Ch. 11, pp. 273–90
Payaslian, Ch. 4, pp. 77–100
Week of Apr. 17  
**Turkish, Mongol & Turkmen Domination (1071–1500)**  
Bedrosian, in *AP*, Ch. 10, pp. 241–71  
**Monday, April 17**, classes suspended; **Wednesday, April 19**, scheduled as “Monday”  
**Wednesday, April 19**, Book Review Essay due

Week of Apr. 24  
**Armenian Philosophical Discourses before the Collapse of Eastern Christendom**  

Week of May 1  
**The Legacy of Historic Armenia & Modern Armenian Political Thought**  
End of class presentations

Wed. May 3  
Last day of classes

**Last Day of Classes**: Wednesday, May 3, 2017  
**Study Period**: Thursday, May 4–Sunday, May 7, 2017  
**Final Exam Period**: Monday, May 8–Friday, May 12, 2017
Book Review Essay Guide

Students are required to write a book review essay on three books of their choice. Unlike “book reports,” the review essay does more than summarize the material covered in each book. The review essay compares and contrasts the authors’ approaches to specific issues as presented in their books, their analytical frameworks and methodologies, and their ideological orientation and interpretations. The essay should be organized thematically rather than as separate reviews on each book.

The following is to guide you in preparing your outline:

I. Introduction
1) What are the books about?
2) What is each author’s purpose in writing the book? Usually, but not always, this is clearly stated in the preface or in the introduction. Who is their intended audience—for example, the general public, university students/scholars, policy makers?
3) What are the principal theses presented in their books?

II. Analysis
1) What are the major components of each book—for example, how many chapters (mention some examples of chapter titles), charts, and tables? If the author does include charts and tables, are they useful? Are they consistent with the material presented in the text?
2) How do the books support their theses? This is done by answering the following questions:
   ► What are some of the major arguments regarding specific issues, events, etc.?
   Do the authors agree? Disagree?
   ► What evidence do they present to support their theses?
   ► What type of primary sources do the authors rely on—for example, government archives, personal papers, interviews? And secondary sources?
3) What is the mode of analysis used by each author—descriptive, explanatory?

III. Conclusion
1) After reading the three books, how successful were they in accomplishing what they promised in the preface or introduction?
2) How useful do you think are these books—for example, for the general public, university students/scholars, policy makers? Would you recommend them to others? Why or why not? Explain.