

The University of Western Ontario

Department of History

2009 - 2010

HISTORY 2606E - INTRODUCTION TO ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION

Monday 3:30-5:30

Instructor: Maya Shatzmiller

Introduction

The Muslim world is at the centre of international and national attention as world wide awareness of its weight and impact grows. This course is designed to respond to the mounting academic and public interest in the history of Islamic societies, and on the university level to address misconceptions and ignorance about Islamic history in a scholarly manner. I intend this survey course to be the foundational course for the proposed Islamic History and Culture module currently under consideration.

Summary

The course will introduce students to the main events and themes of Islamic history and civilization and their place in world history. The course is divided into classical and modern components and will begin with the seventh century Arab sweep across the Middle East and the creation of a new religion, Islam. The newly established Islamic states, which supplanted the Roman, Persian and Byzantine empires in parts of Europe, Africa and Asia, formed a new civilization, no less sophisticated and brilliant than its predecessors. The survey will cover the important achievements of the Islamic world, counting topics such as: Muhammad and the Qur'an, the conquest movement, the Islamic legal system, the economy, social structure and political institutions, literature, philosophy, theology, art and architecture, medicine and science, interaction with Europe, the Crusades, trade, and the translation of Arabic scientific works into Latin. In the second term the course will cover Muslim societies in the geographical margins of the Middle East in India, China and Africa. Other topics include the Ottoman Empire and Iran and their institutions, the role of French, English and American colonial experience and the emergence of modern states in the Middle East. The concluding lectures will deal with the challenges faced today by Islamic societies, such as gender equality, education, and economic progress.

The course is based on the instructor's lectures and on readings from secondary and primary sources. There will be several textbooks assigned and selected readings. Students will submit a research paper of 10 pages, worth 30% of the final grade, and will write a mid-term 30% and a final exam worth 40%.

TEXTBOOKS:

Gerhard Endress, *Islam. An Historical Introduction*. 2nd edition translated by Carole Hillenbrand. Columbia University Press, 2002.

John Esposito, (editor), *The Oxford History of Islam*. Oxford University Press, 1999.

William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Westview Press, 2009. Fourth Edition.

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE:

FIRST TERM: The Formation of Classical Islam (700-1500) 12 lectures

I. The Beginning

The first three lectures are devoted to the rise of Islam as a religion and a political power. I will speak about the life of the Prophet Muhammad in Mecca and Arabia, the tribal environment in historical and anthropological context and the call to Prophethood. We will read from the primary sources about the revelations and the Qur'an. The analysis of the Arab conquests of the 7th century in the Middle East, Persia, North Africa and Spain will explain the rise to political dominance in these regions. We will look into the reasons which made these military campaigns successful, and conclude with the establishment of the first Arab empire, that of the Ummayyads, with their capital in Damascus, Syria.

II. Political, Economic and Legal Institutions

The second set of three lectures will be devoted to discussing the political developments which resulted in the creation of an Islamic state. The political institutions include the Caliphate and the state apparatus, such as the *vizirate* and the army. We will discuss the economic conditions, land tenure and agriculture in the countryside and manufacturing in the cities, taxation, labour organization, trade and money. The legal system, namely the creation of Islamic law and its four schools, the development of magistrates, courts and the relationship between state and judges, as well as some particular examples of how Islamic law enabled the economic activities and women's property rights.

III. The Social Classes, Ethnicity and the Islamic city

The next 3 lectures will be devoted to discussing the different ethnic, religious, linguistic groups making the Islamic city and countryside. Divided according to legal status, ethnicity, occupation, income and political position, tribal and urban dwellers, enjoyed different standing in the social hierarchy and treatment and entitlements by the state. Urban institutions, municipal, religious and secular, court and mosque and their functionaries will be dealt with here.

IV. Intellectual Life and Material culture.

The next four lectures will be devoted to the development and achievements of Arabic Literature, Philosophy and Mysticism, Islamic Medicine and Sciences and to Islamic architecture and Art.

SECOND TERM: Islam and the Rise of the Modern National State 1500-Present 14 lectures

I. Islamization at the Margins

The first five lectures of the second term will be devoted to the Islamization of peoples outside the main body of Arab and Middle Eastern societies. The initial proliferation resulted in the creation of Islamic states and societies, some of which are no longer in existence as independent political units, such as Muslim Spain, which finally expired in 1492 and Sicily, where Islamic statehood came to an end in 1062. Each however, left a long lasting cultural and religious impact. We will deal with the Crusades to the Holy Land, Sicily, Spain, Islam in India, covering the Delhi sultanate and the Mughal Empire, Islam in South Asia, China and Africa.

II. The Ottoman Empire, World War I and the creation of a new Middle East

Coming back to the Middle East, the next three lectures will be devoted to the institutions, culture and achievements of the Ottoman Empire and Iran, from the 15th century to World War I. As WWI so profoundly transformed the Middle East by creating new independent states in the region, we will deal with the war in the Middle East in some detail, including the Sykes-Picot agreements, the Balfour declaration and the creation of modern Turkey.

III. The National and the Islamic State in the Middle East

The next three lectures will be devoted to discussing the fundamentals of statehood in the Middle East beginning with ideologies: Pan-Islam, Arab Nationalism, Ba'ath (Arab socialism), Islamic fundamentalism and the military regimes. Two lectures will be devoted to social and economic conditions in the Middle East, including the Islamic family, women, healthcare and education, as well as the economic conditions and the challenges to economic progress posed by the absence of infra-structures and resources and lack of industrialization.

IV. The Image of Islam in the West and Globalization

The last session will be devoted to current observations on the Islamic presence in the West, Islamic Jihad, questions of political manifestations under Islamic garb and the impact of the Arab oil.

Detailed Lectures and Readings

First Term. September 14-December 7, 2009

1. September 14: Orientation: Structure, textbooks, general introduction.

Readings: Endress, *Islam*, 1-17

2. September 21: Muhammad: The man and the mission. The Environment.

Readings: Endress, 21-30; 72- 95. Cleveland and Bunton, 1-14. Esposito, 1-14. [Chapter One]

3. September 28: The Qur'an

Reading: Endress, 22-42. Cleveland and Bunton, 26-36. Esposito, 63-106. [Chapter Two]

4. October 5: Political developments. Empires and states

Readings: Cleveland, 12-19. Endress, 96-125. Esposito, 10-61. [Chapter One]

October 12: Thanksgiving. No class.

5. October 19: The Legal System

Readings: Endress, 55-71. Esposito, 107-153. [Chapter Three]

6. October 26: The Economy.

Readings: Esposito, 107-153. [Chapter Three]

7. November 2: Social Structures and Institutions

Readings: Endress, 55-95.

8. November 9: Arabic Literature, Philosophy and Mysticism

Readings: Endress, 131-150. Esposito, [Chapters Two and Six], Cleveland and Bunton, 19-35.

9. November 16: Islamic Medicine and Science

Readings: Esposito, 155-214. [Chapter Four]

10. November 23: Islamic Architecture

Readings: Esposito, 215-268. [Chapter Five]

11. November 30: Islamic Art

Readings: Esposito, 215-268. [Chapter Five]

12. December 7: Mid-term in-class exam

Second Term. January 4-April 5, 2010

13. January 4: The Crusades, Muslim Spain, Sicily

Readings: Endress, 101-103. Esposito, 305-346. [Chapter Seven]

14. January 11: The Ottoman Empire

Readings: Esposito, 347-394. [Chapter Eight]. Cleveland and Bunton, 37-103.

15. January 18: Iran

Readings: Esposito, 347-394. [Chapter Eight]. Cleveland and Bunton, 37-118.

16. January 25: Islam in India

Readings: Esposito, 395-432.

17. February 1: Islam in South Asia, China and Africa

Readings: Esposito, 433-474.

18. February 8: World War I and the new Middle East

Readings: Cleveland and Bunton, 133-171. Esposito, 549-600. [Chapter Thirteen]

February 15: Reading week. No classes

19. February 22: Modern Turkey

Readings: Cleveland and Bunton, 175-193, 275-301.

20. March 1: Modern Iran

Readings: Cleveland and Bunton, 175-193, 275-301.

21. March 8: The Modern Islamic and Middle Eastern State: Ideologies, Political regimes.

Readings: Cleveland and Bunton, 193-345, 451-557. Esposito, 509-548.

22. March 15: The Modern Islamic and Middle Eastern State: Family, Women, Education, Healthcare.

Readings: Cleveland and Bunton, 369-451.

23. March 22: The Modern Islamic and Middle Eastern State: The Economy

Readings: Cleveland and Bunton, 451-473.

24. March 29: The Image of Islam, Globalization

Readings: Esposito, 601-690. [Chapter Fourteen, Chapter Fifteen].

25. April 5: Preparation for the exam.

