

History 137: The Traditional Middle East  
Michael Chamberlain  
Fall, 1992  
Time: 8:00-9:15, Tues. & Thurs.  
Place: 1121 Humanities

Important Dates:

Map Quiz: September 15  
Last Day to Drop This Course Without DR or W on transcripts: September 11.  
Last Day to File Pass/Fail Privilege form: September 29.  
Mid-term: November 3.  
Last Day to Drop This Course Without Academic Penalty: November 20.  
Paper Due: November 24.  
Last Day of Class: December 15.  
Final Exam: 10:05 Saturday, December 19. (Double-check at the end of the term).

Office Hours: 4-5 Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4118 Humanities  
Tel: 265-2673

This course is a broad survey of the politics, social life, culture, and economic life of the Middle East from Late Antiquity until 1500 or so. The course will ask how the Middle East became Islamic, and cover the forms and meanings of a number of Islamic institutions and practices. It will also examine several aspects of Islamic civilization as they developed in the Middle Period Middle East, including law, mysticism, intellectual life, science and technology, rebellion, crime, and insanity, and sex and the family.

The lectures and the readings each cover material not covered in the other. You are responsible for both. Attendance at all lectures is mandatory.

Grading is based on a map quiz (10%), mid-term (25%), paper (25%) and final (40%). This means that if you want an A you should be prepared to put a consistently high level of effort into the course.

Texts and Map

Rand McNally Map of the Middle East – in the Supplies Section of the Bookstore on the first floor. If you can't find it, ask for it.

Do Not Purchase Perry's Book: it is too expensive; if you bought it, return it.

Denny, F.M., An Introduction to Islam.

Cook, M., Muhammad.

McNeill, W.H., and Waldman, M.R., The Islamic World.

For the paper, you are also responsible for reading three books on reserve at Helen C. White listed below.

### Lectures and Readings

	<u>Tuesdays.</u>	<u>Thursdays.</u>	<u>Topics for the Week</u>
Week 1:		Sep. 3	Introduction to the Course.
Week 2:	Sep. 8	Sep. 10	Geography of the Middle East <u>Reading:</u> Map of the Middle East; Handout of Terms for Map-Quiz.
Week 3:	Sep. 15 (Map Quiz)	Sep. 17	Cultural Geography: Peasants, Nomads, City-People, Slaves; Early States and Empires; Trade. <u>Reading:</u> Denny, 3-45
Week 4:	Sep. 22	Sep. 24	Arabia and the Arabs; Life of Muhammad; al-Qur'ân <u>Reading:</u> Denny: 46-91; Cook, <u>Muhammad</u> (all of it); McNeill and Waldman, 9-67.
Week 5:	Sep. 29	Oct. 1	Arab Conquests and Universal Muslim Empires <u>Reading:</u> Denny, 125-149; McNeill and Waldman, 68-74; 79-81.
Week 6:	Oct. 6	Oct. 8	Islamic Cult, Ritual, and Law; Sufism. <u>Reading:</u> Denny, 92-124; 216-269; McNeill and Waldman, 207-247
Week 7:	Oct. 13	Oct. 15	The High Culture of the `Abbâsid Empire; Breakup of the Empire <u>Reading:</u> Denny, 153-189
Week 8:	Oct. 20	Oct. 22	Truth and Violence, Taboo and Community: Sunnis and Shi`a; Sectarianism; Subject Communities; The Dâr al-Islâm; Conversion; Jihâd. <u>Reading:</u> Denny, 216-238; McNeill and Waldman, 167-171

- Week 9: Oct. 27 (Review) Oct. 29 (No Class).
- Week 10: Nov. 3 (Midterm) Nov. 5 Coming of the Turks; Crusaders, and Mongols  
Reading: McNeill and Waldman, 185-206; 249-272
- Week 11: Nov. 10 Nov. 12 Scholars, Soldiers, and Sultans: Islamic Cultural, Social, and Political Institutions of the Middle Period  
Reading: McNeill and Waldman, 373-308.
- Week 12: Nov. 17 Nov. 19 Family, Gender, and Sex  
Reading: McNeill and Waldman, 130-132; Denny, 295-347; 270-292
- Week 13: Nov. 24 (Paper Due) Nov. 26 (Thanksgiving) Slavery, the Household, and Politics  
Reading: McNeill and Waldman, 113-117; 122-124; 132-134
- Week 14: Dec. 1 Dec. 3 Insanity, Criminality, Marginality, and Revolt.  
Reading: Handout
- Week 15: Dec. 8 Dec. 10 Architecture, Science, and Technology; Wrap-up.
- Week 16: Dec. 15 (Review).

## Papers

All papers must be turned-in on time to ensure fairness. You may turn in a paper late, but you will lose a half-grade per class-period, i.e., two periods late will bring your grade from a B to a C.

Papers should be 5-10 pages (10-20k), with foot or end-notes, title page, and bibliography. Use a dark ribbon on your printer. Paper-grading is partly a subjective art, so a good-looking paper, without typos, counts for something.

You may appeal a grade by bringing the paper to me in my office hours with a written argument why it should be changed. Be aware that your grade can be revised down-wards as well as up.

All books are on Reserve at Helen C. White.

Your paper should be based on two of the following three books, though you are responsible for reading all three:

Critchfield, Richard, Shahhat: an Egyptian

Ferneau, Elizabeth, Guests of the Shaykh: Ethnography of an Iraqi Village

Cole, Donald, Nomads of the Nomads: the Al Murrah Bedouin of the Empty Quarter

Compare relations among men and women in any of the two societies covered by these books.

Compare the family in contemporary America with the family in two of the three books above. Which family type would you prefer to live in?

How does Islam shape the lives of people covered in two of the books above?

Using two of the three books above, compare how people's interactions with their environment shape their relations with others, their political organization and relationship to power, and their families.