

History 439: Islamic History

Spring, 2010

Time: 2:25-3:15, MWF; Place: 2650 Humanities

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Course blog: <http://history439blog.blogspot.com/> (also available through learn@uw, at the very top of the page).

This course is about the formation of Islamic civilization and its historical development until the early modern era. The course is divided into three parts. In part one we examine the physical environment and human ecology of the region, long-term social and political continuities of the ancient Middle East, the foundation of Islam, and the establishment of the early Islamic empire. In part two we cover the political collapse of the empire, its replacement by regional courts, and the development of medieval Islamic political, social, and cultural institutions and practices. In part three we will examine the place of the medieval Middle East within the wider history of Eurasia and ask how Middle Eastern peoples both shaped and experienced the ever-accelerating integration of the Old World. As we shall see, it was these developments that made the expansion of Europe within it not only possible but conceivable.

The course starts where all historical inquiry begins: with how the peoples we are studying have adapted to their physical environments. This will require giving some consideration to the environment itself, both its distinctive features and how it might be compared to the environmental settings of the other agrarian

civilizations of the pre-modern past. We will then examine how the region's peoples adapted to it as farmers, peasants, nomads, and city-dwellers, again trying to understand context through comparison. From there we move to something that appeared in the region before anywhere else, and that like the environment gave it its historical unity: the agrarian empire. We will then be in a position to approach a set of recorded history's greatest developments: the appearance of Islam, the Arab conquests, and the formation of an Islamic empire and Islamic civilization. The remainder of the course will be devoted to an examination of Islamic civilization as it developed in the aftermath of the breakup of the early Islamic empire. In this section we will give considerable attention to institutions that survived until the early-modern period and some, in altered form, to recent times. Please note that this is not a course that puts religion at the center, though of course we will be studying the central ideas and practices of Islam throughout. Think of it instead as an attempt to understand how environment, economy, politics, culture, social life, and religion interacted over time to produce and sustain a civilization.

A good part of the course is devoted to the historical diversity of Muslim religious beliefs and practices. Religion is a particularly sensitive issue of course so I like to bring it up right away. Historians cannot define what authentic Islam is and is not, nor can we sort out proper from heretical Muslims. The historian's rule – we can't function otherwise – is that people who say they are Muslim are to be treated as such. This can make discussion uncomfortable, even distasteful. Just remember: the practice of history is something of a thought-experiment, its fundamental attitude skepticism rather than faith. It is interested in what particular people believed at particular

moments in particular contexts. On its own the discipline is incapable of proving or disproving any of the big truths and many of the smaller ones. This approach can all too easily be perceived as offensive, but let me assure you that it is not intended to be so, nor is there any point in it beyond extending this thought-experiment to all aspects of life. To do justice to the historical variety of Muslim beliefs and practices we will, for example, be examining some of the many images Muslim artists in the past have made of Muhammad, at a time when such images were made with great devotion and respect. Avoiding them would be irresponsible; presenting them makes no point at all beyond looking at the evidence that has come down to us. It is just one example of how we must do things if we are to be true to our discipline. We will also give some attention to a revisionist school of thought called “source-criticism” that rejects some or all of the accounts of early Islamic history, including the life of the Prophet, written down by the canonical early Muslim scholars. These accounts are not only central to how Muslims today in all their variety understand their pasts; they are also necessary to Islamic law, ethics, and religious doctrines. Please keep an open mind during this discussion: I certainly have and will continue to do so until someone makes a definitive argument. What you can expect from me is a dispassionate account of the debate rather than a grand new truth. Finally, words such as “cult” and “sectarianism” are used in their neutral scholarly senses; they have here none of the connotations of the popular or journalistic uses of the terms.

Having given you the usual due-diligence boilerplate let me suggest that many of you will find this subject amazing. I certainly do. The story we will be following is about the first world civilization, the sole pre-modern example of a global

culture. The period is also one that is well known to Muslims throughout the world and to everyone in the Middle East, so much so that it is not just history but culture, part of the lived experience of many of the planet's peoples. I hope that the course will give you a sense of a past that to many people is quite vivid and very much in mind.

Grading is based on a map quiz (10%), section participation (15%), mid-term (25%), paper (25%) and final (25%). All work must be completed on time. If you want an A be prepared to put a consistently high level of effort into the course. I recognize that the subject matter of this course is difficult and unfamiliar to most of you. If you do the work you should get a B, although an A will be difficult to obtain without dedication. A = excellent work in all respects. B = work that is excellent in parts and faulty in others or that is of a generally good quality. C = work that while acceptable lacks clarity, organization, or evidence of sustained research. If you are doing D work I hope you will drop the course to spare me the pain of giving and you the humiliation of receiving a D or worse. In general I will not give grades such as AB or BC on tests or papers, and will use these grades only to average out grades. You and I both should be able to discern the difference between an A and a B paper. I am always happy to discuss a grade and willing to argue with you over one. If you think a grade should be changed come to my office with a written argument and we will make an appointment to discuss your case in depth.

Did you know that class attendance is not mandatory at UW unless it is required in the syllabus? Neither did I until an incident last year; hence, reluctantly, here it is, loud, unclear, and

inflexible: all classes and sections are mandatory. If for some reason you can't attend class on a particular day please send your TA or Me or both an email in advance. We can then help you get up to speed on what you missed. If for some reason you have to miss a few classes in a row do let me know as soon as possible so I can record lectures and otherwise help you make up for lost time. We might even be able to get lecture materials to you while you are out of town or indisposed. If a serious problem comes up, such as an injury or illness, get in touch before making any decisions.

McBurney students are most welcome in this course – I've been working with the center recently, have nothing but admiration for them, and am committed to making this course as accessible to you as it is to any other student. The one thing I ask is that you inform me as soon as possible what we can do to that end and to remind me and your TA before every assignment and exam.

A note on Wikipedia: I realize that many of you have come to rely on it. On some subjects the writers are fairly reliable, no doubt. But for Islamic history it is terrible: full of errors, replete with factional points of view of which the editors are unaware, and an arena for the endless struggle to define what True Islam is and who the heretics are. The editors must be aware of the problem, but scholars of the Islamic world gave up on the site so long ago that no one who knows anything would ever write for them. In recent years, most students who failed their midterms admitted to relying on Wikipedia for definitions. Plagiarism cases have often – and easily - been detected through their

reliance on it, easily detected these days. To conclude with a warning: it is easy to discern when students have relied on Wikipedia for an exam or a paper, at which point all confidence in them is lost. This paragraph, by the way, is taken from the syllabi of the last two years, and in each of them students flunked the midterm by relying on Wikipedia at the last minute. Please do everything you can to break this unfortunate streak.

Please give particular attention to the following, especially if you aren't certain you'll take the course.

Due to a condition that appears every few years or so, and reappeared over break after an absence of four years, I'll have to beg you to put up with a workaround that should allow each lecture to be given as scheduled. The last time this happened most of you would have been in high school, too bad as I'm told that watching a historian lecture under heavy doses of narcotics and massive amounts of other drugs was highly amusing. If you've come across me with the occasional bald head and bad beret, scratching at wires connected to it, this was why: the last occurrence I tried everything to prevent it from coming back and interfering with teaching. Sadly, the experiment ended, the pacemaker/ham radio set in my brain had to be taken out last May, and I had to think of another way to keep on lecturing. The following is it, guaranteed to make this one of the most unorthodox course delivery methods you've come across.

Some days will be better than others so this is the plan: until this thing passes on, the day before each class I'll send you an email by late afternoon or early evening. If I suspect that I'll not be ambulatory the next day you will still receive a downloadable video lecture the afternoon or if something goes wrong the

evening of the scheduled lecture. After last time I was determined never to miss a lecture again and to avoid it got heavily into distance education. What this means for you is that if the lecture is not in class it will be available in downloadable video form, at the beginning on learn@uw, perhaps mixed with mywebservice or some other web-hosting site, whatever works best. Learning Support Services is building what they call a “Collaborative Site,” a combination of blog, streaming and downloadable video, and other goodies. I wish it were available sooner but this just started the week before Christmas and they haven’t had enough lead-time.

Nor to worry about the formats: the lectures will be made in Quicktime (and yes, I know, don’t get geeky on me) in various resolutions and for various platforms. At the least the lectures will be 640x360 and should look just fine on iTunes (available for PC’s and Macs for free from Apple); and depending on time and rendering success in 720p too. Please get in touch right away if you can’t watch videos on whatever your computer is – there is always a solution and it shouldn’t be difficult no matter what your OS or computer. As each of the lectures can be watched at any time you don’t have to worry about scheduling and can download at your convenience, perhaps when you have a fast internet connection at hand.. With any luck my predictions will be on target and I won’t miss a single lecture scheduled for the classroom the day before. However, there’s always the possibility that I’ll make the wrong call the evening before, so even if you are informed that the lecture is in class you should probably check your email sometime before lecture begins, around noon would be ideal. I’ll let you know the minute I have to change plans and if in doubt will err on the side of not inconveniencing you.

We'll use the blog for questions and comments, something that worked very well in a Distance Education course I taught last summer. I much prefer the blog format to chat, the other possibility. If you have experienced chat discussions in an academic setting you may agree with me that chat is awkward and a little hokey. Blogs however are another story. There is no need to log-on it at a particular time, the discussion will be continuous and permanently available, and I will check in several times a day. It is my dearest hope that each lecture will engender a discussion in the comments section of the posts. This will also be the place to ask questions and to set up discussion sections for the week. Fortunately, Lynette and Danielle, our two TA's, are something of a dream team, winning the lottery really, so however useful the blog may be I won't intrude on their discussions with a heavy hand. For all the advantages that this approach brings with it, some of you will have to consciously change your ingrained approach to a blog, from an attitude of passive receptiveness to one of active participation. I hope you'll all get active quickly, as we can dispense with the awkward moments when students don't want to expose themselves in a large class. For you shy students (I know, I was one), you won't have to concern yourselves with domineering peers. And if you have anything to say or ask but wouldn't in our anonymous underground room, now's your chance to express yourself at length.

The lectures won't be the usual talking head thing but will consist mainly of moving images and graphics with a voice-over. Plans are in motion to get me a video camera but for the moment video and graphics will be it, apologies to those who were hoping to gaze upon yet another professorial mug. . If you don't have a high-speed internet connection at home you can always

download the day's lecture from one of our computer labs and save it on whatever portable drive you have handy. At the lower resolutions a fifty-minute lecture should be 500MB or so, a size any campus (and many home) computers and cheap thumb drive if needed should handle with ease. For my preliminary and primitive attempts at making videos a year ago check the videos at the bottom of our learn@uw page, most of which will require Adobe Media Player, available free for download from Adobe. Please note that even though the files are Flash video your favorite flash player will probably not work. There were streaming video versions of most of these experiments on the blog last year but during its long quiescence Google apparently decided it wasn't worth storing the files, something I'll try to fix over the weekend. Just found out, otherwise I would have updated everything earlier.

As this is such an unusual way of handling a lecture course anything that goes awry is entirely on me; so when and if anything goes wrong whenever let me know and we'll fix it, and in the meantime, in the face of any glitch, Don't Worry. I suspect that many of you will enjoy this format, but to the extent lectures are online you will have a particular responsibility in return for greater flexibility.

Please don't hope that you can keep up by fast-forwarding through the lectures on your iPod, once a week, lounging in the sun when and if it ever returns. A general rule for this course: we are after a deeper understanding of complex issues than last-minute memorization will permit, and the freedom downloadable lectures gives you could be dangerous if you let things slide.

Online lectures aside, I should warn you that the usual scams, dodges, last-second stratagems, and trusty expedients have rarely worked for this course. Every year the course

dismays students who've figured out some high-grade/minimum-effort strategy in other courses. Fair warning: it probably won't work here. The field of medieval Islamic history is not so well established as to permit scanning a bluffer's guide before an exam. Not only does such a book not exist, the field has yet to benefit from a comprehensive textbook. The only way to acquire a decent knowledge of the field is pull together disparate materials from textbooks, translated primary sources, blog discussions, and lecture. The only way to organize the material and be ready for the next topic is to keep up, and not just keep up but synthesize the lectures and the readings at every turn.

So please, I beg you, watch the lectures every day, pull together the disparate readings week by week, and review, synthesize, and organize daily. Something that will help you immensely is to keep a separate document in which to organize your thoughts. This will be particularly useful in keeping track of how what you are reading or watching fits into the Big Questions around which the course is organized. Finally, take care with resources on the web. Wikipedia is discussed above. Our learn@uw page has a list of relatively reliable links, but note the word "relatively": be skeptical at every turn and confirm everything elsewhere.

Important Dates:

Map Quiz: Wednesday, February 17.

Midterm: March 22nd, the Monday before Spring Break.

Spring Break: Week of March 29-April 1.

Paper due: Friday, April 23, in class or submitted to your TA or in the case of grad and honors students to me via email; you

are not off the hook until you receive confirmation by email that your paper was received.

Take-home Final due by May 11th at 4:00. Given the early date of the official exam this is an extra 28 hours, though of course you may submit it earlier. Do not take this course if you cannot meet these deadlines!

Textbooks:

Required (and available at the University Book Store):

Ahmed Ali, *Al-Qur'ân: a Contemporary Translation* (Princeton, 1984). It is a good thing to own a reliable translation of the Qur'an, which this is. If you are very short of cash there are translations on the web aplenty. Be sure you do some research to ensure they are well-regarded.

Berkey, Jonathan, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600-1800* (Cambridge, 2002).

Cook, Michael, *The Qur'an (a Very Short Introduction)* (Oxford, 2000).

Lapidus, I., *A History of Islamic Societies*, 2nd ed (Cambridge, UK, 2002).

You will notice that for the first few weeks the readings are relatively sparse. I have found that this helps students get their bearings in relatively unfamiliar territory, to master the geography (this takes a lot of work), and to give you a chance to explore the immense amount of material available on

Learn@UW. Another reason is that understanding the context of the formation of Islam, the early Islamic empire, and Islamic civilization requires us to go into other fields such as geography, archeology, and ancient history. These fields have their own preoccupations and questions, little of which we want to get into. If you find yourself particularly interested in any of these issues there are readings on learn@uw that will allow you to explore them in depth, just ask and I'll make specific recommendations. As with the online lectures, do not flag, procrastinate, postpone, or go easy on yourself.

Also note that other required readings, maps, various charts and outlines, most of the sources for the paper topics, and other materials are available on the course learn@uw page. There is an enormous and to some people overwhelming amount of material on learn@uw, so if you try to read all the suggested readings in other courses you will quickly find yourself overwhelmed in this one. There are two things you can do if you find yourself in that position: first, just ask; and second, check out the Recommended Readings and look for something that deals with the period we are covering.

Sources for your papers.

Suggested paper topics with readings can be found below. If you wish to develop a topic on your own please consult with me early and often. The first thing to do is to define a topic and turn it into a question, then set out a plan for addressing it. Once you've done so come up with a list of sources and make an appointment to talk to me about the project. I do not want to discourage any of you from developing your own topics but there are many interesting questions for which there are neither

primary sources nor secondary scholarship. So please consult with me and keep me up to date regularly on your project.

Course Outline and Reading List:

Jan. 20: Introduction to the course: content, expectations, introduction to your TA's, and a chance to swap sections and take care of registration problems after the preliminaries are done/

I. Human Geography and the Rise of Empires in the Ancient Middle East.

Jan 22: Physical and human geography of the Middle East □.

Jan 25: Physical and human geography, continued

Jan 27: Empires and imperial cultures from Sumeria to Late Antiquity.

Jan 29: The Middle East and Arabia in Late Antiquity.

Reading (full references are in the resources section below).

Lapidus, I. M., *A History of Islamic Societies*, pp. 3-10.

Berkey, J., *The Formation of Islam*, pp. 3-52.

To get us going in section, herewith the reading for next week. Come prepared to discuss 1: the way of life and the ethical world of the pre-Islamic Arabs as seen in poetry and ancient accounts of Arabia; and 2: Ibn Khaldun on pastoral nomads and state formation.

The readings are the first four in the Readings section in learn@uw:

Examples of pre-Islamic poetry
Ibn Khaldun: al-Muqaddima, two selections
Ancient accounts of Arabia

Recommended:

“al-Arab,” art., Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd. Ed.

Bagnall, Roger S., Egypt in Late Antiquity.

Brown, P., The World of Late Antiquity, pp, 11-21; 96-112; 160-171.

Fowden, Garth, Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity, 12-36, 138-75.

Hodgson, M.G.S., The Venture of Islam, vol 1, introduction (learn@uw)

McNeill, W. M., The Rise of the West, pp. 64-84; 110-144.

Shahid, I., "Pre-Islamic Arabia," in The Cambridge History of Islam, vol. I.

Shahid, I., Rome and the Arabs.

Sherratt, A., articles on early agriculture and early history on learn@uw),

Hoyland, R.G., Arabia and the Arabs from the Bronze age to the Coming of Islam,

II. The Early Islamic State and the Formation of Islam

Feb 1: The “source-criticism” debate and the sources for early Islamic history; the career of the Prophet I: prophecy and community in a “tribal” society.

Feb 3: The career of the Prophet II: The formation of the early Islamic state

Feb 5: The formation of the Caliphate and the Ridda Wars

Feb 8: The Arab Conquests

Feb 10: The consolidation of the Caliphate under `Umar and the early conquest state; relations with conquered peoples

Feb 12: Continuing consolidation of caliphal authority under `Uthman; conflicts among the Arabs; the political center of gravity shifting from Medina to the garrisons

Feb 15: The murder of `Uthman and the first fitna; conflict between `Ali and Mu`awiya and their followers

Feb 17: Map quiz; The first fitna as the foundation myth of Islamic sectarianism; critique of the standard account of the “Sunni-Shi`ite split”.

Feb 19-24: Catch-up as needed. Mu`awiya and the early Umayyad (or Sufyanid) Caliphate; relations between Damascus and the turbulent garrisons of Iraq. The first dynasty in Islam and the first steps toward an imperial form of political organization

Feb 26: The Second Fitna, the reestablishment of Umayyad (now “Marwanid”) authority under `Abd al-Malik; centralization and systemization of a courtly but not yet fully imperial caliphal state. The beginnings of a specifically Shi`I attitude towards politics and history

March 1: No class, but I`m sure I`ll think of something.

Readings (in rough order):

Ibn Ishaq, Biography of the Prophet, selections (learn@uw)

Berkey, J., The Formation of Islam, pp. 57-75.

Cook, Michael, The Qur`an (a Very Short Introduction).

Lapidus, I., A History of Islamic Societies, pp. 11-53.

Donner, F., The Early Islamic Conquests, pp. 12-90.

(learn@uw).

Tabari, selections from the conquest of Jerusalem to Ziyad ibn Abihi (learn@uw)

Highly Recommended:

Recommended readings on the Prophet and the Qur'an:

Bell, R., Introduction to the Quran.

Crone, P., Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam (learn@uw).

Gabrieli, F., Muhammad and the Conquests of Islam, pp. 103-104, 143, 184.

Gibb, H. A. R., Arab Conquest of Central Asia.

Grabar, O., The Formation of Islamic Art. (learn@uw)

Hawting, G.R., The Ideal of Idolatry and the Formation of Islam: from Polemic to History (Cambridge, 1999).

Hawting, G.R., Approaches to the Qur'an (London, 1993).

Hodgson, M. G. S., The Venture of Islam, I, pp. 145-186 (learn@uw).

Ibn Hisham, The Life of Muhammad.

Izutsu, T., Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Quran.

Madelung, W., The Succession to Muhammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate.

Morony, M., Iraq after the Muslim Conquest (learn@uw).

Pederson, E. L., 'Ali and Mu'awiya in Early Arabic Tradition.

Rodinson, M., Muhammad.

Watt, W. M., Muhammad at Mecca (learn@uw).

Watt, W. M., Muhammad at Medina (learn@uw).

Watt, W. M., Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman.

Recommended readings on the Umayyad Caliphate:

“Umayyads, selections,” (learn@uw).

Dennet, D. B., Conversion and the Poll-Tax in Early Islam.

Hawting, R., The First Dynasty of Islam, pp. 21-71.

Juynboll, G. H. A., Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society

Sharon, M., Black Banners from the East

Shoufany, E., al-Riddah and the Muslim Conquest of Arabia.

Veccia Vaglieri, L., "The Patriarchal and Umayyad Caliphates," in The Cambridge History of Islam, vol. 1, pp. 57-103.

Wellhausen, J., The Arab Kingdom and Its Fall.

Wellhausen, J., The Religio-Political Factions in Early Islam .

III. From Conquest State to Islamic Empire

Mar 1-3: Tensions between Arabs and non-Arab Muslims, between elites and the `Arabs of the garrisons, and anti-Umayyad movements in the 720's—740's; “`Alid loyalism”

Mar 5: The `Abbasid revolt or da`wa

Mar 8: The `Abbasid Caliphate, 750-820.

Mar 10: Imperial culture and court life, architecture, the impact of Hellenistic learning, adab

Mar 12: Cult, ritual, and basic doctrines of Islam

Mar 15: The formation of Islamic Law

March 17: Shi`ism through the `Abbasid Caliphate.

March 19: Economy, trade, and the emergence of the first “World System”

Mar 22: Midterm

Mar 24: Collapse of the `Abbasid Empire and the formation of successor states

March 26: Discussion, Review (I'll be around even if you won't)

March 29-April 1: Spring Break, second paper due April 2, the

Saturday before our first class (just kidding)

Reading (in rough order):

Lapidus, I., A History of Islamic Societies, pp. 54-125.

Berkey, J., The Formation of Islam, pp. 76-158.

Translations of `Abbasid-period sources on learn@uw. Many specifics to be recommended weekly.

Recommended:

`Abbasids:

Bowen, H., The Life and Times of `Ali Ibn Isa.

Crone, P., Slaves on Horseback (learn@uw).

Donner, F., Narratives of Islamic Origins (learn@uw)

Kennedy, H., The Early `Abbasid Caliphate: a Political History.

Lapidus, I. M., "The Evolution of Muslim Urban Society."

Lassner, J., The Shaping of `Abbasid Rule.

Lassner, J., The Topography of Baghdad in the Early Middle Ages.

Melchert, C., The Formation of the Sunni Schools of Law, 9th and 10th Centuries

Schacht, J., The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence.

Zaman, M.Q., Religion and Politics under the Early `Abbasids: the Emergence of the Proto-Sunni Elite

IV. Successor States: Collapse of Empire and the Transformation of Ancient Society

Apr 5: Successor states and regional courts, 945-1092, the

Fatimid and Buyid Shi`I Dynasties among others, and the “Early Middle Period”

Apr 7: The emergence of local inflections of a universal Islamic culture; “golden ages” from Egypt to Iran; the period of mass conversion to Islam. The survival of the Caliphate and its changed, even transformed, roles and self-presentation.

Readings:

Lapidus, I., *A History of Islamic Societies*, 181-191.

Mottahedeh, R., *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (learn@uw - it's a short book)

Chamberlain, M., “Military Patronage States and the Political Economy of the Frontier, 1000-1250” (learn@uw)

Highly recommended: Saunders, P., “The Fatimid State, 969-1171” (learn@uw)

Recommended:

Bosworth, C. E., *Sistan under the Arabs: from the Arab Conquest to the Rise of the Saffarids*.

Bosworth, C. E., *The Ghaznavids*.

Bulliet, R., *The Patricians of Nishapur* (learn@uw)

Daftary, *The Isma`ilis: Their History and Doctrines*.

V. The Middle Period. (on each of these topics there is an abundance of material on learn@uw; take a look around or ask for suggestions). Ask yourselves what the major questions are, then seek out advice for sources and secondary studies that deal with them.

Apr 9: No class, go to section prepared to discuss Motttahadeh. Whether I've recovered or not be sure to watch the video on the reassertion of an authentically Islamic and ineradicably Persian culture and literature.

Apr 12: The Saljuqs (Saljuks, Seljuks) and the movements of Turkic peoples

Apr 14: The ephemerality of the "Saljuq Empire" and the staying power of its institutions: "the military patronage state"

Apr 16: The `ulama and the social order, education and law

Apr 19: Sufism and sufis from the `Abbasids through the Middle Period

Apr 21: Crusades and counter-crusades

Apr 23: Papers due. Salah al-Din ibn Ayyub (Saladin) and the Ayyubid dynasty; comparative medieval political-economy

Apr 26: The Mongol invasions and the integration of Eurasia

Apr 28: The Mamluk Sultanate and the final crystallization of a pre-modern political order that endured, in altered form, into the early modern era, echoes of which survive today

Apr 30: The high medieval Mediterranean: how divided was it between Muslim and Christian shores?

May 3: Cities and urban life: how were cities governed? How did western observers and scholars get it so wrong?

May 5: The rise of the "Gunpowder Empires" and the evanescence of pastoralist military power. New possibilities for universal empire.

May 7: Implications, preparation, and review for the take-home final.

May 11, 4:00 pm, take-home finals due, assuming the final exam date hasn't been changed. Good news and bad news: you are being granted an extra day so we're on the verge of being

indicted if not deported if we fail to get the grades in on time according to the Registrar's strict deadlines. Please don't ask for an extension.

Reading: (Note that the reading is light in this part of the course. The reason is not to give you a chance to relax but to devote your energies to your papers. Attendance at lecture will be essential to success on the final).

Lapidus, I., *A History of Islamic Societies*, 126-161, 241-267; 344-358.

Berkey, J., *The Formation of Islam*, pp. 159-269.

Chamberlain, M., "The Crusader Era and the Ayyubid Dynasty" (learn@uw).

For section

Highly recommended: You may want to cover it in section: how did a cultivated Arab view Europeans in the era when the latter were beginning to make their presence known.

Usamah Ibn Munqidh, *An Arab-Syrian Gentleman and Warrior in the Period of the Crusades* (learn@uw)

Recommended:

Abu Lughod, J., *Cairo: 1000 Years of the City Victorious*.

Bagley, F. R. C., *al-Ghazali's Book of Counsel for Kings*.

Berkey, J., *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo:: A Social History of Islamic Education*.

Bulliet, R., *Islam: The View from the Edge*

The Cambridge History of Islamic Egypt

The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 4

Chamberlain, M., Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus
Coulson, N. J., A History of Islamic Law.
Coulson, N. J., Conflicts and Tensions in Islamic Jurisprudence.
Darke, H., Nizam al-Mulk's Book of Government.
Ephrat, Daphna, A Learned Society in Transition: The Sunni Ulama of Eleventh-Century Baghdad
Gibb, H. A. R., "Constitutional Organization."
Goldziher, I., Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law.
Goldziher, I., Muslim Studies, 2 vols.
Humphreys, R.S., From Saladin to the Mongols: the Ayyubids of Damascus
Hillenbrand, Carole, The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives.
Hodgson, M. G. S., The Order of Assassins.
Kafardar, C., Between Two Worlds: the Construction of the Ottoman State.
Lambton, A. K. S., Theory and Practice in Medieval Persian Government.
Lapidus, I., Middle Eastern Cities.
Morgan, D., The Mongols.
Morgan, D., Medieval Persia, 1040-1797.
Petry, C., The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages

Schacht, J., Introduction to Islamic Law.

Paper Topics:

Papers are due Friday, April 28, in class.

Most sources for the paper can be found on learn@uw.

1. "The career of the prophet Muhammad can only be

understood as a response to the social and economic transformation of Mecca caused by changing patterns of world trade." Comment.

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2. Ibn Khaldun was the first scholar to suggest that interactions among pastoralists, city people, and agriculturalists shaped the central dynamic in Middle Eastern state formation, in other words that political history cannot be understood without reference to human ecology. How has Ibn Khaldun influenced recent historians of the pre-modern Middle East?

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3. "The Arab conquests wrought a revolutionary transformation of the social, political, cultural, and economic structures of the ancient Middle East." Do you agree or disagree?

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Grabar, O., *The Formation of Islamic Art* (New Haven, 1973).
Fowden, Garth, *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, 1993),

4. "As the Arabs conquered the settled peoples of the Middle East, they were in turn conquered by them." Comment.

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5. How did the military elites who dominated the Middle East in the Middle Period exploit the societies they ruled? Were states administered by formal bureaucratic structures and hierarchies? If not, what accounts for the success of ruling groups in administering large and complex societies over time?

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6. "Medieval Muslim cities were not governed by city councils or bureaucratic administrations. Civilian elites had none of the landholdings, charters, or military training that guaranteed the autonomy of urban notables elsewhere. Artisans

and craftsmen were without guilds or trade organizations to defend their interests." How did these societies hold together as complex human communities?

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Mottahedeh, Roy, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Princeton, 1980)

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8. To what extent was the Jewish community of Cairo culturally, politically, and economically integrated into the larger society of Egypt? To what extent can the well-documented social and economic life of this community be taken as representative of Egyptian society at large.

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9. **Military Slavery:** The phenomenon of military slavery became nearly universal from Egypt to Central Asia in the medieval period. Many Europeans were shocked at the thought that the roles held by kings, nobility, and aristocracy were held by soldiers of such humble beginnings. What accounted for this phenomenon? Why did it become so widespread? Is it possible to speak of a "classic mamluk system" as some scholars have?

Ayalon, D., Eunuchs, Caliphs, and Sultans,
Levanoni, Pipes,

10. Eunuchs: In the medieval Islamic world eunuchs played many different roles and could enjoy high status. Why did important institutions employ eunuchs in positions of high responsibility?
Marmon, Ayalon, Patterson.

Resources in English:

Library and Research Resources: [HYPERLINK](http://www.library.wisc.edu/guides/MidEast)
<http://www.library.wisc.edu/guides/MidEast> www.library.wisc.edu/guides/MidEast

Middle East Studies Program: www.mesp.wisc.edu

I. General:

Encyclopedia of Islam. The major reference work for the field. Thousands of entries with bibliographies. The first edition, 4 vols and supplement, Leiden 1913-1942, is complete but dated. The second edition, Leiden, published beginning in 1954-, has finally neared completion. Entries are alphabetical, most under their Arabic, Turkish, or Persian word, so if you are looking for Cairo you will be directed to al-Qahira. Ignore the Arabic definite article al-.

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