

A History of the Middle East, 600-1453

NES 277A/ HIST 277A/ RELI 277A

Fall 2008 | Department of Near Eastern Studies

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T/TH 11-1
Marshall 440 (TA Cubicles)

This course provides a historical overview of the first nine centuries of Islamic civilization. It focuses primarily on the major political dynasties in the Middle East during this period, as well as global events such as the Crusader and Mongol invasions. Students also explore the intellectual and spiritual life of the classical Islamic world, the rise of Persian literature, and Islamic material culture.

This course is a General Education Tier Two Humanities course.

Course Requirements & Expectations:

1. Attendance at all meetings
2. Completion of all reading assignments
3. Completion of all graded assignments

Grades will be based upon the following assignments:

1. Two 4-5 page papers (20%)
2. Three tests (60%)
3. Final Exam (20%)

(Students enrolled in the Honors section [2H], see below, page 5, for assignments)

NOTE: Plagiarism is a very serious offense. Be sure to cite properly other people's ideas in your papers. If any part of the paper is plagiarized, it will receive a "zero" and cannot be rewritten for credit. Please contact me if you are unsure about the proper method of citation.

Books for purchase:

Kennedy, Hugh. *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*. Second Edition (2004)

Maalouf, Amin. *The Crusades through Arab Eyes* (1984)

Watt, W. Montgomery and Pierre Cachia. *A History of Islamic Spain* (1965; reprinted many times)

ER: Readings available on Electronic Reserve:

<http://eres.library.arizona.edu/eres/courseindex.aspx?page=search>

Book on Reserve:

Kennedy, Hugh. *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*. Second Edition (2004)

Cell Phones: If your cell phone rings during class, you will be asked to leave the classroom immediately.

Week 1: Origins

- Aug. 25: Overview of course; Byzantines and Sasanids
Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, pp. 1-14
- Aug. 27: Pre-Islamic Arabia; Muhammad in Mecca
Kennedy, pp. 15-33
ER: "Four Meccan Suras (1, 19, 74, 112)"
- Aug. 29: Emigration (Hijra); Muhammad in Medina: Social legislation
ER: "Constitution of Medina & Two Medinan Suras (24, 49)"

Week 2: Early Islamic Expansion: 622-61

- Sept 1: Labor Day
- Sept. 3: Muhammad in Medina: Battles
Kennedy, pp. 33-48
- Sept. 5: Abu Bakr and 'Umar
Kennedy, pp. 50-69

Week 3: Early Umayyads & the second civil war

- Sept. 8: 'Uthman, 'Ali, Mu'awiya, and the first civil war
Kennedy, pp. 69-88
- Sept. 10: **TEST #1**
- Sept. 12: Yazid, al-Husayn, Ibn al-Zubayr, 'Abd al-Malik and the second civil war
Kennedy, pp. 89-98 (*first paragraph only of p. 98)

Week 4: The Marwanid Umayyads

- Sept. 15: 'Abd al-Malik, al-Hajjaj, and the Dome of the Rock
Kennedy, pp. 98-103
- Sept. 17: al-Walid and the second wave of conquests
Kennedy, pp. 103-112
ER: Donner, "Islam, Conquests," in *The Dictionary of the Middle Ages*
- Sept. 19: Opposition to the Umayyads, Ja'far al-Sadiq, & the 'Abbasid revolution
Kennedy, pp. 112-132

Week 5: The Early 'Abbasids

- Sept. 22: The first 'Abbasid Caliphs: al-Mansur to Harun al-Rashid
Kennedy, pp. 132-47
PAPER #1 DUE
- Sept. 24: The third civil war and caliphate of Samarra
Kennedy, pp. 147-69
- Sept. 26: Islamic Religion & Arabic high culture
ER: "Malik b. Anas"
ER: "'Abbasid poetry & prose"

Week 6: Challenges to the 'Abbasids

- Sept. 29: Anarchy of Samarra, Saffarids, Zanj Revolt, and Samanids
Kennedy, pp. 169-85

- Oct. 1: Review for Test #2 (Eid al-Fitr)
- Oct. 3: Religious authorities, 875-975
 - ER: “al-Tabari: The construction of Baghdad”
 - ER: “The Creed of al-Ash‘ari”

Week 7: The Buyids

- Oct. 6: **TEST #2** (‘Abbasids)
- Oct. 8: The Buyids: Towards an Islamic Commonwealth
 - Kennedy, pp. 198-234
- Oct. 10: Cultural Greatness: Poetry, Philosophy, Theology, Sufism and Imami Shi‘ism
 - ER: “Mutanabbi: Two poems”
 - ER: Inati, “Ibn Sina” in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 231-46
 - ER: “*The Path of Eloquence* (excerpts)”
 - ER: Sells, “Sarraj: The Seven Stations” in *Early Islamic Mysticism*, pp. 196-211

Week 8: The Fatimids & Ghaznavids

- Oct. 13: Early Fatimids: the Caliph-Imams al-Mahdi to al-Hakim
 - Kennedy, pp. 307-335
- Oct. 15: Later Fatimids and the Assassins
 - Kennedy, pp. 335-42
 - ER: “Hasan-i Sabbah”
- Oct. 17: The Ghaznavids & Persian Culture
 - ER: Wink, “The Opening of the Gates of Hind: Ghaznavids, 977-1186” pp. 111-135
 - ER: “Ferdowsi & *The Book of Kings*”

Week 9: The Seljuqs

- Oct. 20: The Great Seljuqs and political fragmentation
 - ER: Hodgson, “The Seljuqs,” from *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, pp. 42-61
- Oct. 22: Classical Islamic Law & Sufism:
 - ER: “al-Ghazali, *Deliverance from Error* (excerpts)”
 - ER: “‘Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani: *Revelations of the Unseen* (excerpts)”
- Oct. 24: **TEST #3** (Buyids, Fatimids, Ghaznavids, Seljuqs)

Week 10: al-Andalus: Islamic Spain

- Oct 27: Umayyad Spain
 - Watt & Cachia, pp. 30-78
- Oct. 29: The Age of the ‘Party Kings’
 - Watt & Cachia, pp. 61-94; 112-36
 - ER: Ibn Hazm, *The Ring of the Dove* (excerpts)
 - ER: Ibn Zaydun, “The Nuniyya” and al-Mu‘tamid’s ode to his father
- Oct 31: The Almoravids and Almohads
 - Watt & Cachia, pp. 95-111; 137-46

Week 11: The Crusades

- Nov. 3: Introduction to the Crusades
ER: "Crusades," *Encyclopedia of Christianity*
- Nov. 5: Early Successes and 'Imad al-Din Zengi
Maalouf, pp. 1-55
- Nov. 7: Nur al-Din and Salah al-Din
Maalouf, pp. 141-200

Week 12: Ayyubids, Crusaders, an 'Abbasid Resurgence, and Chingiz Khan

- Nov. 10: Ayyubids and the Fourth Crusade
ER: Maalouf, pp. 218-31
- Nov. 12: Caliph al-Nasir, al-Suhrawardi, and Ibn 'Arabi
ER: Hodgson, "The Caliph Nasir" from *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, pp. 279-85
ER: Chittick, "Ibn 'Arabi" in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 497-509
- Nov. 14: The Rise of Chingiz Khan (= Temujin)
ER: Jack Weatherford, *Genghis Khan and the making of the Modern World*, pp. 3-17; 55-77

Week 13: Mongols, early Mamluks, Ilkhanids

- Nov. 17: Initial Mongol encounters and the emergence of the Mamluks
Maalouf, pp. 233-259
ER: Morgan, *Medieval Persia*, pp. 46-58

PAPER #2 DUE

- Nov. 19: Hulëgu, the Sack of Baghdad, and the Ilkhanids
ER: Morgan, *Medieval Persia*, pp. 58-82
- Nov. 21: Religious scholars: al-Nawawi, Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, Rumi, Ibn Taymiyya
ER: "Discourses of Rumi (excerpts)"
ER: Dabashi, "Khwajah Nasir al-Din al-Tusi" in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 527-84

Week 14: Early Ottomans

- Nov. 24: Early Ottomans
ER: Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, pp. 424-29
- Nov. 26-7: Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: New Dynasties

- Dec. 1: Timur and the futile quest for political unity
ER: Justin Marozzi, *Tamerlane: Sword of Islam, Conqueror of the World* (2004), pp. 280-317; 376-91
ER: "Timur Lang" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition
- Dec. 3: The Mamluks and Timurids in the 15th century
ER: Holt, *The Age of the Crusades*, pp. 178-202
ER: Bloom and Blair, *Islamic Arts*, pp. 193-220
ER: Berkey, "Women and Islamic Education in the Mamluk Period," in *Women in Middle Eastern History* (1991), pp. 143-57.

Dec. 5: The Nasrid Kingdom of Granada
 Watt & Cachia, pp. 147-64
 ER: L.P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain 1250-1500*, pp. 20-40; 55-67

Week 16: 1453

Dec. 8: Constantinople & the End of the Byzantine Empire
 ER: Donald Nicol, “Constantine XI and Mehmed II: the fall of Constantinople—1448-53” in *The Last Centuries of Byzantium, 1261-1453*, pp. 369-93
 Dec. 10: Conclusion and preview of Middle Eastern History, 1500-2000

FINAL EXAM: FRIDAY, **DECEMBER 19** (8-10AM)

Graded Assignments for Section 2H (The Honors section):

Students in the Honors section are expected to attend all classes and communicate with the instructor about their research paper. They must select a topic of their choice and prepare a succinct bibliography by **October 29**. This project should involve work with original sources (in translation) on a topic from the period covered in class and is due Friday **DECEMBER 5**. Students are strongly encouraged to submit a draft to the instructor or T.A. at least one week prior to this due date, although this is not obligatory. The paper must be in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins on all sides. Students in this section will not write the second short paper, due November 14, but will be responsible for all other assignments.

- 1. One 4-5 page paper (10%)
- 2: Three tests (45%)
- 3. Research paper (12-17 pages) (20%)
- 4. Final Exam (25%)

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All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for those students who show affiliation with that particular religion.

Students with Disabilities:

If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the Disability Resource Center and request that the DRC send me official notification of your accommodation needs as soon as possible. If you would like to discuss how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate, please see me by appointment of during office hours.

