

Rutgers University—Newark  
Federated Department of History  
Fall Semester 2021  
Class Time: Mon. 2:30-3:50  
Wed. 1:00-2:30

Prof. Mayte Green-Mercado  
mayte.green@rutgers.edu  
Virtual Office Hours: by appointment  
Conklin Hall 424



Window with the *shahādah*, the Muslim profession of faith, carved stucco and colored glass  
Egypt, 1800-80. Museum no. 1202-1883

## HIST 287 HISTORY OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION, I

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is a survey of the history of Islamic civilization. In it we will study social, economic, and cultural aspects of the history of the region of West Asia, North Africa, and South-Western Europe between the sixth and thirteenth centuries. The treatment of the subject will be roughly chronological, though themes such as law, science, and philosophy will recur throughout the course. In addition to lectures, the course will heavily draw upon discussion sessions, which will give students a hands-on approach to history. In these sessions, we will discuss in detail various historical problems presented in the text and lectures. We will also read different types of historical evidence and learn how they can be used for historical analysis.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- name and identify individuals, events, themes, and issues of major importance in the history of Islamic civilization,
- demonstrate a basic level of competence in differentiating the major periods of the history of Islamic civilization and the significance of historical context,
- recognize the importance of cause and effect in history, and discuss the significance of change and continuity over time,
- develop an understanding toward the use of historical evidence by historians and display some familiarity toward different types of evidence,
- critically analyze historical evidence and articulate a synthesis with a thesis.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

- Vernon O. Egger, *A History of the Muslim World to 1405: The Making of a Civilization*, (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, Prentice Hall, 2004).
- Chase Robinson, *Islamic Civilization in Thirty Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016)
- Selection of Primary Sources

**All readings for this course will be available on Canvas.**

**Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:** As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community.

The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here:  
<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

Students are required to view the Plagiarism video on Canvas and take the quiz by **no later than October 4**. The video is available in the Modules section of the Canvas site.

**Assignments:**

- There will be a series of short videos and quizzes in the module section of Canvas that you will have to complete before submitting paper 1 [Types of Sources; Why Citations Matter; Turabian Citations; Academic Integrity] Each quiz will count for half a credit point.

- Students will write ONE paper (500 words, 2 pages). The essay prompt will be posted on Canvas one week in advance. **No email submissions will be accepted.**

- Students will work in their groups to produce a final project, that they will present to the class on the last week of the semester. Each presentation will be no more than 20 minutes long. For the final projects, students will collectively create a timeline of the history of Islamic Civilization focusing on ONE figure of Islamic history, using the digital tool **Timeline JS**. Students will use the assigned biographies assigned in class, or in consultation with the Professor. A list of biographies will be provided. Students will select any biography **WITH THE EXCEPTION OF** that of Muhammad. Each group will present on their biography. No groups can work on the same biography.

- There will be **TWO** exams (midterm and final).

- Participation in these discussions will count towards your final grade.

**Grading:**

Participation	11%
Online training quizzes	4%
Paper 1	10%
Digital Group Project	20%
Midterm	25%
Final Exam	30%

A	100-90	B	84-80	C	74-70	F	59-0
B+	89-85	C+	79-75	D	69-60		

**RESOURCES, SUPPORT, AND ASSISTANCE:**

Technology Resources for Students

<https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/technology-resources-for-students/>

**Counseling Center:** The Rutgers-Newark Counseling Center provides a number of counseling and consultative services to enrolled and eligible undergraduate and graduate students. For students, if you are seeking individual or group therapy, you can expect to find a safe, supportive space to collaboratively identify and begin to change the thoughts, behaviors, and beliefs that prevent you from being your best self.

<http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu>

**Disabilities:** Rutgers welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form:

<https://webapps.rutgers.edu/student-ods/forms/registration>.

**Students with Temporary Conditions/Injuries:** Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury that is adversely affecting their ability to fully participate in their courses should submit a request for assistance at: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

**Students Who are Pregnant:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist students with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy: (973) 353-1906 or [TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu).

**Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment:** Students experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, should know that help and support are

available. To report an incident, contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance: (973) 353-1906 or [TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu).

To submit an incident report: [tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm](http://tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm).

To speak with a staff member who is confidential and does NOT have a reporting responsibility, contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance: (973) 353-1918 or [run.vpva@rutgers.edu](mailto:run.vpva@rutgers.edu).

**Food:** PantryRUN, the campus food pantry, helps students who have difficulty affording enough healthy food to remain focused on their studies and stay healthy. You can find hours and information here: <https://myrun.newark.rutgers.edu/pantryrun>.

**Writing:** The Rutgers University-Newark Writing Center provides tutoring for students who want to strengthen their reading, writing, and research skills and offers individual sessions and writing workshops to all undergraduate students currently enrolled in classes on the Rutgers University-Newark campus. More details here: <https://sas.n.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/writing-center>.

**\*\*This syllabus is subject to change\*\***

---

### **Week 1 Introduction and Organization**

W, 9/ 1 **Introduction, discussion of the syllabus, and course policies**  
What do we mean by Islamic Civilization? Geography, Languages, Sources and Periodization.

---

### **Week 2 The Near Eastern Context to the Rise of Islam**

W, 9/ 8 **Pre-Islamic Near East: The Byzantine and Sassanian Empires**  
**\*\* (Monday Schedule, 2:30-3:50) \*\***  
**Textbook:** Vernon O Egger, *A History of the Muslim World to 1405*, 1-15.  
**Podcast:** "The Sassanid Empire," *In Our Time*, BBC

---

### **Week 3 The Rise and Expansion of Islam (ca. 570-632 C.E.)**

M, 9/ 13 **Pre-Islamic Arabia**  
**Textbook:** Egger, 16-22.  
**Primary Source:**  
"Ibn al-Kalbī: From the Book of Idols" in *The Islamic World*, eds. McNeill, W. and Marilyn Robinson Waldman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973): 9-13.  
**Podcast:** "Antara ibn Shaddad," *In Our Time*, BBC

W, 9/ 15 **Muhammad, The Prophet**  
**Textbook:** Egger, 20-31.  
**Biography:** Chase Robinson, "Muhammad, the Prophet," in *Islamic Civilization in Thirty Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016): 20- 31.

**Primary Source:** "The umma Document," in Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers*, 227-232.

#### **Week 4      The Question of Legitimacy in the Early Islamic Empire, 632-661 C.E**

---

M, 9/20                      **The Age of Conquests and Early Institutions**

**Textbook:** Egger, 33-44.

**Podcast:** "[The Arab Conquests](#)," *In Our Time*, BBC

W, 9/22                      **The First Civil War (Fitna)**

**Textbook:** Egger, 62-66.

**Biographies:**

"Ali, cousin, caliph, and forefather of Shi'ism," *ICTL*, 31-37.

"A'isha, wife of the Prophet," in *ICTL*, 37-41.

**Primary Source:**

Balādhurī, "Conversations with Mu'awiya (661-668)"

#### **Week 5                      The Umayyad Dynasty (661-750 C.E.)**

---

M, 9/27                      **The Second Civil War and the Early Umayyads**

**Textbook:** Egger, 66-69.

**Biography:** "al-Ṭabarī, traditionalist rationalist," in *ICTL*, 85-90.

**Primary Source:** *History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. XIX, "The Events of the Year 61 (680/681)," [Battle of Karbala] excerpts.

W, 9/29                      **'Abd al-Malik and the Later Umayyads**

**Textbook:** Egger, 44-61.

**Primary Source:** "Inscriptions in the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem," in Fred Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers*, 233-235.

**Biography:** "'Abd al-Malik, engineer of the caliphate," in *ICTL*, 42-48.

**Short Video:**

Heba Mostafa, [The Dome of the Rock: Original Mosaics](#)

#### **Week 6                      The 'Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258 C.E.)**

---

M, 10/4                      **The 'Abbasids**

**Textbook:** Egger, 69-72; 85-89.

**Biography:**

"Ibn al-Muqaffa', translator and essayist," in *ICTL*, 48-55.

"al-Ma'mun, caliph and patron," in *ICTL*, 60-68.

**Podcast:** "[The Imperial Caliphates](#)," Ottoman History Podcast

W, 10/6

**\*\*PAPER 1 DUE via Canvas\*\***

**Primary Sources:**

•Tale from *A Thousand and One Nights*

•Ibn al-Sāʿī, *Consorts of the Caliphs. Women and the Court of Baghdad*, ed. Shawkat M. Toorawa (New York: NYU Press, 2015): 6-9; 99.

**Biography:** “Arib, courtesan of caliphs,” in *ICTL*, 74-79.

**Podcast:** “[The Arabian Nights](#),” *In Our Time*, BBC

---

## **Week 7                      The Empire Cannot Hold Two Caliphs**

---

M, 10/11                      **Shiʿi identities**

**Textbook:** Egger, 72-80; 214-219.

W, 10/13                      **The Fāṭimids**

**Article:** Tahera Qutbuddin, “Fatimids” in *The Cultural Sociology of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia*, vol. 2 Africa, ed. Edward Ramsamy (Los Angeles, Sage Publications, 2011), 37-40.

**Primary Source:**

Wilfred Madelung and Paul E. Walker (ed.), *The Advent of the Fatimids, A Contemporary Shiʿi Witness. An Edition and English Translation of Ibn al-Haytham’s Kitab al-Munazarat* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2000): 63-73.

**Podcast:** “[Fragments of the Fatimid Caliphate](#),” *Ottoman History Podcast*

---

## **Week 8                      The Ornament of the World: The Umayyads in al-Andalus**

---

M, 10/18                      **al-Andalus**

**Textbook:** Egger, 98-112; 166-168.

**Biography:** “Ibn Hazm, polemicist, polymath,” *ICTL*, 128-134.

**Primary Sources:**

Ibn Hazm, “On Forgetting a Beloved,” in *Medieval Iberia*, 103-106.

Podcast: “[Legacies of al-Andalus](#),” *Ottoman History Podcast*

W, 10/20                      **Midterm Exam**

---

## **Week 9                      Filling the Power Vacuum (819-1062 C.E.)**

---

M, 10/25                      **The Samanid Dynasty**

**Article:**

Luke Treadwell, “The Samanids: The First Islamic Dynasty of Central Asia,” in Edmund Herzig and Sarah Stewart (eds.) *Early Islamic Iran. The Idea of Iran* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 3-15.

**Podcast:** “Avicenna,” *In Our Time*, BBC

**\*\*Discussion of final project, selection of biographies, and demonstration of Timeline JS\*\***

W, 10/27                      **The Buyid Sultanate**

**Textbook:** Egger, 142-144.

**Primary Source:**

al-Mawardī, “On the Appointment of Provincial Governors,” in *The Ordinances of*

*Government: A Translation of al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyya w' al-Wilāyāt al-Dīniyya.*  
Translated by Wafaa H. Wahba (Reading, UK: Garnet Publishing Ltd., 1996), 32-37.

---

## **Week 10                      Filling the Power Vacuum (977-1194 C.E.)**

---

M, 11/1                      **The Ghaznavids**

**Textbook:** Egger, 145-151.

**Biography:** "Mahmud of Ghazna, conqueror and patron," in *ICTL*, 107-112.

**Podcast:** "[Shahnameh of Ferdowsi](#)," *In Our Time*, BBC

W, 11/3                      **The Seljuks and the Migration of the Oghuz**

**Textbook:** Egger, 151-154; 192-194.

**Primary Sources:**

"Ibn Khallikan: Biography of the Vizier Nizam al-Mulk," in *Islamic Central Asia*, 89-92.

"Nizam al-Mulk: A Mirror for Princes," 92-94.

---

## **Week 11                      Challenges to the Caliphate**

---

M, 11/8                      **Zangids, Ayyubids, and the Crusades**

**Textbook:** Egger, 172-182.

**Biography:** "Saladin, anti-Crusader hero," in *ICTL*, 160-168.

**Primary Source:**

"Usāma: From Memoirs," in *The Islamic World*, selections.

*Travels of Ibn Jubayr. A Medieval Journey from Cordoba to Jerusalem*, trans. Ronald Broadhurst (London: I.B.Tauris, 2020), selections.

**Podcast:** "[The Crusades in an Islamic Context](#)," *Ottoman History Podcast*

W, 11/10                      **Amazigh Empires: Almoravids and Almohads**

**Textbook:** Egger, 182-188.

**Biography:** "al-Idrisi," *ICTL*, 153-160.

**Podcast:** "[The Almoravid Empire](#)," *In Our Time*, BBC

**Primary Source:**

"Ibn Tumart and the Rise of the Almohads," in *Medieval Iberia*.

---

## **Week 12                      Synthesis and Creativity**

---

M, 11/15                      **Islamic Law**

**Textbook:** Egger, 114-122.

**Biographies:**

"Karima al-Marwaziyya, hadith scholar," in *ICTL*, 134-139.

**Podcasts:**

"[What is Islamic Law](#)," *Ottoman History Podcast*

W, 11/17                      **Theology, Philosophy, and Mysticism**

**Textbook:** Egger, 123-137, 199-214.

**Biographies:**



“al-Ghazali, ‘Renewer’ of Islam,” in *ICTL*, 139-148.  
“Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Aristotelian monotheist,” in *ICTL*, 169-177.  
Rabi‘a al-‘Adawiyya, renunciant and saint, in *ICTL*, 54-60.  
“al-Hallaj ‘the Truth (922),” in *ICTL*, 79-84.  
Rumi, Sufi ‘poet,’ in *ICTL*, 188-194.  
**Podcast:** “[Rumi’s Poetry](#),” *In Our Time*, BBC  
“[Rumi’s World](#),” *Ottoman History Podcast*

---

**Week 13**                      **Project Organization**

---

M, 11/22                      **Discussion of projects**

W, 11/24                      **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

---

**Week 14**                      **Alternatives to the Classical Islamic Principles of Governance**

---

M, 11/29                      **The Mamluk Dynasty**  
(Wednesday schedule)

**Textbook:** Egger 269-273.

**Primary Source:**

Shihab al-Din al-Nuwayri, “On the History of the Mamluk State,” in *The Ultimate Ambition in the Arts of Erudition* (excerpts).

**Podcast:** “[The Mamluks](#),” *In Our Time*, BBC

“[Life in the Mamluk Sultanate](#),” *Ottoman History Podcast*

W, 12/1                      **The Islamic World in the Age of Mongol Prestige**

**Textbook:** Egger, 194-198; 257-269.

**Primary Source:**

“The Secret History of the Mongols: Temujin’s Origins.”

**Biography:**

“Rashid al-Din, physician, courtier, and global historian,” in *ICTL*, 194-200.

“al-Hilli,” in *ICTL*, 200-205.

Podcast: “[The Mongols and Muslim Societies](#),” *Ottoman History Podcast*

---

**Week 15**                      **Presentations**

---

M, 12/ 6                      **Group presentations**

W, 12/ 8                      **Group presentations**

---

**Week 16**                      **Recap**

---

M, 12/13                      **LAST DAY OF CLASSES**

---

**Week 17**                      **Final Exam**

---

M, 12/ 20                      Online exam