

HISTORY OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION I
(up to 1258 C.E.)

Fall 2014
(21:510:287)

Monday, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
CONKLIN HALL, 342

Dr. Nükhet Varlık
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Office Hour: By appointment only
Office: Conklin Hall, 310

TEXTBOOKS:

- Vernon O. Egger, *A History of the Muslim World to 1405: The Making of a Civilization*, 2004. (Required)
- James E. Lindsay, *Daily life in the Medieval Islamic World*, 2005. (Recommended)
- Daniel Brown, *A New Introduction to Islam*, 2004. (Recommended)
- Additional primary source readings will be posted on Blackboard.
- Also see: *Internet Islamic History Sourcebook* (compiled by Paul Halsall)
<<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/islam/islamsbook.html>>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is a survey of the history of Islamic civilization. In this course, we will study social, economic, and cultural aspects of the history of the Middle and Near East region, 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 see different types of historical evidence and learn how they can be used for historical analysis.

COURSE 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.

ASSIGNMENTS:

You are expected to write two papers for this class. The first paper will be a short paper (3-4 pages, due Sept. 28). The second paper will be longer (6-7 pages, due Dec. 19). Both papers will be submitted via *Turn-It-In* on Blackboard. Detailed information regarding the papers will be announced in class AND posted on Blackboard. LATE PAPERS OR EMAILED PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

EXAMS:

There will be two tests for this course, which will assess your mastery of specific information such as important dates, names, and terms. The subjects covered for the tests will not be accumulative. In other words, the second test will only cover the material covered after the first test.

GRADING:

- 10 % First paper
- 30% Second paper
- 30 % First test
- 30 % Second test

GRADING STANDARDS:

- 90-100 % A (a genuinely outstanding achievement)
- 80-89 % B (above average achievement)
- 70-79 % C (comprehension of the subject at an appropriate university level)
- 60-69 % D (unsatisfactory performance, barely passing)
- Below 60% F (failure)

COURSE POLICIES:

- Attendance at all regularly scheduled meetings of this class is expected. Rutgers catalog states that “the recognized grounds for absence are illness

requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions.” More than 3 (three) UNEXCUSED absences will automatically result in your failure so it is your responsibility to come to class and see that you are marked present for the classes you attend. In the event that you have a medical, legal, or family-related problem that might lead to an extended absence, you need to meet me in person and bring necessary documentation as evidence for your problem. Only then, we can discuss whether your absence can be excused or not. An email message explaining your problem will NOT be considered as an excuse of your absence. Ultimately, it will be the instructor’s judgment to decide whether an absence can be excused or not. If you miss a class due to a reason that you cannot document, please do not contact me to explain your case. Instead, consider it as one of your unexcused absences. Please remember that any student who misses 6 (six) or more sessions through any combination of EXCUSED and UNEXCUSED absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

- You are expected to come to class having done the assigned readings and participate in class discussions. We will be using our main textbook (Egger) frequently in class; therefore, please bring it to each meeting. On discussion days, make sure to bring a copy of the assigned reading with you. Any student who does not have the textbook (Egger) or the primary source(s) may be asked to leave the classroom and marked absent for the class.
- Punctuality and courtesy at all times are expected.
- Academic dishonesty of *any sort* will not be tolerated. It is your responsibility to comply with the university's policy on academic integrity. To review the policies go to:
http://judicialaffairs.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf
In compliance with Rutgers Honor Code, you should include the following pledge in every assignment you submit: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).”
Print Name
Sign
Date
- If you have questions or concerns about this class, come and talk to me in my office hours. *Please do not send email inquiries related to your absence or class materials.* It is your responsibility to find out about the subjects covered in your absence and study them.

- If for any family or medical reason you find it absolutely necessary to miss an examination, you must contact me before the exam and have my consent to your absence. Failure to do so will result in a zero for the assignment. With the exception of extreme cases there will be no early or make-up exams! As with all other exams, you must contact me in advance should an extreme emergency arise.
- Rutgers abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008, and Sections 504 and 508 which mandate reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities and the accessibility of online information. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact me early in the semester so that I can provide or facilitate in providing accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Office of Disability Services, the designated office on campus to provide services and administer exams with accommodations for students with disabilities. The Office of Disability Services is located in the Robeson Student Center. I look forward to talking with you soon to learn how I may be helpful in supporting your academic success in this course. For more information on disability services at Rutgers, go to <http://disabilityservices-uw.rutgers.edu/>

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to amendment or change at the discretion of the instructor.

Introduction

READ: Lindsay, pp. 1-31, 173-203.

- Sept 8
- Introduction; discussion of the syllabus and course policies
 - Why do we study the history of Islamic civilization?
 - Geography, Languages, Sources, and Periodization

The Near Eastern Context of the Rise of Islam

READ: Egger, pp. 1-20; Lindsay, pp. 33-55; Brown, pp. 10-34; Primary sources (*The Book of Idols & Jahiliyya poetry* --see Blackboard).

- Sept 15
- The Byzantine and Sassanian Empires
 - The Arabian Peninsula
 - Discussion of primary sources

The Rise of Islam / The Age of Conquests / Early Islam

READ: Egger, pp. 20-44; Brown, pp. 3-9, 35-96; Lindsay, pp. 60-70; Primary sources (*Baladhuri on the Arab Conquests & The Constitution of Medina* --see Blackboard).

- Sept 22
- Muhammad
 - The Qur'an; *Hadith*
 - The Caliphate; *Ridda* and Conquests
 - Discussion of primary sources

*******REMEMBER TO UPLOAD YOUR FIRST PAPER ON BLACKBOARD (BY SEPTEMBER 28th 2014, SUNDAY 11:59 pm)*******

The Umayyad Caliphate & Sectarianism

READ: Egger, pp. 44-72; Brown, pp. 99-115.

- Sept 29
- The First Civil War (36-40 / 656-661)
 - The Second Civil War (64-76 / 680-692)
 - 'Abd al-Malik and the Later Umayyads

The Abbasid Caliphate

READ: Egger, pp. 85-94; Primary sources (*A Shu'ubi Poem & A Tale from the Thousand and One Nights & Book of Kings* --see Blackboard).

- Oct 6
- The 'Abbasid Revolution
 - The 'Abbasid Caliphate
 - Discussion of primary sources

The Center Cannot Hold Three Caliphates

READ: Egger, pp. 94-113; Lindsay, pp. 70-81.

- Oct 13
- The Crisis of the 'Abbasid Caliphate
 - The Fatimid Caliphate
 - The Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba

Synthesis and Creativity

READ: Egger, pp. 114-123, 127-138; Brown, pp. 116-174

- Oct 20
- Law and Legitimacy in Early Islam
 - Science and Medicine

Oct 27 - **TEST #1**
 - Shi'ite Identities

Synthesis and Creativity (cont.)

READ: Egger, pp. 72-84, 123-127; Primary sources (*Shaybani on War and Peace & Malik: the Medinan School & Shafi'i on the Sources of Law & Hallaj: Anecdotes, the Sufi Martyr* --see Blackboard).

Nov 3 - Sufism
 - Discussion of primary sources

Filling the Vacuum of Power, 950-1100

READ: Egger, pp. 142-171; Brown, pp. 177-183.

Nov 10 - The Buyid Sultanate
 - The Ghaznavids

Nov 17 - The Fatimid Empire
 - The Saljuqs and Migrations of the Oghuz

Barbarians at the Gates, 1100-1260

READ: Egger, pp. 172-198; Primary sources (*Two Faces of "Holy War": Christians and Muslims (1095-1270); Jahiz on the Turks, Singing-girls, and Landlords & Books* --see Blackboard).

Nov 24 - The Crusades
 - Discussion of primary sources

The Consolidation of Traditions & The Muslim Commonwealth

READ: Egger, pp. 199-256; Lindsay, pp. 87-137.

Dec 1 - Intellectual Life, Agriculture and Urban Life
Dec 8 - **TEST #2**
 - Concluding remarks and discussion

*******REMEMBER TO UPLOAD YOUR SECOND PAPER ON BLACKBOARD (BY DECEMBER 19th 2014, FRIDAY, 8:59 pm)*******