

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Society and Culture in the Medieval Middle East - 38992

Last update 21-10-2017

HU Credits: 4

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: islamic & middle east stud.

Academic year: 0

Semester: Yearly

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Reuven Amitai

Coordinator Email: reuven.amitai@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesday, 15:30-16:30

Teaching Staff:

Prof Reuven Amitai

Course/Module description:

The course will deal with different aspects of the social and cultural history of the Middle East, from the appearance of Islam to the beginning of the modern era, with a certain emphasis on the Mamluk period (1250-1517) in Egypt and Syria. Among the topics to be discussed: Arabization, islamization, the formation of Muslim society, learning and scholarship, established religion and popular religion, sufism as a social phenomenon, cities and urbanization, waqf, the village and agriculture, etc.

Course/Module aims:

The seminar seeks to imbue in the students an understanding and appreciation of the wide variety and richness of medieval Middle Eastern society and culture. The student will not only learn facts (important as these are), but will gain a sense of the development of various aspects of the social and cultural history of the region, looking at its various components (different religious communities, sundry social strata, urban and rural societies, etc.). Students will be exposed to modern survey literature, specialized studies and original sources (in translation). Thus, s/he will gain training as a young historian, learning to read critically and carefully both original sources and modern scholarly literature.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

The student will have a richer understanding of the sweep of pre-modern Middle Eastern history, and its salient themes. S/he will gain training as a young historian, learning to read critically and carefully both original sources and modern scholarly literature.

Attendance requirements(%):

85%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lectures and discussions based on weekly readings. Students will write weekly reports of their reading, and will deliver occasional oral reports. There will be a final term paper, but students who are interested can write a seminar paper instead.

Course/Module Content:

Semester 1

- 1. Organization and introduction*
- 2. Social (and Cultural) History in general*
- 3. Background to the social history of the Middle East in the premodern period*
- 4. The City and its organization - A*
- 5. The City and its organization - B*
- 6. The Social fabric in general*
- 7. The Dhimma (non-Muslims) overall*
- 8. The Jews*
- 9. Arabization*
- 10. Islamization - A*
- 11. Islamization - B*
- 12. The Learned class (the `ulama')*
- 13. Market, trade and traders*
- 14. The lower classes: sa`alik, etc.*

Semester 2

- 15. Women*
- 16. Children*
- 17. Slaves*
- 18. Education*
- 19. Waqf*
- 20. Sufis (mystics)*
- 21. Popular religion*

22. Demography

23. Health in the city

24. Rural society and agriculture

25. Land tenure and iqta`at

26. Into the modern period

27. Excursion

28. Summation

Required Reading:

Semester 1

1. Organization and introduction – 25.10.17

Keith Thomas, "New Ways Revisited: How History's Borders Have Expanded in the Past Forty Years," *Times Literary Supplement*. 13 October 2006, pp. 3-4.

2. Social (and cultural) history in general – 1.11.17

Claude Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, tr. J. Jones-Williams (London, 1986). [DR 481 C3313]

* Marc Bloch, *The Historians' Craft (Apologie pour l'histoire, ou metier d'historien)*, intro. by Joseph R. Strayer, tr. Peter Putnam. New York, 1953.

3. Background to the social history of the Middle East in the premodern period – 8.11.17

Andrew S. Ehrenkreutz, "The Silent Force behind the Rise of Medieval Islamic Civilization," in C.E. Bosworth et al. (eds.), *The Islamic World from Classical to Modern Times* (Princeton, 1986), 121-26. [DS 42.4 I84]

S.D. Goitein, "Religion in Everyday Life as Reflected in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza," in S.D. Goitein (ed.), *Religion in a Religious Age* (Cambridge, MA, 1974), 3-19. [BM 180 R44]

4. The City and its organization – A – 15.11.17

Gustav E. von Grunebaum, "The Structure of the Muslim Town," in G.E. von Grunebaum, *Islam: Essays in the Naure and Growth of a Cultural Tradition*, 2nd edn. (London, 1961), 141-58. [BP 55 G65 1961]

Janet Abu Lughod, "The Islamic City, Historic Myth, Islamic Essence and Contemporary Relevance," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 19 (1987), 155-176.

5. The City and its organization – B – 22. 11.17

Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (London, 1991), ch. 7. [DS 37.7 H69]
Nimrod Luz, *The Mamluk City in the Middle East: History, Culture, and the Urban Landscape* (Cambridge, 2014), 13-18.

* Samuel M. Stern, "The Constitution of the Islamic City," in A.H. Hourani and S.M. Stern (eds.), *The Islamic City: A Colloquium* (Oxford, 1970), 25-50. [HT 147.5 I84]

6. Geography and the fabric of life – 29.11.17

Xavier de Planhol, *The World of Islam* (Ithaca and London, 1957).

7. The Dhimma (non-Muslims) – Christians – 6.12.17

Sidney H. Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton, 2008), 6-22.

* Georges C. Anawati, "The Christian Communities in Egypt in the Middle Ages," in Michael Gervers and Ramzi Jibran Bikhazi (eds.), *Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands, Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Toronto, 1990), 237-251.

8. The Jews – 13.12.17

David J. Wasserstein, "So, What Did the Muslims Do for the Jews?," *The JC.COM*, 5.24, 2012. <https://www.thejc.com/comment/comment/so-what-did-the-muslims-do-for-the-jews-1.33597>

Mark R. Cohen, "Islam and the Jews: Myth, Counter-Myth, History," *Jerusalem Quarterly*, 37 (1986), 125-137.

9. Arabization – 20.12.17

Milka Levy-Rubin, "Arabization versus Islamization in the Palestinian Melkite Community during the Early Muslim Period," in A. Kofsky and G. Stroumsa (eds.), *Sharing the Sacred: Religious Contacts and Conflicts in the Holy Land, First-Fifteenth Centuries C.E.* (Jerusalem, 1998), 149-162.

* Robert Hoyland, "Introduction: Muslims and Others," in Robert Hoyland (ed.), *Muslims and Others in Early Islamic Society* (Aldershot, 2004), xiii-xxx. [BP 171 M84 2002]

10. Islamization – A – 27.12.17

Claude Cahen, "Socio-Economic History and Islamic Studies: Problems of Bias in the Adaption of the Indigenous Population to Islam," in Robert Hoyland (ed.), *Muslims and Others in Early Islamic Society* (Aldershot, 2004), 259-276. [BP 171 M84 2002]

Ira M. Lapidus, "The Conversion of Egypt to Islam," *Israel Oriental Studies*, "2 (1972), 248-262.

Yohanan Friedmann, "A Note on the Conversion of Egypt to Islam," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 3 (1981-82), 238-40.

11. Islamization – B – 3.1.18

Milka Rubin, "Arabization versus Islamization in the Palestinian Melkite Community

during the Early Muslim Period," in A. Kofsky and G. Stroumsa, *Sharing the Sacred: Religious Contacts and Conflicts in the Holy Land, First-Fifteenth Centuries C.E.* (Jerusalem, 1998), 149-162. [DS 123 S53 K6]

Nimrod Luz, "Aspects of Islamization of Space and Society in Mamluk Jerusalem and its Hinterland," *Mamluk Studies Review*, 6 (2002), 133-154.

* Michael Brett, "The Islamisation of Egypt and North Africa," *The First Annual Levtzion Lecture* (Jerusalem, 2005). [DT 193.5 B45 B724 2006]

* Tamer el-Leithy, "Sufis, Copts and the Politics of Piety: Moral Regulation in Fourteenth-Century Upper Egypt" in Richard J.A. McGregor and Adam Sabra (eds.), *Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l'époque mamelouke*, "Cahiers des Annales islamologiques," 27 (Cairo, 2006), 75-119.

12. The Learned class (the 'ulamā') – 10.1.18

Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Late Middle Age*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, 1984), 107-115. [HT 147.5 L36]

Daphna Ephrat, *A Learned Society in a Period of Transition* (New York, 2000), 125-136. [BP 185.5 U4 E62 2000]

* Joan E. Gilbert, "Institutionalization of Muslim Scholarship and Professionalization of the 'Ulama' in Medieval Damascus," *Studia Islamica*, 52 (1980), 105-34.

13. Market, trade and traders – 17.1.18

John L. Meloy, "Overland Trade in the Western Islamic World (fifth-ninth/eleventh-fifteenth centuries)," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 2: *The Western Islamic World Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 2010), 648-664.

Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Late Middle Age*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, 1984), 95-105, 116-130. [HT 147.5 L36]

14. The lower classes: ṣa`ālīk, ḥarāfīs, zu`ar etc. – 24.1.18

Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Late Middle Age*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, 1984), 143-184. [HT 147.5 L36]

* B. Shoshan, "The Politics and 'Moral Economy' of the Cairene Crowd," in B. Shoshan, *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo* (Cambridge, 1993), 52-66. [DT 146 S54]

Semester 2

15. Women – 21.3.18

* Reuben Levy, "The Status of Women in Islam," in R. Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam* (Cambridge, 1955), 91-134.

Nikke R. Kedde, "Deciphering Middle Eastern Women's History," in N.R. Kedde and Beth Baron (eds.), *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender* (New Haven and London, 1991), 1-22. [HQ 1726.5 W67]

Jonathan P. Berkey, "Women in Medieval Islamic Society," in L.E. Mitchell (ed.), *Women in Medieval Western European Culture* (New York, 1999), 95-111.

16. Children – 11.4.18

Reuben Levy, "The Status of Children in Islam," in R. Levy, *The Social Structure of*

Islam (Cambridge, 1955), 135-149.

Avner Giladi, "Gender Differences in Child Rearing and Education; Some Preliminary Observations with Reference to Medieval Muslim Thought," *Qantara*, 16 (1995), 291-307.

17. Slaves and slavery – 18.4.18

Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Enquiry* (New York and Oxford, 1990), 3-20, 37-42.

18. Education – 25.4.18

Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, 1992), chapter 1. [BP 64 E32 C32]

Ulrich Haarmann, "Mamluk Endowment Deeds as a Source for the History of Education in the Late Medieval Egypt," *Al-Abhath*, 28 (1980), 31-47.

19. Waqf (endowment land) – 2.5.18

Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Late Middle Age*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, 1984), 73-78. [HT 147.5 L36]

Nimrod Luz, "Awqāf and Urban Infrastructures," in N. Luz, *The Mamluk City in the Middle East: History, Culture, and the Urban Landscape* (Cambridge, 2014), 107-147.

20. Ṣūfīs (mystics) and popular religion – 7.5.18

Boaz Shoshan, "Sufism and the People," in B. Shoshan, *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo* (Cambridge 1993), 9-22.

Daniella Talmon-Heller, "The Shaykh and the Community: Popular Hanbalite Islam in 12th-13th Century Jabal Nablus and Jabal Qaysun," *Studia Islamica*, 79 (1994), 103-120.

* Daphna Ephrat, "From Wayfaring Elites to Local Associations: Sufis in Medieval Palestine," *Al-Qantara*, 27/1 (2006), 77-104.

21. Turks in the Middle East – 16.5.18

David Ayalon, "Preliminary Remarks on the Mamlūk Military Institution in Islam," in V.J. Parry and Malcolm E. Yapp (eds.), *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (London, 1975), 44-58. Reprinted in D. Ayalon, *The Mamlūk Military Society* (London, 1979).

Bregel, Yuri. "The Importance of Central Asia in the History of the Muslim East." *Asia Society Occasional Papers* no. 20 (New York, 1980).

<http://www.afghandata.org:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/azu/3068/azu_acku_pamphlet_ds329_4_b74_1980_w.pdf?sequence&eq;1&isAllowed&eq;y>

22. Demography – 23.5.18

J.C. Russel, "The Population of Medieval Egypt," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, 5 (1966), 69-82.

D. Ayalon, "Regarding Population Estimates in the Countries of Medieval Islam," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 28 (1985), 1-19 [reprinted

in D. Ayalon, *Outsiders in the Land of Islam: Mamluks, Mongols and Eunuchs* (London, 1988), article V]. [DS 38.3 A91]

C. Issawi, "The Area and Population of the Arab Empire: A Essay in Speculation," in M.A. Cook (ed.), *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East, from the Rise of Islam to the Present Day* (Oxford, 1970), 375-397.

23. Health in the city – 30.5.18

G.T. Scanlon, "Housing and Sanitation: Some Aspects of Medieval Public Service," in A.H. Hourani and S.M. Stern, *The Islamic City: A Colloquium* (Oxford, 1970), 179-194.

Michael Dols, "The General Mortality of the Black Death in the Mamluk Empire," in M.A. Cook (ed.), *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East, from the Rise of Islam to the Present Day* (Oxford, 1970), 397-428. [HC 415.15 C771]

24. Rural society and agriculture – 6.6.18

Avraham L. Udovitch, "Technology, Land Tenure, and Rural Society: Aspects of Continuity in the Agricultural History of the Pre-Modern Middle East," in A.L. Udovitch (ed.), *The Islamic Middle East, 700-1900: Studies in Economic and Social History* (Princeton, 1981), 10-26. [HC 415.15 I83]

Andrew W. Watson, "A Medieval Green Revolution: New Crops and Farming Techniques in the Early Islamic Middle World," in Udovitch, *The Islamic Middle East, 700-1900*, 29-58.

* W.F. Tucker, "Natural Disasters and the Peasantry in Mamluk Egypt," *Journal of the Social and Economic History of the Orient*, 24 (1981), 215-224.

* R.S. Cooper, "Agriculture in Egypt, 640-1800," in *Wirtschaftsgeschichte des vorderen Orients in islamischer Zeit* ("Handbuch der Orientalistik," 1 Abteilung, 6 Bd, 6 Abschnitt) (Leiden, 1977), 188-204.

25. Land tenure and iqtā`āt (and back to waqf) – 13.6.18

Claude Cahen, "Iktā'", *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn., 3:1088-91.

R. Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols: The Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193-1260* (Albany, 1977), 371-375. [DS 97.3 H85]

* Hassanein Rabie, "The Size and Value of the iqtā` in Egypt, 564-741

A.H./119-1341 A.D.," in M.A. Cook (ed.), *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East, from the Rise of Islam to the Present Day* (Oxford, 1970), 129-138.

* Igarashi Daisuke, "Land Tenure and Mamluk Waqfs." *Ulrich Haarmann Memorial Lecture 7* (Berlin, 2014).

26. Excursion – 20.6.18

TBA

27. Into the modern period and summation – 27.6.18

E. Ashtor, "The Economic Decline of the Middle East during the Later Middle Ages: An Outline," *Asian and African Studies*, 15 (1981), 253-286.

Charles Issawi, "Technology, Energy, and Civilization: Some Historical Observations," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 23 (1991), 282-289.

* Jean-Claude Garcin, "The Mamluk Military System and the Blocking of the Medieval Moslem Society," in J. Baechler, J.A. Hall and M. Mann (eds.), *Europe and the Rise of Capitalism* (London, 1988), 113-130. [HC 240.9 C3 E97]

* Michael Cook, "Islam: A Comment," in Baechler et al., 131-135.

Additional Reading Material:

TBA in near future.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 10 %

Participation in Tutorials 20 %

Project work 50 %

Assignments 20 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information:

An excursion is planned for the penultimate week of the course, in Jerusalem or its environs.

Students are welcome to write a seminar paper in the framework of this course. If interested, please speak with the teacher early on.

The course is open to 3rd year students in the Dept. of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies. Interested students should speak to the teacher to obtain permission.