HISTORY OF THE ISLAMIC MIDDLE EAST (600-1800)

Hasan Kayali, Fall 2009
534-1071
hkayali@ucsd.edu
H&SS 6040
Office hrs.: Tu 11-1

The course is an introductory survey of the politics, society, and culture of the pre-modern Middle East from the birth of Islam in Arabia to the beginnings of European domination of the region, seventh through the eighteenth centuries. Themes such as state formation, sectarianism, political legitimacy, imperial consolidation, and contacts with the Christian world will be examined on the example of early Arab empires and the Ottoman and Safavid states.

Regular sections will be held for the class by Teaching Assistant Aytek Alpan in two slots on Thursdays: 11-11:50 (HSS # 4025) and 2-2:50 (HSS # 3027). Attendance in a weekly section is strongly recommended, though not required. Aytek Alpan will hold office hours on Thursdays, 4-6 (HSS # 6047).

(Selections on electronic reserves are marked with ***)

BEGINNINGS OF ISLAM AND THE ISLAMIC POLITY

Th Sep 24, Introduction: Islam in historical perspective

1. Tu Sep 29, The creation of the first Islamic state
   Th Oct 1, The prophet as messenger, leader, and model

Readings:
- J. J. Saunders, A History of Medieval Islam, 1-37
- Michael Sells, Approaching the Qur’an, 42-59, 136-37 *
- Patricia Crone, Medieval Islamic Political Thought, 3-16 *

2. Tu Oct 6, Film: Hajj: The Pilgrimage
   Th Oct 8, The problem of political legitimacy and schisms

Readings:
- Saunders, 39-75
- Crone, 17-47 *
- Husayn Tabataba’i, Shi’ite Islam, 39-67 *
THE AGE OF ARAB DYNASTIC EMPIRE

3. **Tu Oct 13**, Formation of an empire and a civilization,
**Th Oct 15**, Societal tensions in the domain of the caliphate

Readings:
- Saunders, 77-105
- Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, 79-101 *

4. **Tu Oct 20**, Rival caliphates,
**Th Oct 22**, The challenges from the West and the East: The crusades and the Mongols

Readings:
- Saunders, 106-98

5. **Tu Oct 27**, Discussion
**Th Oct 29**, MID-TERM EXAMINATION

Readings:
- Excerpt from Ibn Khaldun’s *Muqaddimah* (Introduction), ed. Franz Rosenthal, vii-xiv, 91-126 *

FROM DISUNITY TO RE-CONSOLIDATION

6. **Tu Nov 3**, Fragmentation,
**Th Nov 5**, Film: Islam – Empire of Faith: The Ottomans

Readings:
- Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, *Islam*, 159-80 *
- Ross Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta*, 1-12; 41-62 *
- H.A.R. Gibb, ed., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta*, vol. 1, 70-89 *
# RE-CONSOLIDATION OF MUSLIM EMPIRES

## 7. Tu Nov 10
The rise and foundations of the Ottoman state

## 8. Th Nov 12
Ottoman institutions and expansion

### Readings:

- Norman Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition*, 3-61
- Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror* in McNeill and Waldman, 312-36

## 9. Tu Nov 17
Film: “The Age of Sulayman”

## 10. Th Nov 19
The gunpowder empires (16th century): Safavid Iran and Mughal India

### Readings:

- Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 226-47
- “Letters from Selim and Isma’il,” in McNeill and Waldman, 337-44

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# THE MUSLIM WORLD AND THE RISE OF MODERN EUROPE

## 9. Tu Nov 24
Internal and external challenges

## 10. Th Nov 26
*Thanksgiving*

### Readings:

- Itzkowitz, 63-109
- Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Complete Letters*, v-vii; 353-373
- Kafadar, “Janissaries and Other Riffraff of Istanbul: Rebels Without a Cause?” in B. Tezcan and K. Barbir, eds., *Identity and Identity Formation in the Ottoman World*, 113-34

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# Internal and external challenges

## 10. Tu Dec 1
Discussion

## 11. Th Dec 3
Towards the modern Middle East

### Reading:

- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, 47-59, 69-87
**READING LIST**

Norman Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition*
J. J. Saunders, *A History of Medieval Islam*  
(Both available at the University Bookstore and on hard-copy Reserves at SSH Library)

All other readings can be accessed at the UCSD Libraries Electronic Reserves (http://reserves.ucsd.edu/eres). The films are available at SSH Video and Film Reserves.

**REQUIREMENTS**

Mid-term exam on **October 29** (35%)
Final exam (comprehensive) on December **10** (8:00 a.m.) (65%)  
Both exams are mandatory and in-class. Bring **blue book** and pen/pencil.