Location: NYU London

Class code: MEIS-UA.9694.1.001.SP12/HIST-UA.9520.1.001.SP12

Instructor Details: Dr Philipp Wirtz

Office hours: By appointment

Class Details: Islam and the West

Location to be confirmed.

Prerequisites: An above-average level of curiosity and the willingness to change pre-conceived notions about the world around us... Some familiarity with basic developments in world history and the basic points of the Islamic faith help, but are not mandatory. For reading suggestions to help you along, see the “required texts” section below.

Class Description: This course examines the relationship that developed between the Islamic world and “the West” (broadly defined) and their historical impact on each other. The class surveys and analyses the historical relationship between these two regions from the rise of Islam through the early modern period and the advent of European colonialism to modern-day resurgence of traditional aspects of Islam. The course will focus mainly on the eastern Mediterranean as sphere of diplomatic, trade and cultural relations. Particular emphasis will be on periods that saw intensified interaction between the two civilizations. Examples of these are sessions on the Crusades in Syria, the westernisation-modernisation dilemma within the Ottoman reformist movement, the diplomatic battle fought on education between the Ottoman Sultan and the missionary schools, and the exchanges between European and Middle Eastern intellectuals towards the end of the 19th century.

The course is taught via a mixture of lectures and seminar discussions and includes at least one field trip.

Desired Outcomes: 1) Enable students to read, think and speak critically about “Islam and the West”; 2) Provide an overview of the shared histories between Europe, North America and the Islamic world; 3) Familiarise students with broad trends and developments in the history of Islam; 4) Critically assess key historical themes and narratives in the relationship between “Islam and the West” (such as the Crusades or fundamentalism); 5) Equip students to participate critically and proactively in current debates, inside and outside academia.

Assessment Components:

Mid-term test, 60 minutes, week 6, 20%
Reaction paper I (primary source analysis), 1500 words, week 8, 25%
Reaction paper II (media analysis report), week 12, 25%
End of term test, 90 minutes, week 15, 20%
Class participation, 10%.

Failure to submit or fulfil any required course component results in failure of the class.

For details of assignments and how to approach them, please see the “How-to” document on NYU
Mid-term Test
The purpose of the test is to see if you have mastered basic material of the first half of the course, and made sense of it. You have to answer two identification questions on an event, person or concept from a list of several. You will also have to critically analyse two excerpts from primary source texts that have previously been analysed in class.

You are expected:

a) to give the date of the event, or death date of the person,

b) to explain the significance of the concept, person, or event, for the topic of the course,

c) to include as much more information as you have time to write.

d) to perform a critical analysis on primary source excerpts.

Reaction paper
For criteria for the reaction papers, please refer to the “How to” document on NYU Classes.

End of semester examination
The purpose of the test is to see if you have mastered basic material of the second half of the course, and made sense of it. You have to answer two identification questions on an event, person or concept from a list of several. You also have to analyse two short excerpts from primary source texts that have been previously discussed in class.

You are expected:

a) to give the date of the event, or death date of the person,

b) to explain the significance of the concept, person, or event, for the topic of the course,

c) to include as much more information as you have time to write.

d) to perform a critical analysis on the primary source excerpts.

Class participation
For criteria for class participation, please refer to the “How to” document on NYU Classes.

Required Text(s)
There is no required textbook for this course, all readings will be on NYU Classes. I would, however, strongly suggest you get a copy of the following excellent introduction: Brown, Daniel: A New Introduction to Islam, 2nd ed., Oxford 2009. ISBN: 9781405158077. Students in the past have found this book very helpful, especially those without a previous background in Islamic studies/history.

Supplemental Text(s) (not required to
Not required, but highly recommended as independent companion reading:


Mishra, Pankaj: From the Ruins of Empire: The Revolt against the West and the Remaking of Asia. London 2013. A fascinating study of Asian responses to western domination during the 19th and 20th century.

Silverstein, Adam: *Islamic History: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford 2010. Exactly what the title implies. Fits into every jeans pocket...

For (even) wider background orientation:


Remember: The more you read (on- or off-syllabus), the more solid your understanding, the safer you feel in the exam, etc. ...

For most of the sessions you have to read one or several additional texts that are available as PDFs via NYU Classes. I expect you to have these texts (especially the primary sources) in class, either as printouts or on-screen, as they are the basis for class discussions. You might want to purchase those books from the Further Reading list from which we read substantial passages.

For students it is often difficult to decide what material from the internet is appropriate for essay writing. As a general rule: avoid any material that is freely available (such as Wikipedia) and use only material that you access via academic portals (such as NYU Home). You have to familiarize yourself with two crucial online resources: Encyclopaedia of Islam and Index Islamicus (both via NYU and SOAS library) and the Cambridge History of Turkey. For finding resources on the topic that you chose for your essay the Oxford Bibliographies (Islamic Studies) is very useful and has for instance entries on, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, Women in Islam, People of the Book, Islam in Europe/North America, jihad, Orientalism (access via SOAS or NYU library). Please let me know if you find yourself struggling in any way to search for material!!!!

None, apart from your preferred writing material to take notes in class.
Class sessions

**Session 1**
Introduction
Course overview, requirements of the course, assessment, session format, grading, expectations

**Session 2**
Islam and the What? Terminology and paradigms of interaction
Readings:

In addition, please read at least two of the following texts:


Further reading:

**Session 3**
Who are they? The Rise of Islam (The Byzantine and Sasanian Empires, Muhammad, the Arab Conquests)

Primary source: Selected texts on the early Muslims by Christian observers.

Recommended additional reading:

**Session 4**
The formation of a Muslim society: History, Beliefs, Practices, Islamic Law

Primary source: Muslims vs. Vikings? From the travelogue of Ibn Fadlan.

Recommended additional reading:

**Session 5**
Decolonising the Crusades: Western Background and Muslim Reaction
Readings:
1) Brown, *Introduction*, pp. 219-233

Primary sources:
1) Accounts of Urban II’s sermon at Clermont, 1095.
2) Usama ibn Munqith, excerpts from *The Book of Contemplation (Kitab al-I’tibar)*.

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**Session 6**

**Imperial Rivalries: Muslims and Europeans in the “Age of Exploration”**

Readings:

Primary sources:
Sidi ‘Ali Reis: The Mirror of Countries, transl. C. Horne. (This is a long source of about 50 pages, instructions on how to skim-read it effectively will follow!)

**Written mid-term test (60 minutes)**

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**Session 7**

**From Golden Age to Decline? Shifting patterns in the 17th and 18th centuries**

Readings:
1) Almond, *Two faiths*, pp. 139-180.
2) İnalcık, H. *Turkey and Europe in History*. “The Ottoman and the Protestant World.” (174-178)

Primary sources:
2) Selections from the “Turkish Embassy Letters” by Mary Wortley Montague.

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**Session 8**

**The Age of Reform: westernisation vs. modernisation**

Readings:
Zürcher, E.J. *Turkey: a Modern History*, Part 1, sections 2-5 (21-70)

Primary sources:
2) “An Imam in Paris”: Excerpt from the travelogue of Rifa’a at-Tahtawi.
Session 9

The battle for Muslim minds: Between Colonialism and Pan-Islamism

**Readings:** Hanioğlu, Ş. *A brief history of the late Ottoman Empire*. Section 6 (150-203).

Additional readings (highly recommended):
- Taglia, S. “The Young Turks, intellectualism and their importance for Ottoman and Turkish History.” *Turkish Area Study Group Review* 20 (Autumn 2012).
- Zürcher, E.J. *Turkey: a Modern History*, Part 1, sections 6-7 (71-92)

**Primary sources:**
2) Hanioğlu, Ş. “Garbcilar: their attitudes towards religion and their impact on the official ideology of the Turkish Republic,” *Studia Islamica* 86 (1997), 133-158.

Session 10

Displaying Islam: Visit to the British Museum Islamic Collection

After a short introductory session in our usual classroom, we will make our way to the British Museum (Montague Place entrance, not main entrance!) to visit room 34 ‘The Islamic World’. You have to bring a note pad and a pen.

For preparing the visit take the virtual tour: Arabic Script: Mightier than the Sword under [http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/online_tours/museum_and_exhibition/arabic_script/arabic_script.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/online_tours/museum_and_exhibition/arabic_script/arabic_script.aspx)

and study the sections “related objects” under [http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/galleries/middle_east/room_34_the_islamic_world.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/galleries/middle_east/room_34_the_islamic_world.aspx)

Session 11

The West triumphant? European domination and modernity

**Readings:**

**Primary sources:**
1) “Napoleon’s proclamation to the Egyptians,” in Hurewitz, J.C. *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: a documentary record* (63-64).
2) The British Orientalist E. W. Lane on the “modern Egyptians”

Session 12

New Challenges, New Patterns of Interaction: Revivalism and Fundamentalism

**Readings:**
2) Kepel, G.: The origins and development of the jihadist movement: from anti-communism to terrorism,


**Additional primary source:** Documentary “The State” on Channel 4, about British Muslims who have joined ISIS/ Daesh in Syria: [http://www.channel4.com/programmes/the-state](http://www.channel4.com/programmes/the-state)

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**Session 13**

Islam in the West: The Muslim experience in Europe and the US


**Primary sources:** TBC

Round-table discussion with SOAS student: “What is it like to be a British Muslim in 2018?”

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**Session 14**

Islam and the West reconsidered: Final discussion and exam revision

- reflection on the key themes of the course
- clarification of questions
- discussion of exam preparation

If you have time and nerves left, please read: Foley, S.: Muslims and Social Change in the Atlantic Basin, in: *Journal of World History* 20/3 (2009), pp. 377-98.

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**Session 15**

End of term exam

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**Classroom Etiquette**

Toilet breaks should be taken before or after class or during class breaks.

Food & drink, including gum, are not to be consumed in class.

Mobile phones should not be used in class.

Laptops are only to be used with the express permission of the teacher.

Please kindly dispose of rubbish in the bins provided.

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**Required Co-curricular Activities**

Field trip to the British Museum.
Estimated Travel Costs
None, the British Museum is within walking distance from NYUL.

Suggested Co-curricular Activities
Announcements of suitable co-curricular activities will be made ad-hoc. For lectures, talks, concerts and exhibitions at the School of Oriental and African Studies (many of which are relevant for our course), please regularly visit https://www.soas.ac.uk/about/events/

If you have a further interest in the material culture of the Islamic world, visit the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) in Kensington (south of Hyde Park).

View, on line, the programme “Islam: Empire of Faith.” Available on YouTube, produced by PBS – link will be provided.

From the podcast of BBC Radio 4 In our time, listen to the following: 1) The Sasanian Empire; 2) The Abbasid Caliphs; 3) Constantinople, siege and fall; and 4) The Siege of Vienna. http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qykl

Your Instructor
I studied the history, languages and cultures of Europe and the Middle East in Frankfurt am Main, Bamberg and London. I am currently Lecturer in the History of the Modern Middle East in the Department of History the School of Oriental and African Studies (commonly known as SOAS – pronounced as a word, not an acronym...). My research and teaching interests are mainly within the early modern and modern history of the Middle East, especially the Ottoman Empire.

NYU GLOBAL ACADEMIC POLICIES

Policies and procedures for Global Academic Centres, including policies on academic integrity and the Study Away Standard, can be found here: https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/student-services.html

Absences: Key information on NYU London’s absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found here: http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html

NYU London work submission policies can be found here: http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html

Classroom conduct: Academic communities exist to facilitate the process of acquiring and exchanging knowledge and understanding, to enhance the personal and intellectual development of its members, and to advance the interests of society. Essential to this mission is that all members of the University Community are safe and free to engage in a civil process of teaching and learning through their experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Accordingly, no student should engage in any form of behaviour that interferes with the academic or educational process, compromises the personal safety or well-being of another, or disrupts the administration of University programs or services.

Please refer to the NYU London Disruptive Student Behaviour Policy at https://goo.gl/Nvt5Vu for examples of disruptive behaviour and guidelines for response and enforcement.