

# NYU Paris

## FREN-UA9907

### France and Islam

#### Instructor Information

- Renée Champion
- Office Hours: Thursday  
12h30-13h30

#### Course Information

- FREN-UA9907
- France and Islam
- Tuesday and Thursday 11h-12h30  
Room TBA

#### Course Description

Islam is the second largest religion in France (after Roman Catholicism) and France has the highest Muslim population in Europe. An Islamic revival among descendants of North African immigrants, along with the rise in religious fundamentalism, recent terrorist attacks in France, and the influx of refugees, has led to continued heated debate and controversy about the place of Muslim citizens within the secular Republic. France's interwoven history with Islam dates back, however, to the first Umayyad conquests of the Iberian peninsula in the 8<sup>th</sup> century and then to the period of what is known as "The Crusades". This multi-disciplinary survey course aims to trace the complexity and heterogeneity of Western (French) perceptions and representations of Islam and Muslims within a broad historical perspective, beginning with these early encounters and up until the present day. A wide corpus of sources is utilized: historic documents, literary texts, the press, film, visual arts, and critical readings (notably in history, sociology and cultural studies). The material is divided into two major sections following a chronological and thematic outline. The first section examines French interactions with the Islamic world from the Middle Ages to the colonial period, with a focus on the conquest and colonization of Algeria. The second section addresses contemporary issues in France, including immigration and integration, paradoxes of *"laïcité"*, "islamophobia", and multiple Muslim identities. The French model is also studied within the European context, and compared with two case studies from Western Europe. The format of the course includes lectures, discussion, oral presentations by students and site visits.

# Course Overview and Goals

## Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of French interactions with the Islamic world in a historic perspective
- Contextualize the various concerns and anxieties regarding Islam that affect Western societies today
- Assess some of the current policies that the French government has adopted and consider the way they have affected the French Muslim community
- Critically evaluate information sources and alternative viewpoints on a range of contemporary issues concerning Islam in the post-9/11 and “Je suis Charlie” era

## Course Requirements

### Class Participation

Students should be ready to discuss the readings in class. Leading discussions will be on a rotating basis. This involves briefly summarizing the readings, presenting the author’s main arguments and a critical evaluation. Two discussion questions should be prepared ahead of time.

### Quizzes and Response papers

Announced and unannounced quizzes will be short answer/fill in the blank.

Response papers for films should include some background information on the director. Choose a scene or theme and discuss how it relates to class discussions and readings. Include a critical evaluation. (2 pages) Response papers will not be graded but you will be penalized if you do not submit them.

### Review Essay

Students are expected to visit the Immigration Museum on their own and submit a 5-6 page review essay. This should include: historical background information on the building contrasted with its current use; a description of two or three displays which you think illustrate the overarching narrative of the museum; and a critical analysis of its function. (Further details will be provided in class.)

### Research project paper and oral presentation

Students are to conduct research on a relevant topic in consultation with the instructor. This work is to be written up in a 10 page paper (not including the bibliography). Some suggested topics are listed in the syllabus. A sign-up sheet for meetings to discuss outlines and references will be distributed during week 2. Students will present their research in class during 15 minute

presentations scheduled throughout the semester. Research papers are due 14 May. No late papers will be accepted.

Please note that all written work must be submitted in printed form at the beginning of class on the due date. An electronic version of the final research paper must also be submitted by 6 pm 14 May.

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

## Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

<b>Assignments/Activities</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>
Class participation	20%
Quizzes	20%
Review Essay of the Immigration Museum	20%
Oral Presentation	15%
Research paper	25%

## Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>A</b>	16-20	Outstanding
<b>A-</b>	15	Excellent
<b>B+</b>	14	Very Good
<b>B</b>	13	Good
<b>B-</b>	12	Satisfactory
<b>C+</b>	11	Above Average
<b>C</b>	10	Average

<b>C-</b>	9	Below Average
<b>D+</b>	8	Unsatisfactory
<b>D</b>	7	Low Pass
<b>D-</b>	6	Low Pass
<b>F</b>	5	Fail

## Course Schedule

### Topics and Assignments

<b>Week/ Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
Week 1, 5 February	Introduction, review syllabus		
7 February	Framing the Discussion : “Why the Debates about a French Islam?”	J. Cesari, “Muslims as the Internal and External Enemy, pp. 1-20; H. El Karoui, <i>A French Islam is possible</i> , summary, 3 p. and ch. 1 “A portrait of the Muslims living in France”, pp. 9-29	
Week 2, 12 Feb.	Historical Encounters:The Legacy of the Battle of Poitiers and the Battle of Roncevaux Pass	M. Rodinson, <i>Europe and the Mystique of Islam</i> , ch. 1, pp. 3-23; W. Watson, <i>Tricolor and Crescent</i> , ch 1, pp. 1-9; Excerpt from “The Song of Roland”	
14 Feb.	“The Crusades” and Evolving Medieval Representations of Islam: pagan enemy, heretic, worthy adversary	M. Rodinson, pp. 23-31; J. Tolan, <i>Europe and the Islamic World</i> , ch. 2 “Conquest and Its Justifications”, pp. 33-51; J. Tolan, “Muslims as Pagan Idolaters”, pp. 97-102; M. Sullivan, “Why Muslims See the Crusades So Differently”, 4 p.; Medieval Sourcebook Documents	Sign-up for meeting to present outline and bibliography; Choose film from List 1. 2 p. response paper due 26 February
Week 3, 19	The Translation Movement in Andalusia (12 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup> c.):	J. Tolan, ch. 5 “On the Shoulders of Giants”, pp. 85-102	

February	the Transmission and Exchange of Knowledge		
21 February	The Impact of Trade and Shifting Alliances: France and the Ottoman Empire <b>Presentation 1: The Arabian Nights</b>	D. Abulafia, "The Role of Trade in Muslim-Christian Contact during the Middle Ages", pp. 1-24; M. Rodinson, pp. 31-40; E. S. Gürkan, "France" and B. Masters "Capitulations", <i>Encyc. of the Ottoman Empire</i> , pp. 221-225 and pp. 118-119	
Week 4, 26 February	Representations of Islam in 19 <sup>th</sup> c. painting and literature: orientalism and its reappropriations	J. Mackenzie, c. 3 "Orientalism in Art", pp. 42-51 and pp. 58-70; M. Volait, "Middle Eastern Collections of Orientalist Painting", pp. 251-271	<b>Film Response 1 due</b>
28 February	Napoleon's Expedition to Egypt and the "mission civilisatrice" <b>Quiz</b>	R. Tignor, ch. 9 "Napoleon Bonaparte, Muhammad Ali", pp. 196-227; N. Burleigh, "Epilogue", pp. 241-248	
Week 5, 5 March	France and her North African Empire: Focus on the Conquest and Colonization of Algeria	Jules Ferry Speech on French Colonial Expansion; J. Reudy, "Algeria: overview" and "Algerian War of Independence", pp. 121-128 and pp. 136-139; A. Horne, ch. 1 "A Town of No Great Interest", pp. 23-43	Choose film from List 2. 2 page response paper due 14 March; Out of class visit on your own: Visit the History of Immigration Museum, 5-6 page paper due 21 March, with your ticket stub !
7 March	Film in class: Gillo Pontecorvo's <i>The Battle of Algiers</i> , 1966	B. Stora, <i>Algeria</i> , ch. 3 "The Cruel War" (1957), pp. 49-56	Find a Review of the film to share in class
Week 6, 12 March	The Algerian War of Independence and Metropolitan France <b>*Presentation 2: 17 October 1961</b>	B. Stora, ch. 5,6,7,8, pp. 69-106; A. Chrisafis, "France admits systematic torture", 2 p.	Out of class visit on your own: St Michel Bridge: find the memorial plaque commemorating the 17 October massacre
14 March	North African Immigration to France <b>*Pres. 3: French Muslim Soldiers WWI and WW2</b>	G. Noiriel, "Immigration: Amnesia and Memory", <i>FHS</i> , pp. 367-380	<b>Film Response 2 due</b>

Week 7, 19 March	“Laïcité” and Islam, from the Law of 1905 to the Laws of 2004 (“The Headscarf Ban”), 2010 (“The Burqa Ban”) and Burkinigate (2016)	J. Baubérot, 5 p.; J. Bowen, <i>Why the French Don't Like Headscarves</i> , ch. 1 & 2, pp. 1-33; <i>The Charter for Laïcité</i> ; J. Bowen, “How the French State Justifies Controlling Muslim Bodies”, pp. 325-348; P. Bruckner, “Unveiled”, pp. 61-65	
21 March	<b>*Presentation 4: The 1983 March for Equality and Against Racism</b> Headscarf Debate in Class (Law of 2004)	M. Cohen, “The March for Equality and Against Racism”, 5 p.	<b>Review Essay on Immigration Museum Due</b>
Week 8, 26 and 28 March	Spring Break !		
Week 9, 2 April	French Muslims and the Republican Ideal of Equality	J. Fredette, <i>Constructing Muslims in France</i> , ch. 1, “Introduction”, pp. 1-22 & ch. 4, “Education”, pp. 78-102	
4 April	The Banlieues: “The Lost Territories of the Republic”	J. Fredette, ch. 5 “Employment” and ch. 6 “Housing”, pp. 103-150	
Week 10, 9 April	<b>Quiz</b> Regulating Islam in France, from the Great Mosque of Paris (1926) to the French Council for the Muslim Religion (CFCM, 2003), and the <i>Fondation de l’Islam de France</i> (2016)	J. Bowen, pp. 34-62; F. Khemilat, “What makes ‘Muslim representatives’ representative?”, pp. 10-13	
11 April	<b>Mandatory Visit during class to the Paris Mosque</b> , Meeting point: Main entrance: 2 bis Place du Puits de l’Ermite, 75005 Paris	N. Davidson, <i>Only Muslim</i> , pp. 62-85	
Week 11, 16 April	French anxieties regarding Islam and Islamophobia <b>*Presentation 5: Islamic Feminism</b>	V. Geisser, pp. 39-46; J. Cesari, “Islamophobia in the West”, pp. 21-41	

18 April	<i>Charlie Hebdo</i> and Freedom of Expression in France <b>Presentation 6: <i>Charlie Hebdo's</i> caricatures of religion</b>	S. Parmar, Freedom of Expression Narratives after the <i>Charlie Hebdo</i> Attacks", pp. 267-296	
Week 12, 23 April	Muslim Identities <b>Presentation 7: Subversive Discourse in French Muslim Hip-Hop</b>	E. Geoffroy, "The Seminal Role of Sufism in Europe's Islam"; J. Jouili, "Rapping the Republic", pp. 58-80; J. Cheshes, "Maghreb Food in Paris", 3 p.	
25 April	<b>*Presentation 8: Sub-Saharan Muslims in France</b> <b>Presentation 9: The Queer Muslim Community in France</b>	M. Chabrol, "Château Rouge: a "Little Africa" in Paris?", pp. 1-5; M. Doezema, "LMZ", 2 p.	
Week 13, 30 April	Radicalization in the French Context: Politically Activist and Religiously Idealist Factions	H. El Karoui, <i>The Islamist Factory</i> , pp. 1-4 and pp. 64-72; M. Adraoui, "Salafism in France", 27 pp.	<b>Film Response 3 due</b>
2 May	Radicalization in the French Context, cont. <b>Presentation 10: French Jihadist recruits and Daesh</b>	D. Pisoui, "Radicalization", 27 pp.; O. Roy, "What is the Driving Force Behind Jihadist Terrorism?", 6 pp.; J. Klausen, "Review of G. Kepel's <i>Terror in France</i> ", 6 pp.	
Week 14, 7 May	Muslims in Western Europe <b>*Presentation 11: French responses to the "Refugee Crisis"</b>	S. Gilliat-Ray, "The United Kingdom", pp. 64-103; J. Nielsen, "Germany", pp. 24-39; D. Trilling, "Five myths about the refugee crisis", 9 pp.; U. Schmiedel, "Religion is Key", 2 p.	
9 May	Islam as a Market: The Halal Industry in France <b>Presentation 12: A French Muslim Vote?</b> <b>Presentation 13: Islam, France and Soccer (IMA exhibition)</b>	F. Bergeaud-Blackler, "Islamizing Food", in <i>Halal Matters</i> , pp. 91-104	
Week 15, 14 May	Guest Speaker		<b>Research Papers due</b>

16 May	<b>Quiz</b>		
Week 16, 21 May	Conclusions: What is the future for a French Islam?		

## Course Materials

### Required Textbooks & Materials

- France and Islam Course Reader, 2 volumes, available for sale at Mistral Photo, 40 rue St Jacques, Paris 75005

### Optional Textbooks & Materials (See the Reserve Shelf!)

- Maurits S. Berger, *A Brief History of Islam in Europe: Thirteen Centuries of Creed, Conflict and Coexistence*, Leiden University Press, 2014
- John Bowen, *Can Islam Be French? Pluralism and Pragmatism in a Secularist State*, Princeton University Press, 2009
- Jocelyne Cesari (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of European Islam*, Oxford University Press, 2015
- Mayanthi Fernando, *The Republic Unsettled: Muslim French and the Contradictions of Secularism*, Duke University Press, 2014

### Resources

- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

## Course Policies

### Attendance and Tardiness

- Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is



mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade for every week's worth of classes missed. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in harsher penalties including failure.

- Unexcused absences affect students' grades: unexcused absences will be penalized with a 2% deduction from the students' final course grade.
- Absences are excused only for illness, religious observance, and emergencies.

**Illness:** For a single absence, students may be required to provide a doctor's note, at the discretion of the Associate Director of Academics. In the case of two consecutive absences, students must provide a doctor's note. Exams, quizzes, and presentations will not be made up without a doctor's note.

**Religious Observance:** Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. Students must notify their instructor and the Academic Office in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose. If exams, quizzes, and presentations are scheduled on a holiday a student will observe, the Associate Director, in coordination with the instructor, will reschedule them.

**Please note: if you are unable to attend class, you are required to email your professors directly to notify them.**

## **Late Assignment**

Late submission of work will be accepted only with justifiable reasons of health or family emergency.

## **Academic Honesty/Plagiarism**

*At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community.*

**Plagiarism:** *presenting others' work without adequate acknowledgement of its source, as though it were one's own. Plagiarism is a form of fraud. We all stand on the shoulders of others, and we must give credit to the creators of the works that we incorporate into products that we call our own. Some examples of plagiarism:*

- *a sequence of words incorporated without quotation marks*
- *an unacknowledged passage paraphrased from another's work*
- *the use of ideas, sound recordings, computer data or images created by others as though it were one's own*
- *submitting evaluations of group members' work for an assigned group project which misrepresent the work that was performed by another group member*
- *altering or forging academic documents, including but not limited to admissions materials, academic records, grade reports, add/drop forms, course registration forms, etc.*

For further information, students are encouraged to check [www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html](http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html)

## Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

## Films

### List 1: Historical Encounters

Thomas Asbridge, *BBC The Crusades*, 2012, Episodes 1 and 2

Youssef Chahine, *Destiny*, 1997

Ovidio Salazar, *The Alchemist of Happiness* (Al Ghazali), 2004

Karim Miské, *Jews and Muslims: Intimate Strangers*, Episodes 1 and 2

### List 2: Algerian War for Independence

Rachid Bouchareb, *Outlaws* (Hors la loi), 2010

Mehdi Charef, *Summer of '62* (Les Cartouches Gauloises), 2006

Florent Emilio Siri, *Intimate Enemies* (L'Ennemi Intime), 2007

### List 3: Contemporary Topics

Houda Benyamina, *Divines*, 2016 (in French)

Philippe Faucon, *Fatima*, 2015 (in French)

Mathieu Kassovitz, *La Haine* (Hate), 1995

Kheiron, *Nous trois ou rien*, 2014 (in French)

Philippe Lioret, *Welcome*, 2009

## Suggested co-curricular activities

**Institut du monde arabe (IMA):** Exhibitions, lectures, concerts, movies, café, book-store; 1 Rue des Fossés Saint-Bernard, 75005, Paris (“Rendez-vous de l’Histoire du monde arabe”, 4 days, April)

**Maghreb des Livres,** Largest book fair in France on the Middle East and North Africa, round table discussions, book presentations and signings, “Oriental café/restaurant”, Hôtel de Ville, 8-10 February

**Institut des Cultures de l’Islam (ICI),** temporary exhibitions, café/restaurant, mosque; 56 rue Stéphenson, 75018 Paris (Exhibition on artists from Java until 2/24)

**“Rencontre annuelles des musulmans de France” (RAMF),** the largest Muslim fair in Europe, Le Bourget, 19-22 April

