History 439: Islamic History  
Spring, 2007  
Time: 2:25 MWF; Place: 2650 Humanities  
Instructor: Michael Chamberlain

This course is about the formation of Islamic civilization and its historical development until the early modern era. The course is divided into three parts. In part one we examine the physical environment and human ecology of the region, long-term social and political continuities of the ancient Middle East, the foundation of Islam, and the establishment of the early Islamic empire. In part two we cover the political collapse of the empire, its replacement by regional courts, and the development of medieval Islamic political, social, and cultural institutions and practices. In part three we will examine the place of the medieval Middle East within the wider history of Eurasia and ask how Middle Eastern peoples reacted to an increasing European influence in the region.

Grading is based on a map quiz (10%), section participation (15%), mid-term (25%), paper (25%) and final (25%). All work must be completed on time. If you want an A be prepared to put a consistently high level of effort into the course. I recognize that the subject matter of this course is difficult and unfamiliar to most of you. If you do the work you should get a B, although an A will be difficult to obtain without dedication. A = excellent work in all respects. B = work that is excellent in parts and faulty in others or that is of a generally good quality. C = work that while acceptable lacks clarity, organization, or evidence of sustained research. If you are doing D work I hope you will drop the course to spare me the pain of giving and you the humiliation of receiving a D or worse. In general I will not give grades such as AB or BC on tests or papers, and will use these grades only to average out grades. You and I both should be able to discern the difference between an A and a B paper. I am always happy to discuss a grade and willing to argue with you over one. If you think a grade should be changed come to my office with a written argument and we will make an appointment to discuss your case in depth.

Office hours are 3:30-4:30 Wednesdays and Fridays, 4111 Humanities, and by appointment. It is usually a good idea to email me for a specific time the day before you wish to meet. My office telephone number is 265-2673.

Important Dates: Map Quiz: Feb 19; Midterm: March 21; Paper due: April 25.  
Take-Home Final Exam due by 3:00 p.m, May 15. Do not take this course if you cannot meet these deadlines!

Texts:

Required and (with one exception) available at the University Book Store):

Lapidus, I., A History of Islamic Societies, 2nd ed (Cambridge, UK, 2002).

Please note that most of the readings for the paper and many supplemental readings and other materials are available on the course learn@uw page.

The University Bookstore should have a large map of the Middle East available for purchase, but first check out the maps section of the learn@uw page before plonking down your money.

Course Outline and Reading List:

Jan. 22: Introduction

I. Human Geography and the Rise of Empires in the Ancient Middle East.

Jan 24: Physical and Human Geography of the Middle East; the Agrarian Empire
Jan 26: Film
Jan 29: Empires and imperial cultures from Sumeria to Late Antiquity
Jan 31: The Middle East in Late Antiquity
Feb 2: Arabia in Late Antiquity

Reading (full references are in the resources section below).

Lapidus, I. M., A History of Islamic Societies, pp. 3-10.
Examples of pre-Islamic poetry on the course web-page
Ibn Khaldun: al-Muqaddima, selections on learn@uw: Introduction, Pastoral Nomads, Royal Authority, Pastoral Nomads

Recommended:

Bagnall, Roger S., Egypt in Late Antiquity.
Fowden, Garth, Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity,12-36, 138-75.
McNeill, W. M., The Rise of the West, pp. 64-84; 110-144.
Shahid, I., Rome and the Arabs.
Hoyland, R.G., Arabia and the Arabs from the Bronze age to the Coming of Islam.

II. The Early Islamic State and the Formation of Islam

Feb 5: The career of the Prophet I: Prophecy and community in a “tribal” society.
Feb 7: The career of the Prophet II: The formation of the early Islamic state
Feb 9: The Arab conquests
Feb 12: The early conquest state
Feb 14: Conquest state and society to the Second Civil War

Reading:
Cook, The Qur’an
Lapidus, I., A History of Islamic Societies, pp. 11-53.
Donner, F., The Early Islamic Conquests, pp. 43-90.
Selections from Tabari on learn@uw.

Recommended:
Bell, R., Introduction to the Quran.
Crone, P., Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam.
Gabrielii, F., Muhammad and the Conquests of Islam, pp. 103-104, 143, 184.
Grabar, O., The Formation of Islamic Art.
Ibn Hisham, The Life of Muhammad.
Morony, M., Iraq after the Muslim Conquest.
Pederson, E. L., ’Ali and Mu’awiya in Early Arabic Tradition.
Rodinson, M., Muhammad.
Watt, W. M., Muhammad at Mecca.
Watt, W. M., Muhammad at Medina.
Watt, W. M., Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman.

III. The Islamic Empire

Feb 16: Cult, ritual, and basic doctrines of Islam
Feb 19: Map Quiz and review
Feb 21: The Marwanid Caliphate, 692-750
Feb 23: The ‘Abbasid Revolt.
Feb 26: The ‘Abbasid Caliphate, 750-820
Feb 28: Imperial culture, architecture,
Mar 2: The impact of Hellenistic learning
Mar 5: Map quiz
Mar 7: Film
Mar 9: Trade and commerce from Late Antiquity through the ‘Abbasid Period
Mar 12: The Formation of Islamic Law
Mar 14: Shi’ism
Mar 16: Collapse of empire
Reading:

Lapidus, I., A History of Islamic Societies, pp. 54-125.
Translations of ‘Abbasid-period sources on learn@uw.

Recommended:

Umayyads:

Dennet, D. B., Conversion and the Poll-Tax in Early Islam.
Juynboll, G. H. A., Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society
Kennedy, Hugh, The Prophet and the Age of the Crusades: the Islamic Near East, from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century, pp. 51-123.
Sharon, M., Black Banners from the East
Shoufany, E., al-Riddah and the Muslim Conquest of Arabia.
Wellhausen, J., The Arab Kingdom and Its Fall.
Wellhausen, J., The Religio-Political Factions in Early Islam.

‘Abbasids:

Crone, P., Slaves on Horseback.
Donner, F., Narratives of Islamic Origins.
Kennedy, H., The Prophet and the Age of the Crusades: the Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century, pp. 124-211.
Lapidus, I. M., "The Evolution of Muslim Urban Society."
Lassner, J., The Topography of Baghdad in the Early Middle Ages.
Melchert, C., The Formation of the Sunni Schools of Law, 9th and 10th Centuries
Zaman, M.Q., Religion and Politics under the Early ‘Abbasids: the Emergence of the Proto-Sunni Elite

Mar 19: Midterm review
Mar 21: Midterm

IV. Successor States: Collapse of Empire and the Transformation of Ancient Society

Mar 23: Successor states and regional courts, 945-1092
Mar 26: The Fatimids
Mar 28: The Seljuks and the formation of the “military patronage state”

Readings:

Lapidus, I., A History of Islamic Societies, 181-191.
Chamberlain, M., “Military Patronage States and the Political Economy of the Frontier, 1000-1250” (pdf file on learn@uw)
Saunders, P., “The Fatimid State, 969-1171” (pdf file)

Recommended:

Bosworth, C. E., Sistan under the Arabs: from the Arab Conquest to the Rise of the Saffarids.
Bulliet, R., The Patricians of Nishapur.
Daftary, The Isma`ilis: Their History and Doctrines (Cambridge, 1990).
Mottahedeh, R., Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society

V. The Middle Period.

Mar 30: Crusades and counter-crusades

Apr 2, 4, 6: Spring break

Apr 9: Mongol invasions and the integration of Eurasia.
Apr 11: Mamluks and the Mamluk Sultanate
Apr 13: Institutions of the military patronage state: iqta’
Apr 16: Waqf
Apr 18: The `Ulama/
Apr 20: Medieval Islamic education
Apr 23: Medicine, science and technology
Apr 25: Political theory
Apr 27: Ibn Khaldun
Apr 30: Non-Muslim communities
May 2: Sufism
May 4: Marginality, criminality, resistance, and revolt
May 7: Changing relations with Europe, 1350-1600
May 9: The formation of the Ottoman and Safavid empires
May 11: Review

Reading:

Lapidus, I., A History of Islamic Societies, 126-161, 241-267; 344-358.
Chamberlain, M., “The Crusader Era and the Ayyubid Dynasty”.

Recommended:

Abu Lughod, J., Cairo: 1000 Years of the City Victorious.
Bagley, F. R. C., al-Ghazali's Book of Counsel for Kings.
Berkey, J., The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo:: A Social History of Islamic Education.
Bulliet, R., Islam: The View from the Edge
The Cambridge History of Islamic Egypt
The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 4
Chamberlain, M., Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus
Coulson, N. J., A History of Islamic Law.
Coulson, N. J., Conflicts and Tensions in Islamic Jurisprudence.
Ephrat, Daphna, *A Learned Society in Transition: The Sunni Ulama of Eleventh-Century Baghdad*
Goldziher, I., *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*.
Humphreys, R.S., *From Saladin to the Mongols: the Ayyubids of Damascus*
Hillenbrand, Carole, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*.
Hodgson, M. G. S., *The Order of Assassins*.
Kafardar, C., *Between Two Worlds: the Construction of the Ottoman State*.
Lapidus, I., *Middle Eastern Cities*.
Morgan, D., *The Mongols*.
Morgan, D., *Medieval Persia, 1040-1797*.
Petry, C., *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages*.
Schacht, J., *Introduction to Islamic Law*.

Paper Topics:
Papers are due Friday, April 25, in class.

1. "The career of the prophet Muhammad can only be understood as a response to the social and economic transformation of Mecca caused by changing patterns of world trade." Comment.

2. Ibn Khaldun was the first scholar to suggest that interactions among pastoralists, city people, and agriculturalists shaped the central dynamic in Middle Eastern state formation, in other words that political history cannot be understood without reference to human ecology. How has Ibn Khaldun influenced recent historians of the pre-modern Middle East?

3. "The Arab conquests wrought a revolutionary transformation of the social, political, cultural, and economic structures of the ancient Middle East." Do you agree or disagree?
   *Fowden, Garth, Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, 1993),

4. "As the Arabs conquered the settled peoples of the Middle East, they were in turn conquered by them." Comment.
5. How did the military elites who dominated the Middle East in the Middle Period exploit the societies they ruled? Were states administered by formal bureaucratic structures and hierarchies? If not, what accounts for the success of ruling groups in administering large and complex societies over time?

Lapidus, I., Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge, MA, 1967).
Chamberlain, M, Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190-1350 (Cambridge, UK, 1994).

6. "Medieval Muslim cities were not governed by city councils or bureaucratic administrations. Civilian elites had none of the landholdings, charters, or military training that guaranteed the autonomy of urban notables elsewhere. Artisans and craftsmen were without guilds or trade organizations to defend their interests." How did these societies hold together as complex human communities?

Lapidus, I., Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge, MA, 1967).

8. To what extent was the Jewish community of Cairo culturally, politically, and economically integrated into the larger society of Egypt? To what extent can the well-documented social and economic life of this community be taken as representative of Egyptian society at large.

Goitein, S. D., A Mediterranean Society: the Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza, 4 vols and index., (Berkeley, 1967-78).

Resources in English:

Library and Research Resources: w w w.libra ry.wisc.edu/guides/MidEast
Middle East Studies Program: w w w.mesp.wisc.edu

I. General:

Encyclopedia of Islam. The major reference work for the field. Thousands of entries with bibliographies. The first edition, 4 vols and supplement, Leiden 1913-1942, is complete but dated. The second edition, Leiden, 1954-, has reached the further reaches of the letter U. Entries are alphabetical, most under their Arabic, Turkish, or Persian word, so if you are looking for Cairo you will be directed to al-Qahira. Ignore the Arabic definite article al-

Cahen, C., Sauvaget's Introduction to the History of the Muslim East A useful guide to the literature, methods, and materials of the field.
The Cambridge History of Iran, IV, The Period from the Arab Invasions to the Saljuks, R. N. Frye ed. (Cambridge, 1975);
The Cambridge History of Iran, V, The Saljak and Mongol Periods, J. A. Boyle ed. (Cambridge, 1968)

Roolvink, R., Historical Atlas of the Muslim Peoples (Amsterdam, 1957).

II. Economic History

Byrne, E. H., Genoese Shipping in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries (Cambridge, MA, 1930).

III. The Prophet Muhammad and Late Antique and Early Islamic Arabia

Bagnall, Roger S., Egypt in Late Antiquity (Princeton, 1993).
Bell, R., An Introduction to the Qur'an (Edinburgh, 1953).
Brown, P., Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity (Berkeley, 1982).
Cook, M., Muhammad (Oxford, 1983).
Fowden, Garth, Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity (Princeton, 1993), 12-36, 138-75

Hoyland, R.G., Arabia and the Arabs from the Bronze age to the Coming of Islam (London, 2001)
Trimingham, J., Christianity and the Arabs in Pre-Islamic Times, 243-286.

IV. The Arab Conquests and the Conquest State

Kaege, W, Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests (Cambridge, 1992),
Lapidus, I., "The Arab Conquests and the Formation of Islamic Society," in
G.H.A. Juynboll ed., Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society (Carbondale, Ill.)
Madelung, W., The Succession to Muhammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate
(Cambridge, 1997).
Morony, M., Iraq after the Muslim Conquest (Princeton, 1983).
Pederson, E. L., Ali and Mu'awiyah in Early Arabic Tradition (Copenhagen, 1984).

V. The Umayyads and Umayyad Opposition Movements.

Because of the unreliability of the written sources for this period, many of the best
studies on the Umayyad period are treatments of non-narrative evidence, such as law,
dogma, art, and architecture.
Beeston, A. F. L., et al., Arab Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period
(Cambridge, 1983).
Crone, P., and Hinds, M., God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries
of Islam (Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, 1986).
Dennet, D. B., Conversion and the Poll-Tax in Early Islam (Cambridge, Mass,
1950).
Ettinghausen, R., From Byzantium to Sasanian Iran and the Islamic World: Three
Modes of Artistic Influences (Leiden, 1972).
Goldziher, I., Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law, A. Hamori and R.
Grabar, O., "Islamic Art and Byzantium," Dumbarton Oaks Papers 18 (1964): 113-
32.
Grabar, O., "Umayyad Palaces and the Abbasid Revolution," Studia Islamica 18
Grabar, Oleg, and Ettinghausen, Richard, The Art and Architecture of Islam, 650-
1250 (Penguin, 1987).
Hawting, G. R., The First Dynasty of Islam: the Umayyad Caliphate AD 661-750
(Carbondale, IL, 1987).
Juynboll, G. H. A., Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society (Carbondale,
1982)
Kennedy, H., The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphs: the Islamic Near East from
the Sixth to the Eleventh Century (London, 1986).
Sharon, M., Black Banners from the East (Jerusalem, 1983).
Wellhausen, J., The Arab Kingdom and its Fall (Calcutta, 1927).

VI. `Abbâsid Empire

Bowen, H., The Life and Times of `Alî Ibn Isâ, the Good Wazir (Cambridge,
1928).
Daniel, E. L., The Political and Social History of Khurasan under `Abbasid
Rule (Minneapolis and Chicago, 1979).
Lapidus, I. M., "The Evolution of Muslim Urban Society," in Comparative Studies
Lapidus, I., "The Separation of State and Religion," International Journal of
Middle East Studies, iv, (1975).
Melchert, C., The Formation of the Sunni Schools of Law, 9th and 10th Centuries
C.E. (Leiden, 1997).
Zaman, M.Q., Religion and Politics under the Early `Abbasids: the Emergence of
the Proto-Sunni Elite (Leiden, 1997).

VII. Middle Period Politics, Society, Culture.

Bosworth, C. E., Sistan under the Arabs: from the Arab Conquest to the Rise of the
Saffarids (Rome, 1968).
Dunn, R. E., The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: a Muslim Traveller of the 14th
Century (London and Berkeley, 1986).
Goitein, S. D., A Mediterranean Society: the Jewish Communities of the Arab
World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza, 4 vols., (Berkeley, 1967-78).
Hodgson, M. G. S., "The Isma`ili State," in Cambridge History of Iran, V.
(Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, 1968).
Humphreys, R.S., From Saladin to the Mongols: the Ayyubids of Damascus
Kafardar, C., Between Two Worlds: the Construction of the Ottoman State.
Karamustafa, A., God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Later Middle
Period, 1200-1500 (Salt Lake City, 1994).
Lapidus, I., Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1984)
Makdisi, G., "Muslim Institutions of Learning in Eleventh-century Baghdad,"
Vryonis, S., Jr., The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor (Berkeley, 1971).