

University of Wisconsin – Madison
Department of History

Fall 2024

History 805

HUMANITIES 5245

Thursdays
1:20 – 3:15 PM

in-person

Prof. Elizabeth Lapina
lapina@wisc.edu

Office: 4131 Mosse Humanities

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:20 – 10:20 (and by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course will discuss material culture produced at the time of the crusades (between late 11th and late 13th centuries), primarily in the Middle East. It will provide an introduction into different types of material culture that has survived as well as into different approaches to material culture in scholarly literature. The main focus of the class will be on independent research.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- To gain a better understanding of what material culture is and how its study can be useful for medievalists in a wide variety of fields (not just art historians)
- To learn about the crusades and of the Middle East at the time of the crusades (from the late 11th through the 13th century)
- To learn about interfaith relations, which involved Western Christians, Eastern Christians, Muslims and Jews, during the time of the crusades.
- To engage in independent research, which will result in a 14-16-page paper.

FINAL PAPER:

The students will have a lot of freedom choosing their paper topic. The paper can focus on

- a specific object
- a type of objects or structures
- the uses of objects, for example as gifts, plunder or trade commodity
- the transformations of objects and structures and of their meaning depending on the context where they found themselves

- the process of creation of the objects, to include the origins of materials or techniques
- modern history of objects
- fictional objects (described in medieval texts)
- soundscapes
- built environments and their uses

The final paper has to pose and answer an original question (literature reviews will not be accepted). The final paper should be about 14 to 16 pages long, double-spaced. Please, consult with the instructor if you intend your paper to be significantly shorter or longer. You can use ChatGPT if you wish, but do acknowledge this in the first endnote.

SUCCESS IN THE CLASS

Please note that I take health issues and life circumstances very seriously. Please, talk with me as soon as you begin to suspect that you will not be able to keep up in this class for whatever reasons and we will brainstorm a solution together.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

September 5: **Introduction to the Course**

WEEK 2: **Material Culture.** An overview.

September 12:

Assignment # 1:

- Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, “Material culture history: Methods, practices and disciplines,” *Writing Material Culture*
- Iris Shagrir, “Adventus in Jerusalem: the Palm Sunday Celebration in Latin Jerusalem,” *Journal of Medieval History* 41 no. 1 (2015): 1-20.

Assignment # 2: Pick one of the objects from the exhibition catalogue, *Jerusalem, 1000-1400: Every People under Heaven* (there is ne copy on reserve at the College Library; another copy at the Art Library). Prepare a 5-10-minute presentation of the object that you have picked. Your presentation should include a brief description of the following and should answer the following questions. Note that the last question is probably the most important of all. Please, send me an image of the object that you chose well before class, so that I can display on the screen.

(1) Is this object stand-alone or part of a larger ensemble?

(2) What is the history of this object (if known) from its creation to the moment when it was displayed at the exhibition in New York?

(3) Is this object unique, representative or both?

(4) What can this object tell us (about the crusades, the Latin States, the Middle East at the time of the crusades, interfaith relations or whatever else)?

(5) Take a look at the bibliography on this object (at the end of each catalog entry). What can you say about the scholarship that exists on this object?

(6) What attracted you to this object?

(7) What questions do you have about the object? What would you like to know about it? Do you think it is possible to find out this information?

WEEK 3

September 19: **Crusader Castles: The Example of Montfort 1**

- Adrian J Boas and Rabei G. Khamisy, “Initial Thoughts on the Architectural Development of the Castle”
- Adrian Boas, “Interpretation of the Parts”
- Kristjan Toomaspoeg, “Montfort Castle and the Order of Teutonic Knights in the Latin East”

WEEK 4

September 26: **Crusader Castles: The Example of Montfort 2**

- Adrian J. Boas, “Archaeological Evidence for the Mamluk Sieges and Dismantling of Montfort: A Preliminary Discussion”
- Rabei G. Khamisi, “Montfort Castle (Qal‘at Al-Qurayn) in Mamluk Sources”
- Rafael Lewis, “How Strong was Strong Mountain?”

WEEK 5

October 3: **Movement of goods, artefacts and ideas I.**

PROVISIONAL PAPER TOPIC due (no more than a paragraph, upload on Canvas)

- Sarah Guérin, “Gold, Ivory, and Copper.”
- Cynthia Hahn, “Passion Relics: Strength in Unity”
- Nicholas L. Paul, “Possession: Sacred Crusading Treasure in the Material Vernacular”
- Avinoam Shalem, “Objects in Captivity”
- Avinoam Shalem, “Exhibition of Islamic Artefacts in Church Treasuries” (Chapter 8 of *Islam Christianized. Islamic Portable Objects in the Medieval Church Treasuries of the Latin West*, 159-167).

WEEK 6:

October 10: **Movement of goods, artefacts and ideas II. Textiles.**

- Jochen Sokoly, “Textiles and Identity.”
- Kinoshita, “Almeria Silk”
- Anne E. Lester, “Intimacy and Abundance: Textile Relics, the Veronica, and Christian Devotion in the Aftermath of the Fourth Crusade”
- E. J. Burns, “Saracen Silk and the Virgin’s Chemise”

WEEK 7:

October 17: **Coins (meet at the entrance to the Chazen Museum)**

- Robert Kool, “Coin Finds (1926–2012) and the Use of Money at Montfort”
- Robert Kool, “Currency and Coins”

WEEK 8:

October 24: **Gifts**

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY due (at least 10 items)

- Cecily Hilsdale, “The Imperial Image and the End of Exile.”
- Anthony Cutler, “Significant Gifts: Patterns of Exchange in Late Antique, Byzantine, and Early Islamic Diplomacy,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38 (2008): 79–101
- Andrew Cowell, “The Power of Giving.”
- Russel Belk, “The Dual Dangers of the Gifts,” *The Dangers of Gifts from Antiquity to the Digital Age*
- Avinoam Shalem, “Exchange of Royal Presents,” (Chapter 2 of *Islam Christianized. Islamic Portable Objects in the Medieval Church Treasuries of the Latin West*, 37-55).

WEEK 9:

October 31: **The Holy Land: Jerusalem and Environs**

OUTLINE due (no more than two pages)

- Robert Ousterhout, “Architecture as relic and the construction of sanctity: the stones of the Holy Sepulchre.”
- Gil Fishhof, “Glorious Past(s): Tradition, Living Memory, and the Construction of Legitimacy.”
- Adrian Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time of the Crusades*
 - read the following chapters (corresponding to pages 142-187): “Markets, “Other Public Works,” “Urban Industry, Crafts, Trades and Institutions of Commerce and Finance”; “Private Space,” “Water Sources and the Communal Water Supply,” “Burial Inside and Outside the City”
 - the entire book is available on-line through our library

WEEK 10:

November 7: PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 11:

November 14: PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 12:

November 21: PRESENTATIONS

ROUGH DRAFTS due (upload on Canvas)

WEEK 13:

November 28: HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!

WEEK 14:

December 5: **Material Culture and Film**

- Watch *Valley of the Bees* (copy available in the library)

- Hannah Greig, “As seen on the screen: Material culture, historical accuracy and the costume drama,” *Writing Material Culture*
- Kevin McDermott, *Communist Czechoslovakia, 1945-89: a political and social history* (Chapter 3: “Social Crisis and the Limits of Reform, 1953-67”)

FINAL PAPERS due December 19 (upload on Canvas)