

Virginia H. Aksan ([vaksan@mcmaster.ca](mailto:vaksan@mcmaster.ca))  
CNH 602 x23541

**History 751: Graduate Reading Course  
European/Muslim Encounters in the  
Pre-Modern World  
Term 2, 2009/10**

This seminar will explore the historical origins and evolution of East/West (Europe/Islam) relations, concentrating on a number of themes such as perceptions of religious difference (Christianity and Islam), the narratives of warfare (crusades and jihads), the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the Orient and the “Turk” in European thought (17th-19th centuries), and the politics and representations of eastern and western empires & cultures to the present. This is largely a course on the history and circulation of ideas. We will read select primary texts which continue to influence the writing of the history of the Middle East in English and French. The subject is vast, and I begin with the assumption that the students will have little background knowledge. Our aim is to reach a broad understanding of the origins of present-day cross-cultural apprehensions.

Each student is responsible for the required readings and for participating in the weekly discussion. It is my hope that students will acquire a mastery of some theoretical concepts and historical evidence, take charge of their own intellectual development of the subject at hand, and engage seriously in the rigors of research and discussion. Students will prepare a 1000 word summary on each set of readings for the seminars (10 in total). The intent of the précis is for students to respond to the readings with a series of statements or questions which will serve as the focus of discussion.

Each student will also be asked to prepare an analytical bibliography/historiography on a topic of his/her choice, 2500-3500 words (10-15 pages) in length, due in April. The subject of the essay will be chosen in consultation with me, and should reflect the course intentions but not necessarily the course content.

***Assessment:***

Summaries (ten in total)	40%
discussion	30%
essay (10-15 pages, due April 10)	30%

***A note on evaluation:***

Attendance at meetings is mandatory. Students should retain a photocopy of any written work.

Graduate students are expected to be well acquainted with the subject under discussion. Overall performance which demonstrates firm knowledge of the required literature and sources, but no intellectual spark, will be in the high B range. Work of A caliber requires

diligence, maturity, articulate oral and written communication, and originality. The McMaster History Dept. takes structure, style and fluidity of presentation seriously. Lack of attention to those aspects of the process has an immediate impact on the final mark.

### ***E-mail Communication***

It is the policy of the McMaster University History Department that all e-mail communication between students and instructors (including TAs) must originate from their official McMaster University e-mail accounts. This policy protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information and confirms the identities of both the student and instructor. History Department instructors will delete messages that do not originate from McMaster e-mail accounts

### ***Academic Dishonesty***

“Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/univsec/policy/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **Schedule of Seminars and Readings**

All readings are either on RESERVE in Mills Library, or in the RESEARCH COLLECTIONS of Mills Library, or available in digital databases, or, on occasion, available as copies in 751 box in CNH 619. When I have included a primary source, such as Prideaux, I intend for the student to examine the volume/text as representative of its time, not to read it cover to cover. Take the time to examine the originals in Research Collections. You may not have another such opportunity.

January 6: Introduction and Definitions

January 13: The Religious Encounter

Richard Bulliet, *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 1-45. (DS36.85B85 2004)

Carl Ernst. *Following Muhammad: Rethinking Islam in the Contemporary World* (Chapel Hill, UNC Press, 2003), chapters 1-2 especially. (BP161.3.E76 2003; also in CNH 619 751 box)

Albert Hourani, "Western Attitudes Toward Islam," *Europe and the Middle East*, (London, 1980), 1-18; (DS61.6H66; also in CNH 619 box)

Humphrey Prideaux, 1648-1724, *The True Nature of Imposture display'd in the life of Mahomet* London, 1722-23, Mills Research Collections B3877 (Simply an early and influential example of the ways in which Islam is represented). Available in digital form (via Morris catalogue) as well

Malise Ruthven, *Islam: A Very Short Introduction* is on reserve for History 2HH3 should anyone feel the need for basic information about Islam

No summary is required this week: bring all your questions about the Muslim world – terminology, etc., to the seminar for a general discussion

#### January 20: Frontiers

Daniel Power & Naomi Standen, eds., *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700-1700* (London,: Macmillan, 1999), 1-54 (D34.A83F76 1999) also 751 box)

Peregrine Horden & Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: a Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford" Blackwell, 2000), 26-49 (DE59.H7 2000; also in 751 box)

Pirenne Thesis (excerpts – 751 box)

Patricia Risso, *Merchants and Faith: Muslim Commerce in the Indian Ocean* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995), 1-54. (DS349.R57 1995)

To think about: 1) How do these authors use the idea of a "frontier?" 2) What kind of "zones of contact" or "borderlands" are they discussing?

#### January 27: Crusades and Jihads

Stephen O'Shea, *The Sea of Faith: Islam and Christianity in the Medieval Mediterranean World* (New York: Walker, 2006), 159-204. (DE84.O84 2006)

Philip K. Hitti, "The Influence of the Crusades on Moslem Lands," in K. Setton, ed. *A History of the Crusades* (Madison: U. Wisconsin, 1985), v. 5, 33-58. (D157.S482 v.5; also 751 box)

Usama ibn Munqidh excerpts (751 box)

Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* (London, al-Saqi Books, 1984), chap. 9-11 especially. (D157.M2813 1984)

To think about: 1) What are the consequences of the crusades on Muslim-Christian relations? 2) Are there any? or is this a matter of rhetoric?

February 3: Constantinople, that's Istanbul

- Aziz S. Atiya, "The Aftermath of the Crusades," In *A History of the Crusades*, Kenneth A. Setton, ed., vol. 2, 647-66. (D157.S482, v. 3; also 751 box)
- Stephen O'Shea, *Sea of Faith*, 253-85 (as above)
- The Siege of Constantinople: Seven Contemporary Accounts*, trans. By J. R. Melville (Amsterdam, 1971) excerpts (MLR10327 and 751 box)
- Mehmed II the Conqueror and the Fall of the Franco-Byzantine Levant to the Ottomans Turks: Some Western Views and Testimonies*, ed., trans, and annotated by Marios Philippides, read a sample of the writings, esp. Pope Pius II and Henry of Soemmern (Tempe, Ariz., ACMRS, 2007) (DF649.M44 2007)

February 10: Renaissance Encounters

- Jerry Brotton, *The Renaissance Bazaar: From the Silk Road to Michelangelo* (Oxford: OUP, 2002) (CB361.B74 2002)
- Lucette Valensi, *The Birth of the Despot: Venice and the Sublime Porte* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1993) (DR479.I8V3513 1993)
- Eric Dursteler, "The Bailo in Constantinople: Crisis and Career in Venice's Early Modern Diplomatic Corps," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 16 (2001), 1-20 (Online)

To think about: 1) Where were the encounters? 2) What do we make of these as historical sources? 3) Can we speak of a "Mediterranean" society in this period?

February 17 No class

February 24: Minorities in Mediterranean Society

- Amitav Ghosh, *In an Antique Land* (Vintage, 1992) (DT56.2.G48 1992)
- Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims* (Princeton, 2000), esp. chap 1-3 (DF901.C83G74 2000)
- S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: the Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza* (Berkeley, 1967) – 6 volumes. You are meant only to explore the kind of documentation available to Ghosh and others for the period. (DT56.2.G48 1992 6 v.) also available digitally The Friedberg Genizah Project <http://www.genizah.org/theCairoGenizah.htm>
- Steven M. Wasserstrom, "Apology for S. D. Goitein: an Essay," in Adnan Husain and K. E. Fleming, eds., *The Faithful Sea: The Religious Cultures of the Mediterranean* (Oxford, 2007), 173-98. (in 751 box)

To think about: How would you define "tolerance" pre-1800 based on these readings?

### March 3: Lives: merchants, slaves, diplomats

- Klará Hegyi, "Freed Slaves as Soldiers in the Ottoman Fortresses in Hungary," in Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, *Ransom Slavery Along the Ottoman Borders: Early Fifteenth to Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Brill, 2007), 85-91. (DR486R36 2007; aslo 751 box)
- Robert C. Davis, "Counting European Slaves on the Barbary Coast," *Past & Present* 172 (2001), 87-124 (online)
- Nabil Matar, *In the Lands of the Christians: Arabic Travel Writing in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003), esp. chap. 1 (G227.I5 2003)
- Intimate Life of an Ottoman Statesman: Melek Ahmed Pasha* (Albany: SUNY, 1991) [from Evliya Celebi] read last (quite funny) section on Melek's marriage (instructor's copy on reserve MPB20162)
- To accompany this: Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi* (Leiden, 2004), esp. chap. 1-2, to browse through, and Afterword by Gottfried Hagen which is a brilliant analysis of 17<sup>th</sup> century Ottomans (DR486.E95D3 2004)

### March 10: Reflections on Muslim Empires Then and Now

- Paul Rycout, 1628-1700, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London, 1688; reprint, New York, 1971) Research Collections D1137 (online)
- Constantine Volney, *Travels Through Egypt & Syria* (New York, 1798) Research Collections B7683 (1798) and C1218 (1788) (online)
- Molly Greene, "The Ottoman Experience," *Daedalus* Spring 2005, 88-99 (online)
- Linda Darling, "Political Change and Political Discourse in the Early Modern Mediterranean World," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* XXXVIII:4 (2008), 505-531. (online)
- Maxime Rodinson, *Europe and the Mystique of Islam* (Seattle, 1987), 41-71. (DS36.855.R613 1987)

### March 17: The Orient & the Enlightenment

- Francesco Cardini, *Europe and Islam* (Oxford, OUP, 1999), 117-72 (DS38.3C3713 2001)
- Akman, Beyazit H. "The Turk's Encounter with Defoe," *Digital Defoe* 1:1 (2009), 76-85 (online)
- Joubin, Rebecca, "Islam and Arabs Through the Eyes of the *Encyclopédie* as a Case of French Cultural Self-Criticism," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 32 (2000), 197-217.
- Kaiser, Thomas, "The Evil Empire? The Debate on Turkish Despotism in Eighteenth-Century French Political Culture," *Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000), 6-34.
- Lady Wortley Montague, 1689-1762, *Letters From the Levant During the Embassy to Constantinople, 1716-1718*. (1971) (DA501.M7A4 1971b)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Letters of the Right Honourable Lady M-y W-y*  
M-e Research Collections B5897-8 v. 1-2 (one of several editions)

March 24: No class

March 31: Modern Perspectives: Representations? Has anything changed?

Anthony Pagden, *Worlds at Wars: the 2,500 Struggle Between East and West*,  
chaps. 10-11 (New York: Random House, 2008) (CB251P24 2008)

Robert Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing: the Orientalists and Their Enemies* (London:  
Allen Lane, 2006), chapter 1-3 (DS61.85.I792 2006)

Paul Rich, "Civilisations in European and World History: A Reappraisal of the  
Ideas of Arnold Toynbee, Fernand Braudel and Marshal Hodgson," *The*  
*European Legacy* 7:5 (2002), 331-42 (online)

April 7: Modern Perspectives? Polemics? Discordant views

Bernard Lewis, *Crisis of Islam* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) chaps. 1-2 (751 box)

Richard Bulliet, *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization*, pp. 95ff  
(DS36.85B85 2004)

Tomaz Mastnak, "Europe and the Muslims: The Permanent Crusade," in Emran  
Qureishi and Michael A. Sells, eds., *The New Crusades: Constructing the*  
*Muslim Enemy*, 205-48. (or any other of the articles in the volume)  
(D860.N389 2003)