

**Islamic Civilization: From Mecca to the Crusades,  
600-1200 C.E.**

**Topics in Pre-Modern World History**

**Spring 2018**

**Lecture:** Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00 to 1:50, Bryan 111

**Discussion:**

**HIS 207-01**, Fridays 12 to 12:50, Bryan 110

**HIS 207-02**, Fridays 1 to 1:50, Bryan 335

Instructor: A. Asa Eger

[aaeger@uncg.edu](mailto:aaeger@uncg.edu)

Office: MHRA Building, Room 2113

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 3:30-4:30 PM, by appointment

Office Phone: 336-334-5203

Teaching Assistant:

Jacob Harris

[jdarr23@uncg.edu](mailto:jdarr23@uncg.edu)

**Description:**

In the middle of the seventh century, Arab tribes coalesced and emerged from the Arabian Peninsula, conquering an enormous expanse of territory that reached from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean to the deserts of India in less than one hundred years. In the following centuries, Islamic civilization took shape, a dynamic process framed by Islamic ideals yet influenced by the many cultures this civilization embraced. The products of this civilization included magnificent monuments, extensive works of literature and science, far-flung trade routes that connected to east Asia, and new agricultural and technological innovations. This course will familiarize students with the history of the rise and spread of Islamic civilization as a complex and interdependent process that occurred throughout the Near East, North Africa, Spain, and Central Asia. We contextualize this process in the world before Islam and the rise of the Prophet Muhammad at the start of the seventh century and continue until the time of the Crusaders at the end of twelfth century. Our approach will be interdisciplinary. We will look at the history, art and architecture, archaeology, environment, literature, and religion of Islamic civilization.

**Student Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to define a suite of political, religious, and social characteristics that characterize the period after 600 C.E. as “Islamic.” Some of these include tribally based political structures, religio-social legal codes, and pluralism and hybridity in culture and economy.
2. Students will be able to identify and explain historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and

periods within Islamic history until 1200 C.E. by using diverse types of primary and secondary sources available for interpretation.

3. Students will utilize historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view for the formation of Islam. They will be able to describe the historical, geographic, aesthetic, and religious contexts for the rise of Islam and explain various motivations for the conquests and spread of Islam.

4. Students will trace the developments of Islamic civilization through various examples of cultural and social production. By developing an informed historical perspective and by reflecting on the dynamic between Western and non-Western experience, students will be able to challenge and historicize current ideas and stereotypes of Islam.

5. Finally, students will be able to recognize and evaluate salient features of primary source. These features include authorial subjectivity as shaped by social and geographic considerations, differences in generic structures and expectations (that is, formal characteristics of genres), and interpretive value as compared to other comparable sources.

### **Requirements:**

There will be two 50-minute lectures per week and one 50-minute discussion. Lectures will also consist of questions throughout the period and discussion will include class activities and in-class assignments. Please read the assigned materials for that day, ready to listen to the lecture, and come armed to classes with questions and observations about readings and lectures. Attendance is required, as lectures will frequently include material not covered in the assigned readings, for which you will also be responsible for on exams. **You must bring Primary Source readings and your textbook to class for discussion purposes. Failure to do so will result in a low class participation grade for that day.**

No prerequisite is required to take this course.

### **Readings:**

Readings for each week are given on the attached syllabus. Readings listed under the lecture mean you will have read those *in advance* for that lecture day. Weekly assignments consist of readings from selected works. Please come prepared and able to comment on the readings in class. In addition to the assigned readings, additional readings have been placed on reserve and will be useful for those wishing to explore subjects (particularly for papers) in detail.

Lecture handouts will accompany every lecture and will provide an outline and, especially, terms and dates referred to in the lecture. These terms may also appear on your exams. Use these handouts as review sheets for exams.

Study aids, though not a requirement for the course, might be useful in preparing for exams, researching the group assignment, and providing useful basic reference information for Islamic history and civilization. They include:

*The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (First Edition (EI1), 1913-1942, New (Second) Edition (EI2), 1954 (1960)-2004, Third Edition, continuing). Jackson Library stacks Tower 8 DS37.E523, vols. 1-12.

*The Cambridge History of Islam*. Jackson Library stacks Tower 8 DS35.6.C3, vols. 1-2  
Bosworth, C. E., *The Islamic Dynasties*. Jackson Library stacks Tower 8 D199.3.I8 No. 5

Required text: (used and new copies available from bookstore)

Egger, Vernon O. *A History of the Muslim World to 1405: The Making of a Civilization*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall: 2004.

### **Reading Advice**

Because most of the original sources (and much of the content) will be totally unfamiliar to you and include foreign names and terms, I recommend taking notes on them as you read. It is also useful to write a brief summary (2-3 sentences) of each document/source so that you can remember the basic gist of it for class discussion. It's much easier to note down important points as you read than it is to go back and find those points again once you've finished reading. Finally, I recommend reading each document more than once. Sometimes it will take two readings for something to make sense to you. Because the amount of reading for our course is fairly small, you'll have plenty of time for re-reading.

### **Assignments:**

In-Class Assignments: There will be, throughout the course, 10 in-class assignments which sometimes you will complete and hand in during class and sometimes you will be asked to take these home and work on them, returning them the following class. These often will involve group work. These **cannot** be made up if you miss the class, as they count towards half your class participation grade.

Map Assignment: There will also be a map assignment at the beginning of the course designed to introduce you to the geography of the Islamic world. It consists of a blank map and an attached list of geographic features (countries, cities, bodies of water, mountains, and other features) given out in class for you to take home and label. You will be allowed to consult sources to fill this map in, either an internet source (such as Google Earth or Google Maps), or a paper source (such as an atlas or encyclopedia).

Quizzes: There will be three pop quizzes based on the readings due for that day. They will take up the first ten minutes of class. You will have the option of dropping the lowest grade of these at the end of the course. To do well on the quizzes you must attend have read and understood the assigned readings. You may **not** make these up.

Examinations: There will be three examinations for the course. These will consist of a number of brief identifications, short answer, and essay questions. The first two sections are not cumulative for any exam; however, the essay question should be. The brief identifications will be names, foreign terms (in Arabic, Persian, or Turkish), places, events, and dates. Most lectures will be accompanied by a handout providing an outline and including terms that occur in the literature and you may not be familiar with. These terms will be useful to keep for review for the identification tests. You should also

consult the glossary in your textbook (Egger, p. 319-326). It is important to learn about other cultures through their own terminology and vocabulary, which is not always easily translated and loses inherent concepts when it is. Although challenging, learning foreign terms will be useful as the course will emphasize linguistic connections across time and place as a marker of cultural durability. Short answers will require that you are able to explain the characteristics, nature, and qualities of mid-range topics that are fairly specific in nature and often limited to one historical event or single primary source. Answers should be complete and refer to lecture and readings. The essay question on an exam is synthetic and comprehensive calling on you to combine information throughout the duration of the course from lectures, readings, and in class discussions to think about larger themes

Group Assignment: A group research assignment will be given halfway through the semester. Your job is to become specialists in the economy of the Islamic world. Using translated texts by from the 7<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> centuries as a starting point, you will research a specific commodity looking at 1) its nutritional, medicinal, or other uses, 2) how it was grown and/or obtained, 3) where it came from and where it was traded to, and 4) its value. The purpose of the assignment is to: 1) read, integrate, and evaluate primary sources (in translation), 2) implement research skills and access resources to discover relevant secondary sources, and 3) to develop an ability to communicate in written and verbal forms and collaborate by working in groups and giving a public (in-class) presentation. You will be in groups of 3-5 and present your commodities at the end of the semester. An individual final paper will be turned on Reading Day that is between 3-5 pages (800-1500 words, double spaced) and include at least one non-Internet and outside reference.

**Grading**

The weight of the final course grade represented by each of the various assignments is:

In-Class Assignments/Class Participation	10%
Map Assignment	10%
Quizzes	10%
Exam 1:	15%
Exam 2:	15%
Exam 3:	15%
Group Project/Final Paper	25%

**Grading Scale:**

100-97% = A+	89-87 = B+
96-93 = A	86-83 = B
92-90 = A-	82-80 = B-
79-77 = C+	69-67 = D+
76-73 = C	66-63 = D
70-72 = C-	60-62 = D-

59 or lower = F

### **Attendance Policy**

Attendance is mandatory and I will take attendance at the beginning of each class. You may miss three classes during the semester, after which your class participation grade will be docked 3 points for each absence. If you miss more than six classes I will drop your final grade by three points per absence and /or reserve the right to drop you from the course.

Late Work/Missed Exam: All assignments must be turned in on time; those turned in late will be drop one grade per day late. If you must miss an exam you must let me know in writing ***before*** the date and there will be a make-up exam, otherwise you will receive a zero.

Tardiness: Please do not come late to class as it disrupts the class for both your fellow classmates and for me. If you are significantly late (more than 10 minutes) or chronically late, you will be marked as absent for that day.

### **CANVAS SITE**

All materials for the course (except for the required book) will be posted on the Canvas site for the course. This is particularly important for announcements and E-Reserves. It is a good idea to check the Canvas site regularly.

The best way to contact me is by email. Please note that I will only check and respond to emails Monday through Friday during the work day; i.e. don't expect me to respond to an email at 2 am on a Saturday. I can communicate with you only by your UNCG email account (that is the email linked to Canvas, for instance); make sure you check your UNCG email regularly.

Laptops in the Classroom: Laptops may ***not*** be used in the classroom.

Phones: Cellular phones ***must*** be silenced or turned off in the classroom. If your phone rings during class, you will be counted as absent for that class period. If I detect that you are using your phone to text (or surf) you will also be counted as absent for that day. Subsequent offenses will be treated with increasing severity.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

Enrollment in this course and submission of each written assignment constitute students' acceptance of UNCG's Academic Integrity Policy. Make sure you read and understand the policy, which is available at: <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>  
*If you have any questions about any aspect of this policy, including what constitutes plagiarism, please consult the professor.*

UNCG's Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "representing the words of another, as one's own in any academic exercise" (<http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>). Plagiarism includes both 1) failure to cite sources for ideas and words you use; and 2) submitting all of parts of someone else's work as your own. Be sure to cite fully all material you use, whether you are paraphrasing or using a direct quote.

Please note that plagiarism (this includes copying internet text for papers), cheating, and other violations of academic integrity are serious offences and will not be tolerated in the class or anywhere else in the University.

### **Additional Requirements and Advice**

1. In case later consultation should prove necessary, students should keep copies of all graded assignments until the end of the semester (at least).
2. All course requirements must be completed to receive a grade for the class.
3. Late Work: Assignments are due on the date and at the time listed on the syllabus; if a crisis (such as illness) arises, it is **your responsibility** to contact me. If you do not contact me, the work (when eventually received) will be penalized, usually at the rate of 1/3 of a letter grade per day.

#### **\*Emailed Papers will not be accepted. I accept only hard copy.**

4. Consultation of websites not assigned on the syllabus: many students feel that they can obtain the “answer” (or even a good interpretation) concerning a historical problem by simply looking it up on the web. While the web has many uses, this is almost invariably a fatal strategy. Looking up someone else’s ideas is no substitute for your own analysis. Some observations from the instructor’s point of view: 1) use of a web-site without citing it is plagiarism, which, if detected, can result in serious academic penalties (see above); 2) instructors can often detect uncited use of a website when either the writing style of the student’s paper changes drastically, or when facts/ideas/dates/people not discussed in class or in any of the assigned readings appear in an assignment. Again, I don’t want to discourage you from gaining more perspectives by using the web. What I’m saying is that ultimately you are being evaluated on **your** analysis of the **assigned** readings, not on your ability to plug the ideas of some website into your essay.

### **Lecture and Reading Schedule:**

#### **I. RISE AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ISLAMIC STATE (7-10<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY)**

##### **Week 1: Introduction** (Lectures 1 and 2)

Jan. 8. Class Organization, Introduction to the Middle East/Geographic Overview

Jan. 10. The World Before Islam: The Byzantine and the Sasanian Empires

*Primary Source: Jahiliya Poetry* (course document)

Egger, Preface: xi-xii, xv, Ch. 1: 1-20

A. Cameron, *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity*, 152-96

Jan. 12 Screening of Part I of “Islam: Empire of Faith” documentary (PBS)

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##### **Week 2: The Pre-Islamic Near East and The Rise of Islam** (Lectures 3 and 4)

Jan. 15. Pre-Islamic Arabia, The Prophet Muhammad, The Qur’an

**[map assignment due]**

Egger, Ch. 1: 20-32

Denny, W. “Ummah in the Constitution of Madinah,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 36.1 (1977): 39-47. **READ pp. 40-42.**

Jan. 17. The Age of Conquests and the Rashidun Caliphs, The First Civil War  
Egger, Ch. 2: 33-44, Ch. 3: 62-69

Jan. 19. Discussion and Primary Sources

*Primary Source:*

The Constitution of Madina (course document)

Accounts of the Conquest of Egypt (course document)

**DUE IN CLASS #1 and #2**

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**Week 3: The Umayyad Caliphate** (Lectures 5 and 6)

Jan. 22. The Umayyads, The Second Civil War

*Primary Source:* Umayyad Coins (in class)

Egger, Ch. 2: 44-61

Gibb, H. A. R., "The Fiscal Rescript of Umar II," *Arabica* 2 (1955), 1-16.

READ pp. 2-7.

Jan. 24. Umayyad Art and Architecture: Religious Buildings and Desert Castles

*Primary Source:* Dome of the Rock, Great Mosque of Damascus (in class)

PICK ONE:

Bacharach, J. "Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities" *Muqarnas* 13 (1996): 27-44.

Genequand, D. "Umayyad Castles: the shift from Late Antique Military Architecture to early Islamic Palatial Building." in H. Kennedy (ed.) *Muslim Military Architecture in Greater Syria*, 3-25

Grabar, O. "Umayyad 'Palace' and the 'Abbasid 'Revolution'," in *Early Islamic Art, 650-1100*, Volume I, *Constructing the Study of Islamic Art* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005). First published in *Studia Islamica* 18 (1963): 5-18.

Jan. 26. Discussion and Primary Sources

*Primary Sources:* Tax Rescript of 'Umar II (course document)

**DUE IN CLASS #3**

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**Week 4: The Abbasid Caliphate and Umayyad Caliphate of Spain** (Lectures 7 and 8)

Jan. 29. The Early Abbasids,

The Third and Fourth Civil Wars, and Baghdad

*Primary Source:* Description of Baghdad

**DUE IN CLASS #4**

Egger, Ch. 3: 69-72, Ch. 4: 85-89

Jan. 31. Al-Andalus and the Islamic-Christian Frontier

*Primary Source:* Conquest of Spain/Battle of Poitiers (course document)

**DUE IN CLASS #5**

Egger, Ch. 4: 98-104

Watt, M. and P. Cachia, *A History of Islamic Spain* (Piscataway, NJ:

Aldine Transaction, 2008 [orig. printing 1965]), 1-51.

Feb. 2. Exam 1 Review

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## **II. FLOWERING OF ISLAMIC CULTURE (8-10<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY)**

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**Week 5: EXAM and Christian-Islamic Relations** (Lectures 9 and 10)

Feb. 5. The Byzantine-Islamic Frontier and the Concept of Holy War

*Primary Source:* Shaybanī's *Siyar* (course documents)

various archaeological surveys and excavations (in class)

Egger, Ch. 229-238

Al-Shaybanī, Muḥammad, ibn al-Hasan. *The Islamic Law of Nations:*

*Shaybanī's Siyar*. Trans. by Majid Khadduri. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1966. 75-83, 85, 87-102, 142-148, 150-151, 154-160, 195-197, 203, 205, 208, 216-218, 225-226.

PICK ONE:

Dennis, G.T. "Defenders of the Christian People: Holy War in Byzantium." *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*. Ed. Angeliki E. Laiou and R.P. Mottahadeh. Washington, D.C. 2001, 31-39.

Donner, F. "The Sources of Islamic Conceptions of War," in J. Kelsay and J. T. Johnson (eds.) *Just War and Jihad: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives on War and Peace in Western and Islamic Traditions* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991): 31-69.

Hillenbrand, C. *The Crusades: an Islamic Perspective* (1999), 94-97.

Feb. 7. Christian Communities in Islamic Lands

Feb. 9. **EXAM 1** (covering Lectures 1-8)

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**Week 6: Islamic Law and Legitimacy** (Lectures 11 and 12)

Feb. 12. Administration, Taxation, Legitimacy, and Law

*Primary Source:* Political Debates (course documents)

**DUE IN CLASS #6**

Egger, Ch. 5: 114-122, Ch. 9: 248-256

Schacht, J. *An Introduction to Islamic Law*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1-5.

Sharon, M. "The Development of the Debate Around the Legitimacy of Authority in Early Islam," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 5 (1984): 121-41

Feb. 14. The Rise of Sectarianism, Sunnism, Shi'ism

Egger, Ch. 3: 72-84, Ch. 5: 123-127, Ch. 6: 154-160

Hodgson, M. "How did the Early Shi'a Become Sectarian?" *JAOS* 75 (1955): 1-13.



Feb. 16. Screening of 1<sup>st</sup> segment, Part II of “Islam: Empire of Faith” documentary (PBS)  
Discussion of Exam 1

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**Week 7: Islamic Geography and Urbanism** (Lectures 13 and 14)

Feb. 19. Geographical Accounts and Cartography

*Primary Sources:* Geographical accounts (in class)

Maqbul Ahmad, S. “Djughrāfiyā” *Encyclopedia of Islam*. New Edition, Volume 2, 575-587.

Al-Muqqadasī, *The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions (Ahṣan al-Taqāsīm fī Maʿrifat al-Aqālīm)*, transl. by Basil Collins. (Reading, UK: Garnet Publishing, 2001), pp. 1-8.

Feb. 21. The Islamic City

*Primary Source:* various Cities (in class)

Egger, Ch. 9: 241-246

Kennedy, H. “From *Polis* to *Madina*: Urban Change in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria,” *Past and Present* 106 (1985): 3-27.

Abu-Lughod, J. “The Islamic City – Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance,” *IJMES* 19.2 (1987): 155-76.

Whitcomb, D. “An Urban Structure for the Early Islamic City” *Cities in The Pre-Modern Islamic World* (2007), 15-26

\*Islamic Studies Research Network Event, Feb 22, Building Community, Immigrants and Refugees in the Triad, 6:30-7:30 Weatherspoon Museum, Panel Discussion

Feb. 23. Discussion and Primary Sources

*Primary Source:* Idrisī World Map (in class) **DUE IN CLASS #7**

Screening of 2nd segment, Part II of “Islam: Empire of Faith” doc.

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**Week 8: Economy, Cairo, and the Fatimids** (Lectures 15 and 16)

Feb. 26. Trade, Agriculture, and Rural Settlement [**group assignments given**]

Egger, Ch. 4: 104-113, Ch 9: 246-248

Stillman, N. A. “The Eleventh Century Merchant House of Ibn ‘Awkal (A Geniza Study)” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 16 (1973): 15-88.

Feb. 28. The Fatimids and al-Qahira

*Primary Source:* Cairo (in class)

Egger, Ch. 4: 94-98

Walker, P. *Caliph of Cairo: al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah 996-1021*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010. (Read Ch 1: 3-12).

Mar. 2. Discussion and Primary Source

*Primary Source:* Cairo Geniza letter (course document)

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**III. REPOSITIONING OF THE ISLAMIC EMPIRE (10-12<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY)**

**Week 9: NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**

**Week 10: North Africa and Spain** (Lectures 17 and 18)

Mar. 12. Almoravids and Almohads

*Primary Sources:* Madinat al-Zahra' (in class)

Alhambra (in class)

Epic and Romantic Poetry (course document)

Egger, Ch. 5: 127-138, Ch. 6: 162-171, Ch. 7: 182-188, Ch. 8: 199-228

Watt and Cachia, *History of Islamic Spain*, 82-126.

Mar. 14. Mediterranean Connections: Coastal Fortified Settlements & Inland Slave Trade

*Primary Sources:* Accounts Africans, Gold, Slavery (course documents)

**DUE IN CLASS #8**

Sijilmasa, Monastir (in class)

Egger, Ch. 9: 238-241

El'Ad, A. "The Coastal Cities of Palestine During the Early Middle Ages," *The Jerusalem Cathedra* 2 (1982): 146-67.

Miller, J. A. "Trading through Islam: The Interconnections of Sijilmasa, Ghana and the Almoravid Movement," in J. Clancy-Smith (ed.), *North Africa, Islam and the Mediterranean World* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2001), 29-58.

Mar. 16. **EXAM 2** (covering Lectures 9-16)

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**Week 11: Local Autonomies and Crisis of the Caliphate** (Lectures 19 and 20)

Mar. 19. The Later Abbasids and Samarra

*Primary Source:* Samarra (in Class)

Egger, Ch. 4: 89-93, Ch. 6: 139-141

Kennett, D. "The Form of the Military Cantonments at Samarra. The Organisation of the Abbasid Army," in *A Medieval Islamic City Reconsidered: an interdisciplinary approach to Samarra*, ed. by Chase F. Robins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 157-182.

Mar. 21. Nomads and Settlers: the Bedouin Dynasties

Rice, D. "Medieval Harran: Studies on its Topography and Monuments, I." *Anatolian Studies* 2 (1952): 36-84 (read 74-84)

\*Islamic Studies Research Network Event: "Life on the Islamic-Byzantine Frontier,"  
5:30-6:30, EUC Maple Room, Lecture

Mar. 23. Discussion and Review of Exam 2

Submit topic and group choices for Group Projects

**Week 12: Research and Writing Skills**

Mar. 26. Assignment of Groups and Research Skills Day (Library)

Mar. 28. Paper Writing Skills

Mar. 30. NO CLASS-SPRING HOLIDAY

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**Week 13: The East and the Arrival of the Turks** (Lectures 21 and 22)

Apr. 2. The Eastern Provinces, The Buyids, Provincial Autonomy Movements  
Egger, Ch. 6: 142-144

Apr. 4. Ghaznavids, the Saljuq Migration, and Anatolian Civilization  
Kennedy, Ch. 6: 145-154, Ch. 6: 160-162, Ch. 7: 188-198  
Morgan, D. *Medieval Persia 1040-1797* (NY: Longman, 1988) 25-40.

Apr. 6. Discussion and Primary Sources

*Primary Source:*

1001 Nights- Sixth Voyage of Sindbad (course documents)

**DUE IN CLASS #9**

Mu'tamar 'Ulamā' Baghdād

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**Week 14: The Crusades and Islamic Responses** (Lecture 23)

Apr. 9. Crusaders, Zangids, and Ayyubids; Castles and Military Architecture  
Egger, Ch. 7: 172-182

Apr. 11. *Kingdom of Heaven* (Ridley Scott, 2005)

Apr. 13. Discussion and Primary Sources

*Primary Sources: Christians/Muslims View Each Other* (course doc)

**DUE IN CLASS #10**

Screening of third segment of Part II of "Islam: Empire of Faith" documentary

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**Week 15: EXAM**

Apr. 16. Review of Exam 3

Apr. 18. TBA

\*April 19<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Selim Kuru, "Masculinity in the Ottoman World."

Apr. 20. **EXAM 3** (covering Lectures 17-23 and Film)

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**Week 16: Group Assignment Presentations**

Apr. 23: Group Presentations 207-01

**[All Final Papers due April 23, Groups I and II]**

Apr. 25: Group Presentations 207-02