

Geraldine Heng
 E360S: #35895; ISL 372: # 41775; MES 342: #42145; RS 357: #44220. Fall 2014
 M 6:00-9:00 PAR 105

ENVISIONING MUSLIMS: THE MIDDLE AGES AND TODAY: Course Description

Our course will survey how Muslims are represented in the dominant cultural media of two important periods: the period known in the West as the European Middle Ages—a time in which Europe first became conscious of Muslims through Islamic invasions, multiple forms of cultural contact and negotiation, and the international wars known as “the Crusades”—and in the contemporary world of the 20th and 21st centuries, when Muslims have, once again, become prominent in the Western imagination.

In the medieval period, we will read selections from European chronicles and romances, Arab histories and biographies, and other cultural media, including illustrations and maps, to see how Europeans envisioned Muslims, and how Muslims envisioned themselves. In the contemporary period, we will view clips from digital media representing several genres—including, Hollywood action adventure movies, biographies, television comedy, musicals, and films of mixed genre—to see how, and if, modern representations of Muslims differ from premodern representations. We will also view how Muslims represent themselves in digital media, including clips from Youssef Chahine’s “Saladin,” “Paradise Now,” Nadine Labaki’s “Caramel” and “Where do we go from here?” and the Axis of Evil comedy tour.

Course requirements: a term paper of at least 12 pages (50%), 1 in-class presentation (20%), attendance (10%) and active participation (20%). Texts listed here are suggestive, not final. All premodern texts read in modern English translation. Chahine’s “Saladin” has English subtitles.

TEXTS (tentative)

E. Said, J. Shaheen (selections)
Autobiography of Usamah
 R. Pape (selections)
 Richard Coer de Lyon
 Beha ad-Din, Biography of Saladin
The King of Tars
Mandeville’s Travels (selections)
 John Tolan, Saracens (selections)

DIGITAL MEDIA (tentative)

Envisioning Muslims” (M. Sanders)
 The Kingdom
 Paradise Now
 Saladin (Chahine’s)
 Kingdom of Heaven
 Caramel
 Axis of Evil comedy tour
 Where Do We Go Now?

ENVISIONING MUSLIMS: THE MIDDLE AGES AND TODAY: Course Schedule

Wk 1: BEGINNINGS

9/8: Introduction, handouts, course policy, grading, requirements, texts, assignments, course structure, presentations, writing, deadlines.

Watch: "Envisioning Muslims," by Murray Sanders.

Wk 2: CONCEPTS

9/15: Read: Edward Said's Orientalism, Ch. 1: "The Scope of Orientalism": "Knowing the Oriental," "Imaginative Geography and its Representations: Orientalizing the Oriental," "Projects," "Crisis."

Read: Dennis Porter, "Orientalism and its Problems."

Read: Aijaz Ahmad, "Orientalism and After."

Read: Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage."

Read: C. M. Naim, "The Outrage of Bernard Lewis."

Small group discussions.

Presentations begin: 2 presentations: (1) The History and Origins of Islam; (2) The Varieties of Muslims in the Middle Ages and Today

Wk 3: THE CRUSADES: MODERN REPRESENTATIONS

9/22: Read: Jack Shaheen, "Reel Bad Arabs."

Watch: "The Kingdom of Heaven."

Small group discussion.

Wk 4: THE CRUSADES: ISLAMIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY

9/29: Read: selections from Ousama Munkidh, *The Autobiography of Ousama*. A 12th century prince of Shaizar.

Small group discussion and presentations.

Wk 5: THE CRUSADES: MEDIEVAL EUROPEAN ROMANCE

10/6: Read: lines 2458-3756 of Richard Coer de Lyon (Middle English romance in modern translation). What is a "Saracen"? Religious-racial identities; holy war. Saracen religion; history and cultural fantasy as the ground of encounter, war/atrocities/jokes, depictions of the emir Saladin (Salah-ad-Din Yusof ibn Ayyub).

Small group discussion and presentations.

Wk 6: CULTURE HERO: SALAH AD-DIN YUSOF IBN AYUB ("SALADIN")

10/13: Read: Beha ad-Din, The Life of Saladin: p.xiii-45, p.110-120, p.244, p.248-321, p.398-409. Saladin and Richard Lionheart: history, biography, hagiography. The Saracen as culture hero.

Watch: Clips from Youssef Chahine's "Saladin;" clips from "Kingdom of Heaven."

Small group discussions and presentations.

Wk 7: "SUICIDE TERRORISTS," TAKE 1: QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS, POPULAR CULTURE

10/20: Read: "The Logic of Suicide Terrorism," interview with Robert Pape in *The American Conservative*, and a selection of opinion columns by Robert Pape.

Watch: "The Kingdom."

Small group discussion and presentations.

Wk 8: "SUICIDE TERRORISTS," TAKE 2: NATIONALISM, ECONOMICS, POLITICAL IDENTITY

10/27: Watch "Paradise Now."

Small group discussions and presentations.

Wk 9: CHRISTIAN WOMEN, MUSLIM MEN; MEDIEVAL CULTURAL FANTASY

11/3: Read: *The King of Tars*

Read: John Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, Ch. 5: "Saracens as Pagans."

Small group discussion and presentations.

Wk 10: MUSLIM WOMEN TODAY, TAKE 1: THE VARIETIES OF WOMEN'S LIVES

11/10: Watch: Nadine Labaki's "Caramel."

Small group discussions and presentations.

Wk 11: MUSLIM WOMEN TODAY, TAKE 2: THE VEIL

11/17: "Read: "The Battle of the Veil in Tunisia."

Small group discussions and presentations.

Wk 12: HUMOR AND MUSLIMS

11/24: Watch: "The Axis of Evil Comedy Tour."

Small group discussions and presentations.

Wk 13: BEYOND GENRE: WHERE DO WE GO NOW?

12/1: Watch Nadine Labaki's: "Where Do We Go Now?"

Small group discussions and presentations.

Term papers and projects due today.

Prerequisites: Nine semester hours of coursework in English or rhetoric and writing.

ENVISIONING MUSLIMS: THE MIDDLE AGES AND TODAY

COURSE POLICY: READ THIS CAREFULLY

The requirements for this course are: class attendance and active participation in large- and small-group discussions; the reading of your assigned texts, as demonstrated by your informed participation in large- and small-group classroom discussion; an in-class presentation on appropriate cultural, literary, historical or media material; and a final paper of 12 pages, typed and double-spaced to be submitted in week 13, on Monday, December 1. Merely “speaking up” in class does not qualify as informed discussion that demonstrates your reading of assigned texts.

Because of the nature of this course, in lieu of a paper you may also submit: a substantial Wikipedia entry with hyperlinks and images; a portfolio of images; a short documentary, video, or appropriate digital creation of your own *if you are skilled in film production* (permission is required in advance if you intend any alternatives to a term paper, so consult early).

Final grades for this course will be earned as follows: **10% for attendance, 20% for participation; 20% for an in-class research presentation, and 50% for a term paper of 12 pages, typed and double-spaced (for special projects, see paragraph above).** Grades will be as earned; there will be no grading curve.

Attendance will be taken from Week 1; 4 absences lead to an automatic grade of F for the course; 3 absences lead to no higher than a final grade of C for the course. One point is deducted from your attendance percentage for every absence. Failure to make a presentation when a presentation has been scheduled will automatically result in an F for the presentation grade. Persistent lateness for class is penalized.

Presentations can take a variety of forms: discussion of historical, social, artistic, cultural, literary, scientific, political, or background material related to Muslims, Islam, the Near East, or the depiction of these subjects in the medieval period, today, or the eras between. The first 2 presentations of the semester should be on the history of Islam, its Prophet and key figures, differences between Sunnis and Shiites, and the varieties of Muslims in premodernity, and today. **The first 2 presentations will each earn an extra 5% bonus points if they receive a grade of 18% or above of the 20% assigned grade for presentations.**

When in doubt as to whether the subject or form of the presentation you have in mind is appropriate, please consult me in advance before or after class, during office hours, or by e-mail. The maximum time for presentations is 25 minutes; presentations exceeding this time limit, and extending into the time allotment of another student, will be penalized. Presentations and term papers must be on different subjects: there should be no overlap in topic between your presentation and your term paper/project.

For your term paper, you are asked to select a particular Muslim community to study and discuss. You may choose to research and write on as large a subject as a Muslim country, or as small a subject as a local mosque community, group of performers, or even a Muslim family. You will need to discuss the history, structure, characteristics, and other aspects of the community: the community can be an emerging one, currently in existence, or no longer in existence (i.e. a premodern historical formation).

There will be NO EXTENSIONS for submission of writing assignments.

COURSE MATERIALS (all available as pdfs)

1. Edward Said's *Orientalism*, Ch. 1: "The Scope of Orientalism": "Knowing the Oriental," "Imaginative Geography and its Representations: Orientalizing the Oriental," "Projects," "Crisis."
2. Dennis Porter, "Orientalism and its Problems."
3. Aijaz Ahmad, "Orientalism and After."
4. Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage."
5. C. M. Naim, "The Outrage of Bernard Lewis."
6. Jack Shaheen, *Reel Bad Arabs*: Introduction.
7. Ousama Munkidh, *The Autobiography of Ousama*.
8. *Richard Coer de Lyon*.
9. Beha ad-Din, *The Life of Saladin*, p.xiii-45, p.110-120, p.244, p.248-321, p.398-409.
10. Pape.1: "The Logic of Suicide Terrorism," interview with Robert Pape in *The American Conservative*.
11. Pape.2: "Blowing Up an Assumption."
12. Pape.3: "Al Qaeda's Smart Bombs."
13. Pape.4: "To Beat the Taliban, Fight from Afar."
14. John Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, Ch. 5: "Saracens as Pagans."
15. *The King of Tars*
16. "The Battle of the Veil in Tunisia."

Documented Disability Statement: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone), or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd>.

Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Academic Integrity: Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. For additional information on Academic Integrity, see <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint.php>.

Religious Holy Days: By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.