Topics in Medieval Religious Cultures

Fall 2013: Christian, Muslim, and Jew: Religion, Community, and Culture in Medieval Spain

Professor: Deeana Klepper
Office Hours: Monday 11:00-12:30, Friday 8:30-10:00
and by appointment
147 Bay State Road, Room 408
617 358-0186
dklepper@bu.edu

All the lands in their diversity are one, and men are all neighbors and brothers
al-Zabaidi, tutor of Caliph al-Hakam II of Cordoba (961-976)

In this course, we will explore interactions between Muslims, Christians, and Jews in medieval Europe's most religiously diverse region - from the establishment of an Islamic al-Andalus in 711 CE through the final Christian "reconquest" of the peninsula and expulsion of the Jews in 1492 and expulsion of the Moriscos (Muslims forcibly converted to Christianity) in 1609. Themes include religion and communal identities, the complexities of cultural engagement in pluralistic environments, and toleration and its limits. You can expect to gain an understanding of current scholarship in the field, to develop familiarity with primary sources and methods for interpreting them, and to engage both of these things in the construction of a substantive research paper (for undergraduates) or bibliographic essay (for graduate students).

Course Requirements:

Students are expected to attend and participate in every class. If you know that you will miss class because you are sick or are away from school for an emergency, please try to let me know ahead of time, if possible, via phone or e-mail. More than two unexcused absences during the semester may result in a lower overall grade in addition to an unsatisfactory class participation grade. Graded work for the seminar will include class participation (30%); weekly response papers (30%), and a final research paper (40%). Students will also be expected to prepare and lead discussion on one week's reading. The class participation grade will be based on attendance, the level of your preparedness to discuss the material, your presentation to the class/discussion leading during your assigned week, and your general involvement in the seminar. Please note that students must complete all written work in order to receive a passing grade for the class.

Note: University policy is that students have the right to be excused from class for the observance of religious
holidays. However, it is your responsibility to notify faculty ahead of time and to arrange to make up any work you might miss. If you plan to miss class for this reason, you must let me know at the beginning of the semester.

**Expectations of Integrity:** All students should familiarize themselves with the Boston University [Academic Conduct Code](http://www.bc.edu/cas/seniorclasses/dosurpli/academicconduct.html) or College of Arts and Sciences Graduate Academic Conduct Code as appropriate and adhere to it. Please see also my [plagiarism policy](http://www.bc.edu/cas/seniorclasses/dosurpli/academicconduct.html).

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact [Disability Services](http://www.bc.edu/cas/seniorclasses/dosurpli/disability.html) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. If you suspect that you may have an undiagnosed disability that is interfering with your success in your coursework, please come see me and I will help direct you to the appropriate resources at BU.

**Required Books:**


**Copies of required books will be held on 24 hour reserve in Mugar Library.**

**Recommended Book:**

- Bernard F. Reilly, *The Medieval Spains* (Cambridge University Press, 1996). This very detailed political history will be a useful resource if you find yourself confused about changes in the political landscape as we move through the semester. It will be held on reserve in Mugar Library.

**Other Readings:**

A number of readings are available on the [Blackboard Learn site](http://blackboard.bc.edu/) or directly through Mugar Library. **Please bring all readings to class each week.** You may either print out web readings or bring your laptop/ipad/tablet to class.

**Assignments:**

**Response Papers:** Students will be asked to write weekly 2-page response papers, due by 11:59 on Sunday. Students may opt out of this assignment any three weeks of the semester (i.e., you will write ten responses over the course of the semester). Each response will be worth a possible 10 points for a total of 100 points over the course of the semester.

**Final Paper:** Students will write a final research paper on a topic of their own choosing. Undergraduate papers should be 12-15 pages long, graduate papers should be 15-20 pages long. Guidelines may be found below.

Discussion Leading: There will be a sign up sheet for discussion leading. Take a look and choose a week that works for you in terms of topic, schedule, or both. By 11:59 PM Sunday night of the week you are scheduled, you should post a brief entry to the Blackboard Learn Blog highlighting some of your thoughts on the document(s), book, or article on which you'll be leading discussion, including several questions for classmates to ponder. In class, you will give a presentation of no more than 10 minutes and will be given the opportunity to manage discussion. Feel free to contribute graphics, timelines, etc. Most weeks we will have two
presenters, and you are encouraged to work together to establish a division of labor and content.

**Schedule:**

**Sep 9 What is at Stake: Concerns about Religious Intolerance Today and the Idealization of Religious Pluralism in Medieval Spain**

**Sep 16 Envisioning a Plurality Ideal: The Construction of "Convivencia"**

Maria Rosa Menocal, *Ornament of the World*, 1-100; 174-188; 244-283

**Additional Graduate Reading:** Menocal, *Ornament of the World*, entire

**Sep 23 Jews in Visigothic Christian Spain**


**Sep 30 Muslim Arrival and the Establishment of al-Andalus**


**Additional Graduate Reading:** Kenneth Baxter Wolf, *Christian Martyrs in Muslim Spain* (Cambridge, 1988) [Library of Iberian Sources Online]

**Oct 7 The Umayyad Caliphate and its Courtly Culture**


**TUESDAY Oct 15 (MONDAY SCHEDULE) Conquest, (Re)conquest, and Frontiers**


**Oct 21 Song of the Cid**

Burton Raffel, trans., *The Song of the Cid*

**Oct 28 Arts and Religious Identity**


**Research Paper Proposals Due by 11:59**

**Nov 4 Religious Devotion and Mysticism**

**Additional Graduate Reading:** Lobel, *A Sufi-Jewish Dialogue*, entire [Mugar Library reserve]

**Nov 11 Urban Space and Religious Identity**


**Nov 15: Annotated Bibliographies Due by 11:59 PM**

**Nov 18 Food and Religious Identity**

David Freidenreich, *Foreigners and Their Food: Constructing Otherness in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Law* [excerpts on Learn]

**Additional Graduate Reading:** Freidenreich, *Foreigners and Their Food*, entire [Mugar Library reserve]

**Nov 25 Conversions**


**Dec 2 Expulsion of the Jews and the Conquest of Grenada; Converted Jews and Muslims in early modern Spain**


**Additional Graduate Reading:** Mary Elizabeth Perry, *The Handless Maiden*, entire [Mugar Library reserve]

**Dec 9 Convivencia, Again...**


**Thursday, Dec 12: Final Papers Due. Submit to Learn site by 11:59 PM**