This course examines the dynamics of “honor-shame” cultures generally and then applies such insights in understanding their role in the European Middle Ages and the contemporary world. Students are expected to overcome the cognitive egocentrism of Western beliefs and understand how other cultures can emphasize significantly different values and social interactions.

The purpose of this course is to examine the role of a relatively underestimated phenomenon in historical investigations, what anthropologists call “honor-shame” culture. Although we will address various definitions of the problem, I will use the following one for warrior honor-shame: a culture in which it is not only permitted and expected, but even required to shed someone else’s blood for the sake of one’s own honor. In such societies, “self-help” justice (i.e., personal or family revenge, feud, duel and vendetta,) play a prominent role in the resolution of disputes. This contrasts markedly with modern civil societies, which raise the threshold for resort to “legitimate” personal violence, and seek to resolve disputes in courts governed by a consensual discourse of fairness. Of course all cultures deal with the universal desire to seek honor and avoid shame. The primary distinction, then, revolves around public (peer group) conception of acceptable behavior, and this course seeks to examine both the politico-legal structures of honor-shame cultures, and the psycho-social dimensions.

The course divides into three major segments

- Honor-shame culture, conceptual and theoretical concerns
- Honor-shame culture in the European Middle Ages
- Honor-shame culture in the contemporary world

The first section addresses the broad conceptual issues, drawing from writings in anthropology, psychology, sociology and history. Here we will look at a wide range of examples from tribal cultures. The second looks at various aspects of medieval culture from this perspective, analyzing both relatively straightforward topics (early medieval tribal warrior culture, feuds and vendettas) as well as the uneasy and complex interaction of Christianity with these prevailing lay norms. This section concludes with a brief look at some of the ways in which Western culture began to domesticate honor-violence and move towards modern civil societies. Finally we will look at Arab culture, considering the role of honor-shame concerns in the Arab reaction to modern western societies, and in particular in the Arab-Israeli conflict. This section grapples with Said’s hostility to honor-shame analysis in Orientalism. The class will conclude with a comparison of the prevailing IR models explaining the dynamics of the conflict (security and economic gain) and those generated by an understanding of honor-shame cultures.
Requirements:

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all classes. Any more than two unexcused absences will affect the final grade. Participation in class discussion, while not required, will be recognized and factored into final grade.

**Two Papers:** First paper a bibliographical study of conceptual or theoretical principles (20%) *due Thursday Feb 19*; second paper an in-depth analysis of a particular case study (40%) *due Thursday April 23.*

**Final Exam:** 40% (take-home) *due*

**Wikipedia Entry:** There is no entry at the *Wikipedia* for Honor-Shame culture or self-help justice. We can write them and any others related to it that we wish. Those who would like to do so can substitute their efforts for the first paper, and depending on their work, for the second paper.

Students are responsible for knowing and understanding the provisions of the CAS Academic Conduct Code. Copies are available in room CAS 105. I will refer cases of suspected academic misconduct to the Dean's Office.

**Books:**

Marc Weiner, *Rule of the Clan*
Phillip Salzman, *Culture and Conflict*
David Pryce-Jones, *The Closed Circle*
Lee Smith, *The Strong Horse*
Anthony Kwame, Appiah, *Honor Code and Moral Revolutions*
SYLLABUS

Week I January 20-22: Honor-Shame Culture vs. Dynamics: Some Definitions

T: Introduction: LCE and tribal values
Readings: Landes, Medievalist’s Guide to 21st Century [Draft], Chapters 2, 3

Th. The Rule of the Clan
Readings: Weizman, Rule of the Clan chs 1-3.
Suggested: Creighton, “Revisiting Shame and Guilt Cultures: A Forty Year Pilgrimage”*

Week II January 27-29: Honor among Men: Tribal Warrior Societies

T: Warrior’s Honor
Readings: Wrangham, Demonic Males, ch. 1, 4*; Salzman, Culture and Conflict, chs 3-4; Pitt-Rivers, “Honour and Social Status”*; Sagan, Lust to Annihilate, chs 3-4*;

Th: Self-Help Justice and Vendetta
Readings: Weizman, Rule of Clan, ch. 4; Boehm, Blood Vengeance, chaps. 4-5, 10-12,* Jared Diamond, “Revenge”; Blok, Chapter 6*; Stetkevych, Mute Immortals Speak, ch. 2.

Week III February 3-5: Gender and Honor Murders

T: Gender and Honor:
Readings: Stetkevych, Mute Immortals Speak, ch. 5*; Pryce-Jones, The Closed Circle, chap. 5; Wilson, “Patriarchy: Feminist Theory”

Th: Honor Killings

Week IV February 10-12: Monotheism and Honor-Shame culture

T: Hebrew Bible and the Jews

Th: New Testament and the Christians
Matthew 5-6 (Sermon on the Mount); I and II Corinthians; Revelation.
Week V February 17-19: Christian and Muslim Honor, Supersessionism, and Invidious Identity Formation

T: NO CLASS

Th: Envy, Zero-Sum, and Supersessionism


BIBLIOGRAPHY PAPERS DUE

Week VI February 24-26: Imperial Monotheism

T: Iconic Monotheism: One God one Emperor
Readings: Eusebius, Praise of Constantine*; Cranz, “Kingdom and Polity in Eusebius”*; Drake, “Lambs into Lions”*
Suggested: MacMullen, “Judicial Savagery in the Roman Empire”*; Lendon, Empire of Honor, ch. 30-106.

Th: Imperial Christianity and the Germanic Warrior Tribes
Readings: Tacitus, Germania, Selections*; Gregory of Tours, “Sichar and Chrammesind”*; Bede, Selections*; Miller, Bloodtaking and Peacemaking, chap. 6 (pp. 179-220)*; Weizman, Rule of the Clan, ch. 5; James Russell, Germanization of Christianity, chap. 5, and pp.148-54*; Ward Perkins, The Fall of Rome, ch. *
Suggested: John Chance, Honor and Shame in the World of the Bible (Semeia 68 [1994]), 139-61*. Duby, Early Growth of the European Economy, Part I, chap. 3*

Week VII March 3-5: High Middle Ages 1000-1400
T: The Peace of God and Demotic Religiosity

Th: Vengeance, The King’s Peace and the Law
Readings: Song of Roland; Vengeance in the Middle Ages, pp.161-210*; Weizman, ch. 9; Salimbene, “The Great Allelulia”*
Suggested: Thompson, Revival Preachers, ch. 6, 9*

Week VIII March 10-12: NO CLASSES Spring Break
Week IX March 17-19: The West Transcends Honor-Shame

T: Renaissance and Honor Problematized

Th: Democracy as a Rejection of Honor Society (Guest Lecture: Rebecca Clarke)

Week X March 24-26: Arab Culture and Honor-Shame

T: From the Tent to the Town: Bedouin Culture and Arab Culture

Th: Islam and Arab Honor Culture
Readings: Quran, Selections*; Patai, Arab Mind, chap. 9, There is no Dignity except Islam”; Landes, ’The Apocalyptic Origins of Islam”*; Bowman, Honor, ch. 1; Smith, Strong Horse, Part II.
Suggested: Bat Ye’or, Islam and Dhimmitude, chaps. 2-3*; Harris, chap. 11*; Goodwin, The Price of Honor, chap. 2 (pp. 29-46)*;

Week XI March 31-April 2: The Challenge of the West, the Challenge of Zionism

T: What Went Wrong? Modernity and the Humiliation of the Arab-Muslim World

Th: The Limits of the Tolerable: The Naqba as Unbearable Humiliation
Suggested: Palestine Remembered, Nakba Online;
Week XII April 7-9: Hyper-Asabiyya and Western Incomprehension

T: Hyper-Asabiyya and the Pathologies of Honor-Shame Culture
Akhbar Ahmed, “Hyper-Asabiyya”*; The Palestinian Mystique, pp. 39-53; Jessica Stern, Beneath the Bombast and Bombs, a Caldron of Humiliation; Suzanne Fields, Male Humiliation, Muslim Rage; Phyllis Chessler, The Psychoanalytic Roots of Islamic Terrorism; visit this site and look at some of the case studies.

Th: Cognitive Egocentrism and the Logic(s) of Oslo
Readings: Concise History of Arab-Israeli Conflict, chaps.10-11; Eisenberg and Caplan, “Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process in Historical Perspective”*; Husseini, Interview; Fishman, Oslo Ten Years Later; Kenneth Levin, The Oslo Syndrome, TBA.*

Week XIII April 14-16: The (Predictable) Failure of Oslo and the Olso Intifada

T: Dead End to Negotiations: The Failure of Camp David
Readings: Concise History, chap. 12; Itamar Marcus, Rape, Murder, Violence and War for Allah Against the Jews: Summer 2000 on Palestinian Television; Agha and Malley vs. Barak and Morris in the NYRB, Part I; Part II; Part III; Robert Wright, Was Arafat the Problem?; Samuels, In a Ruined Country; Jimmy Carter, Peace or Apartheid; Karsh, Arafat’s War, ch. 9*; Levin, The Oslo Syndrome, ch. 17*; Landes, “Paradigms and the Middle East Conflict”*

Th: Pallywood, Al Durah, and the Politics of Incitement
View Pallywood, Al Durah: Making of an Icon, and Icon of Hatred at Second Draft.

Week XIV April 21-23: From Intifada to Global Jihad: The Dynamics of Global Culture

T: The Mind of Jihad

Th: Eurabia: Praeparatio Caliphatae
Readings: Huntington, Clash of Civilizations, TBA; Ahmad, Islam and the West; Ahmed, Islam Under Siege, TBA; Harris, chap. 13-14; Bat Ye’or, Eurabia, Selections*
FINAL PAPER DUE

Week XV April 28-30: Whither Global Culture?

T December 7: France, July 2014-January 2015

Th: Review after which take-home exam distributed.

May 5: FINAL DUE VIA EMAIL