Cities in the Middle East: Mecca to Dubai (HI 390)
Fall 2017

Betty Anderson (banderso@bu.edu)
CAS 214 TTH: 3:30-4:45

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Office Hours: T 10:00-11:00 and 5:00-6:00; TH 10:00-12:00 and 5:00-6:00; and by appointment

Course Description:

This course examines Middle Eastern history through the lens of its cities, focusing on Mecca, Damascus, Jerusalem, Baghdad, Cairo, Istanbul, Tehran, Beirut, Damascus, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Doha. In these cities, caliphs, presidents and kings have ruled; religious clerics adjudicated Islamic law; architects and artists constructed magnificent monuments; and merchants traded the world’s goods. Cities have also been the centers for literary and scientific experimentation, educational expansion, and social entertainment. Today, they are the epicenter for both political protest and neoliberal globalization. A close examination of the region’s cities provides a window on to developments in governance, religion, and culture. Classes will include historical lectures, discussions about the readings, and displays of images, music and films that illustrate the diversity of experiences to be found in Middle Eastern cities.

The students are required to complete all the readings assigned and will write 2 five-page papers analyzing an aspect of the course covered in the readings, lectures and films. The papers must be turned in on the date specified below; a late paper will lose 1/3 a grade for each day it is late. Plagiarism will be handled per the guidelines set out in the CAS Academic Conduct Code (http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/).

Students will complete 4 critical reading exercises as in-class exercises throughout the semester. These will require students to analyze a written text, an image or a film clip for historical context, authorship, and intended audience. In the last three weeks of the semester, students will present their own critical reading exercise – the 5th – to the class.

The students will prepare a take-home mid-term and final, tested not only on their knowledge of historical events but they must be able to analyze the different historical developments and changes taking place during the period of time covered by the course. Answers must incorporate information gleaned from the class lectures, the assigned readings, the films, and the discussions.
In addition to the written work, discussions will take place every week concerning the assigned readings, current events and films. On these days, the students must arrive in class prepared to analyze and contribute to the topics being discussed in order to receive full credit for participation.

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**Book:**


*(All other articles are on the Blackboard site for the class)*

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**Requirements:**

- 5 critical reading exercise worth 25% of the grade (5% each)
- 2 five-page papers worth 30% of the grade (15% each)
- 1 take-home mid-term exam worth 15% of the grade
- 1 take-home final exam worth 15% of the grade
- Class participation worth 15% of the grade

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**Week 1: Mecca (September 4 and 6)**

**Readings:**

1) **Anderson**, Prologue

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**Week 2: Umayyad Damascus and Jerusalem (September 11 and 13)**

**Readings:**


**1st Critical Reading Exercise, in Class, September 13**
Week 3: Abbasid Baghdad (September 18 and 20)

**Readings:**


2nd Critical Reading Exercise, in Class, September 20

Week 4: Fatimid, Mamluk and Ottoman Cairo (September 25 and 27)

**Readings:**


Week 5: Ottoman Istanbul (October 2 and 4)

**Readings:**

1) Anderson, Chapter 1

First Five-Page Paper Due: Friday, October 5, 5:00 pm
Week 6: Safavid Isfahan and Timurid Samarqand (October 11)

Readings:

2) Gülru Necipoğlu, “Framing the Gaze in Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Palaces.” Ars Orientalist, 1993.

Week 7: 19th Century Istanbul (October 16 and 18)

Readings:

1) Anderson, Chapter 2

Mid-Term Due, Friday, October 19, 5:00pm

Week 8: 19th Century Ottoman Beirut and Damascus (October 23 and 25)

Readings:

1) Anderson, Chapters 3 and 4
3) Samir Kassir, Beirut (University of California Press, 2010), pp.129-159.

3rd Critical Reading Exercise, in Class, September 25
**Week 9: 19th Century Cairo and Tehran (October 30 and November 1)**

**Readings:**


**4th Critical Reading Exercise, in Class, November 1**

**Week 10: Urban Life under Colonialism (November 6 and 8)**

**Readings:**

1) *Anderson*, Chapters 5, 6 and 7
3) Abigail Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire: Jerusalem between Ottoman and British Rule* (Syracuse University Press, 2011), pp. 53-81.

**Second Five-Page Paper Due, Friday, November 9, 5:00pm**

**Week 11: Urban Protest after Independence (November 13 and 15)**

**Readings:**

1) *Anderson*, Chapters 8 and 9
Week 12: No Class (Watch Film to be Determined) (November 20)

Week 13: The Social City (November 27 and 29)

Readings:

1) Anderson, Chapter 10

Beginning of 5th Critical Reading Exercises (Weeks 13-15)

Week 14: Urban Persian Gulf (December 4 and 6)

Readings:


Week 15: 21st Century Urban Protest (December 11)

Reading:

Anderson, Epilogue

Final: Scheduled for Wednesday, December 19, 3:00-5:00pm (To be Arranged as a Take-Home Exam)