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Course Proposal
Spring 2009

Jews and Muslims in the Mediterranean, 1800-present

Depictions of Jewish-Muslim relations today tend to center narrowly on political interactions in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This course seeks to re-conceptualize the question of Jewish-Muslim relations in a broad historical framework that considers a wide variety of relationships in diverse settings. The course will begin by examining Jewish-Muslim relations in pre-modern periods, the two groups' textual traditions regarding one another, and the Mediterranean as an historical and imagined entity. We will then situate more modern Jewish-Muslim relations in the context of the increasing Western presence and Islamic reforms that began at the turn of the nineteenth century. Subsequent sessions assess the historical impact and legacy of the *dhimmi* (the system of rights and restrictions that defined Jews' status for centuries under Islamic rule); the effects of French, British, and Italian colonialism; and the importance of Zionism, Arab nationalism, and anti-colonialist independence movements for Jews and Muslims in the Mediterranean basin. Throughout, we will examine Jewish-Muslim interaction in the spheres of commerce, politics, neighborhoods, kinship, shared culinary, clothing, and musical customs, and overlapping religious practices. The class does discuss Jews and Muslims of Israel-Palestine, but it treats their relations comparatively, placing them within a wider spectrum of settings for Jewish-Muslim interactions that includes, for example, Egypt, Algeria, Greece, the Ottoman Empire, and modern France.

We will also use the subject of Jewish-Muslim relations to examine three wider challenges to historical analysis: elements of violence; transnational influences; and novels as sources for history. In the first instance, several Jewish-Muslim riots enable us to attempt to understand the explosion of violence in circumstances of daily, apparently peaceful coexistence. In the second case, the class asks repeatedly to what extent international developments or local circumstances appear most decisive in Jews' and Muslims' ways of interacting with one another. In the final instance, we will discuss the appeals and pitfalls of novels as both primary sources for historians and guides to history for many of their non-academic readers. I have included below a list of the central sources from which the class will read selected portions (or occasionally the books in their entirety).

Textbook (largely for reference):

Reeva Spector Simon, Michael Menachem Laskier, and Sara Reguer, eds., *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in modern times* (New York, 2003).

Sources for Secondary Reading:

Joëlle Bahloul, *The Architecture of Memory: A Jewish-Muslim Household in Colonial Algeria, 1937-1962*, trans. Catherine du Peloux Ménagé (Cambridge, 1996).

Harvey E. Goldberg, *Jewish Life in Muslim Libya: Rivals and Relatives* (Chicago, 1990).

Emily Gottreich, *The Mellah of Marrakesh: Jewish and Muslim Space in Morocco's Red City* (Bloomington, 2005).

Michael Laskier, *The Jews of Egypt, 1920-1970: in the midst of Zionism, anti-Semitism, and the Middle East Conflict* (New York, 1992).

Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of Islam* (Princeton, 1987).
Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims, and Jews, 1430-1950* (New York, 2005).
Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Arab-Zionist Conflict, 1881-1999* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001).
Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York, 2006).
Sandy Tolan, *The Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East* (Bloomsbury, 2006).

Sources for Primary Reading:

The Qur'an, trans. M.H. Shakir and published by Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, Inc., in 1983. Online at URL: <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/k/koran>.
Avraham Yaakov Finkel,, ed., *The Essential Maimonides: Translations of the Rambam* (Northvale, N.J., 1996).
Norman Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands: A History and Sourcebook* (Philadelphia, 1979).
Norman Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands in Modern Times* (Philadelphia, 1991).
Mordechai Ha-Cohen, *The Book of Mordechai: a Study of the Jews of Libya*, edited and translated with introduction and commentary by Harvey E. Goldberg (Philadelphia, 1980).
Albert Memmi, *The Pillar of Salt*, trans. Edouard Roditi (New York, 1955).
Roman Gary, *The Life Before Us (La Vie Devant Soi)*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York, 1987).
Amin Mahlouf, *Leo Africanus*, trans. Peter Sluglett (New York, 1992).