

The city has served as the site of power, its spaces made coherent and hold in the image of man himself. The city has also served as the space in which these master images have cracked a part. The city brings together people who are different, it intensifies the complexity of social life, it presents people to each other as strangers. All these aspects of urban experience - difference, complexity, strangeness- afford resistance to domination. This craggy and difficult urban geography makes a particular moral promise. It can serve as a home for those who have accepted themselves as exiles from the Garden.

*Flesh & Stone: The Body and the City In Western Civilization*

For Fez had once been familiar to me, well known and yet full of inexhaustible secrets. In it I had experienced another world and another age, a world of the Middle Ages such as perhaps now no longer existed, and austere and yet enticing world, otherworldly poor but inwardly rich. It was a city that had had to yield to foreign rule and that had accepted in silence the arrival of a new order dominated by the power of machines, yet inwardly it remained true to itself; but at the time I first knew it, men who had spent their youth in an un-altered traditional world were still the heads of families. For many of them the spirit which had once created the mosque at Córdoba and Alhambra at Granada was near her and more real than all the innovations that European rule had brought with it. Since then, however a new generation had arisen, one which from its earliest childhood must have been blinded by the glare of European might one which in large measure had attended French schools and thus henceforth bore within it the sting of an almost insuperable contradiction.

*Fez: The City of Islam*

## ISLAMIC CITY

Windows to Islamic Society, Institutions and Culture

REL 278 (Spring 2017)  
T & TH 3:05–4:20 p.m. (Wall 106)

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To Schedule a Meeting: Click <http://bit.ly/2ixJNnl> (FRIDAY 11:00am-1:00pm)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

There are various ways of studying a culture, civilization or a religious tradition. One can choose the window of history (thus studying its historical origins and evolution), read the various texts its inhabitants has produced, listen to the stories that were deemed important by its inhabitants, listen (or/and speak) to the inhabitants OR approach them “spatially”, i.e., by paying close attention to the spaces that they created. It is the latter that we do in our explorations this term. Our explorations this term are "imagined" to discover and share a bird's eye view of premodern Muslim Spaces. It seeks to understand Islamic societies and its inhabitants “the Muslims” by painting a picture/image of a typical "Islamic City" with its religious, cultural, social, political, and economic life. With the enablers (Mr. James Sponsel and Caitlin Christian-Lamb from the Library, and Mr. Brian Little from ITS) assisting you in your explorations, you will ‘choose’, ‘discover’, ‘imagine’ and ‘present’ *An Islamic City* and the lived experience of it.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

It is expected that by the end of the class, the students will have:

1. Appreciation of spaces (and city-space in particular) as among the various ‘key windows’ to understanding a culture and civilization and its underlying worldview;
2. Experimented in ‘plotting’ the story of a cultural world other than one’s own;
3. Learned how to “look and find” (research) information on a phenomena;
4. Learned how to “navigate and bring together” (synthesize) what one sees and finds
5. Creatively imagined and visualized one’s discoveries;
6. Shared with the intended audience the synthesis of discoveries in ways that are accessible, reliable, thoughtful and visually compelling;
7. Reflected on the role of imagination in looking and finding, navigating and bringing together and sharing one’s findings;
8. Cultivated a ‘deeper reading of texts’, and through these texts, the issues that they raise;

## GUIDES ON THE JOURNEY:

*An Ottoman Traveller: Selections from the Book of Travels of Evliya Celebi*

[https://www.amazon.com/Ottoman-Traveller-Selections-Travels-Evliya/dp/1906011583/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1481334387&sr=1-1&keywords=evliya+celebi](https://www.amazon.com/Ottoman-Traveller-Selections-Travels-Evliya/dp/1906011583/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1481334387&sr=1-1&keywords=evliya+celebi)

Al-Ghazali, *Al-Ghazali's Path to Sufism: His Deliverance from Error (al-Munqidh min al-Dalal)*

[https://www.amazon.com/Al-Ghazalis-Path-Sufism-Deliverance-al-Munqidh/dp/1887752307/ref=pd\\_sim\\_14\\_2?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=AMM1R43TFQJ1A7C8EVM6](https://www.amazon.com/Al-Ghazalis-Path-Sufism-Deliverance-al-Munqidh/dp/1887752307/ref=pd_sim_14_2?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=AMM1R43TFQJ1A7C8EVM6)

Titus Burckhardt. *Fez: The City of Islam*

[https://www.amazon.com/Fez-Islam-Islamic-Texts-Society/dp/0946621179/ref=asap\\_bc?ie=UTF8](https://www.amazon.com/Fez-Islam-Islamic-Texts-Society/dp/0946621179/ref=asap_bc?ie=UTF8)

Chase Robinson. *Islamic Civilization in Thirty Lives: The First 1,000 Years*

[https://www.amazon.com/Islamic-Civilization-Thirty-Lives-First/dp/0520292987/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1481333905&sr=1-1&keywords=Islamic+Civilization+in+Thirty+Lives>](https://www.amazon.com/Islamic-Civilization-Thirty-Lives-First/dp/0520292987/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1481333905&sr=1-1&keywords=Islamic+Civilization+in+Thirty+Lives>)

Isabelle Eberhardt, *In the Shadow of Islam*

[https://www.amazon.com/Shadow-Islam-Isabelle-Eberhardt/dp/0720615879/ref=pd\\_sim\\_14\\_3?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=HR4DMYG8Y3S55CVHNBE7](https://www.amazon.com/Shadow-Islam-Isabelle-Eberhardt/dp/0720615879/ref=pd_sim_14_3?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=HR4DMYG8Y3S55CVHNBE7)

Shihab al-Din al-Nuwayri. *The Ultimate Ambition in the Arts of Erudition: A Compendium of Knowledge from the Classical Islamic World*

[https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0143107488/ref=ox\\_sc\\_act\\_title\\_1?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=ATVPDKIKX0DER](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0143107488/ref=ox_sc_act_title_1?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=ATVPDKIKX0DER)

## INTELLECTUAL PRACTICES\*

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Presentations on City-Spaces (10% each)                          | 30% |
| Guided Tour (20%), Accompanying Text that includes History (10%) | 30% |
| TWO Reports & Presentations (10% each)                           | 20% |
| OER Textbook & Website   | 10% |
| Revisiting the Journey (Reflection Essay)                        | 10% |

\*NOTE: Based on how our exploration evolves we may need to make adjustments.

## COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 (Jan 17-19): Introduction to the Course & the Stakes in the Study

Preparation for Thursday

- *An Ottoman Traveller*, xi-xxv & 3-31
- **Watch:** *Islam: Empire of Faith* (Part III) [here](#)

Asterisk of the Week: **Library/Librarian!**

## SECTION I: TRAVELING THROUGH THE WORLD OF ISLAM

Week 2 (Jan 24-26):

Preparation for Tuesday

- *An Ottoman Traveller*, 35-112
- **Watch:** *In the Footsteps of Ibn Battuta* [here](#)

Preparation for Thursday

- *An Ottoman Traveller*, 111-138

Asterisk of the Week: **Research/Information!**

Week 3 (Jan 31-Feb 2):

Preparation for Tuesday

- *Al-Ghazali's Path to Sufism*
- **Watch:** *The Alchemist of Happiness*

Preparation for Thursday

- *An Ottoman Traveller*, 303-370
- Ibn Battuta from *One Thousand Roads to Mecca*, 55-67
- **Watch:** *Inside Mecca* [here](#)
- **Watch:** *The Alhambra: From the Sultan Palace, to the Legend* [here](#) OR *The Legacy of Al-Andalus 'Islamic Spain'* [here](#)

Asterisk of the Week: **Choice!**

Week 4 (Feb 7-9):

Preparation for Tuesday

TUESDAY: "CHOOSING YOUR CITY": WORKSHOP WITH MR. JAMES SPONSEL

### Preparation for Thursday

- *Islamic Civilization in Thirty Lives* (The Rulers: 42-47, 60-68, 107-111, 160-168, 212-219 & 229-246)

Asterisk of the Week: ***Evidence/Proof!***

BY NOW GROUPS SHOULD HAVE DECIDED THE CITY THEY ARE RESEARCHING...

### 2-Page Outline and Presentation (DUE FEB 9)

Individually and through a synthesis of everything that has been discovered thus far in the course, formulate your overview of Islamic society, culture and institutions. Your presentation should also include reflections on the thinking process through which you have formulated these thoughts.

## SECTION II: "WINDOWS" TO TRADITIONAL ISLAMIC CITIES

### Week 5 (Feb 14-16):

#### Preparation for Tuesday

- Ira Lapidus (1973) "The Evolution of Muslim Urban Society" (B)
- *Fez: The City of Islam*, v-63
- **Watch:** "Nomad and the City" *The Traditional World of Islam* (R) (Part 2)

#### Preparation for Thursday

- *Islamic Civilization in Thirty Lives* (The Learned and the Rich: 48-53, 74-106, 112-118, 128-133, 148-159, 169-177, 194-211 & 220-228)

Asterisk of the Week: **Audience/Interlocutor!**

**NOTE:** At this junction for SECTION III each group will think through and choose what "windows/lens" it chooses to describe its city. Four of these combinations will have to be picked for next four weeks (Weeks 8-11). Here are some suggestions:

1. Plains-Hills/Coastal-Inland OR Centralized-DeCentralized/ Populated-Unpopulated
2. Walled-Unwalled/ Public-Private OR Religious-Political-Economic-Social-Artistic
3. Communal-Individual/Solitary OR Open-Discrete/Narrow-Wide
4. Green-Non-green/Natural-Constructed OR Human-non-human
5. Fortified-non-fortified

### Week 6 (Feb 21-23):

#### Preparation for Tuesday

- *Fez: The City of Islam*, 64-89 & 129-150
- Yusuf Ibish, "Traditional Guilds in the Ottoman Empire"
- "Sufism and the People" & "Popular Culture and High Culture in Medieval Cairo" in *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo* (PDF available)

### Preparation for Thursday

- **Watch:** “The Inner Life” *The Traditional World of Islam* (R) (Part 6)
- *Islamic Civilization in Thirty Lives* (The Mystics: 31-36, 54-59, 79-84, 139-147 & 188-193)

Asterisk of the Week: **Tour!**

### Week 7 (Feb 28-Mar 2):

#### Preparation for Tuesday

- *Fez: The City of Islam* “Traditional Science” (107-128)
- *Cambridge Illustrated History*, “Knowledge and its Transmission” pp. 208-239
- George Makdisi (1970), “Madrasa and University in the Middle Ages”
- Said Arjomand (1999), “Development of the Institutions of Learning from the Tenth to the Fifteenth Century”
- Dohaish (1989), “Growth and Development of Islamic Libraries”
- **Watch:** “Man and Nature” *The Traditional World of Islam* (R) (Part 3)

#### Preparation for Thursday

- *The Ultimate Ambition in the Arts of Erudition* (selections will be announced)
- **Watch:** “Knowledge of the World” *The Traditional World of Islam* (R) (Part 5)

Asterisk of the Week: **Space/Map!**

### 4-page Collaborative Outline & CLASS PRESENTATIONS (MAR 2)

In groups and through a synthesis of everything that has been discovered thus far in the course, formulate your overview of Islamic society, culture and institutions. Your presentation should also include reflections on the thinking process through which you have formulated these thoughts.

### SPRING BREAK

*Fri, Mar 2 (4:30 p.m.) - Mon, Mar 13 (8:30 a.m.)*

## SECTION III: ISLAMIC CITY-SPACES

(NOTE: During Weeks 8-11 Media tutors will be available during regular drop-ins. If needed, additional labs will be scheduled.)

### Week 8 (Mar 14-16):

#### Preparation for Tuesday

- *Islamic Art & Visual Culture*, “Foundations” (6-10), *Islamic Art & Visual Culture*, “Behaviors, Gifts, Treasuries and Collections” (11-23) & “Urbanism and Land” (91-95)

TUESDAY: WORKSHOP ON DIGITAL IMAGINING (Location will be announced)

#### Preparation for Thursday

- Annemarie Schimmel, “The Celestial Garden in Islam”
- **Watch:** “The Pattern of Beauty” *The Traditional World of Islam* (R) (Part 4)

### Week 9 (Mar 21-23):

#### Preparation for Tuesday

- PRESENTATIONS (& DISCUSSION) ON CITY SPACES

#### Preparation for Thursday

- *Fez: The City of Islam* “The House” (64-89)
- Avner Giladi, “Children in Medieval Islam” (pdf)
- Amy Singer (2006), “Soup and Sadaqa: Charity in Islamic Societies”

### Week 10 (Mar 28-30):

#### Preparation for Tuesday

- PRESENTATIONS (& DISCUSSION) ON CITY SPACES

#### Preparation for Thursday

- *The Ultimate Ambition in the Arts of Erudition* (selections will be announced)

### Week 11 (Apr 4-Apr 6):

#### Preparation for Tuesday

- PRESENTATIONS (& DISCUSSION) ON CITY SPACES

#### Preparation for Thursday

- *In the Shadow of Islam* (selections will be announced)

## PART IV: GUIDED TOURS TO TRADITIONAL ISLAMIC CITIES

### Week 12 (Apr 11-13): Guided Tours to Islamic Cities

#### Preparation for Tuesday

- GUIDED TOURS

#### Preparation for Thursday

- GUIDED TOURS

### Week 13 (April 18-20): Guided Tours to Islamic Cities

#### Preparation for Tuesday

- GUIDED TOURS

#### Preparation for Thursday

- GUIDED TOURS

WEEK 12 & 13: Interview Meeting with DLT team will be conducted.

## PART IV: REFLECTIONS, SYNTHESSES, CONCLUSIONS

1. Readings for this section of the course will be reevaluated in light of the evolution of our conversation thus far)
2. The process of preparing the Virtual City Tours and Accompanying text for collection and sharing/showcasing your discoveries through a website or/and textbook etc. begin at this point. Caitlin Christian-Lamb will be your main resource person for this phase of the course.

### Week 14 (Apr 25-27): Islamic City Today

#### Preparation for Tuesday

- *Fez: The City of Islam* (151-163)
- *In the Shadow of Islam* (selections will be announced)
- Titus Burckhardt, *Art of Islam: Language and Meaning*, pp.199-225
- Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Art & Architecture" in *Islam in the Modern World*, pp.205-258
- *Cambridge Illustrated History*, 156-163, 197-207, 241-249 & 282-290
- **Watch:** *What Makes an Islamic City?* [here](#)
- **Watch:** "Unity" *The Traditional World of Islam* (R)—[VC T7632 DVD] (Part 1)

#### Preparation for Thursday

- Dale Eickelman, "Is there an Islamic City?"
- Janet Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City--Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance" (IJMES, 1987)
- "The Preindustrial City" *The American Journal of Sociology* 60: 5, (1955)
- Somaiyeh Falahat, *Reimagining the City* (e-book [selections])
- Besim Hakim, *Arabic-Islamic Cities* (selections)



## Week 15 (May 2-4): The City Space

### Preparation for Tuesday

- *The City: A Global History* (selections)
- *A Companion to the City* (selections)

### Preparation for Thursday

- *The Blackwell City Reader* (selections)
- *The Meaning of City* (selections)
- *The Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life* (selections)

## Week 16 (May 9): Conclusion

1. Submitting the final version of the projects for website & textbook
2. The final Reflection Essay is due today
3. Come prepared to discuss your essay as “your conclusion” to the course and reflections on the journey
4. DLT Team will also make observations on our endeavors this term.