

Art History 370: Cultural Contacts: Middle East and Asia

Syllabus and Schedule - Winter 2007

Julia Sapin

Overview and Objectives

This course introduces Islamic visual culture of the Middle East, Asia, and Africa from the time of the rise of Islam (c. 600 AD) until the present. We will cover a vast array of media, including architecture, calligraphy, textiles, ceramics, metalwork, and glass. While these objects were made under the influence of Islamic culture (that is, within societies in which faith in God—as opposed to multiple gods—and belief in Muhammad as God's messenger reign supreme), they are not necessarily religious in nature, which provides a vivid contrast with the arts of Christianity or Buddhism, for example. The specific objective of this course is to gain initial insights into these distinct visual forms and understand the intersection of political, social, and religious motivations that helped create them. More fundamentally speaking, the course will also help expand your visual vocabularies and your ability to use writing about visual culture to further critical thinking.

Texts

*Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, *Islamic Arts*, Phaidon (1997), available at The College Store in Sehome Village as well as the Western Bookstore.

*Readings, available via the web or on electronic reserve at Wilson Library.

Grading

Exams (3)	75%	300
Blogs (6 units)	15%	60
Class participation	10%	40
Total	100%	400 points

Grade Scale

376-400=A	336-351=B	296-311=C	
360-375=A-	320-335=B-	280-295=C-	
352-359=B+	312-319=C+	240-279=D	239 and below=F

***NO MAKEUP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN** without proof of emergency verified by the Student Health Center or the Office of the Dean of Students.*

Reading responses must be submitted on time in order for you to receive credit for them.

Lecture and Reading Schedule

Week 1 (1/9):	Introduction (*no class on Thursday, 1/11*) Section One: The Rise of Islam, 600-900 AD

Week 2 (1/16-18):	Architecture B and B, 15-56 1/ 18: Article discussion #1: Nasser Rabbat, "The Meaning of the Umayyad Dome of the Rock," Muqarnas VI: An Annual on Islamic Art and Architecture (1989). http://archnet.org/library/pubdownloader/pdf/3599/doc/dpt0821.pdf
Week 3 (1/23-25):	Calligraphy and Textiles B and B, 59-98 1/ 25: Article discussion #2: Finbarr Barry Flood, "Between Cult and Culture: Bamiyan, Islamic Iconoclasm, and the Museum," The Art Bulletin, vol. 84, no. 4 (December 2002): 641-659. (JSTOR)
Week 4 (1/31-2/1):	Ceramics, Metalwork, and Glasswork B and B, 101-127. 2/ 1: Exam One
	Section Two: Regional Centers and Local Powers, 900-1500 AD
Week 5 (2/6-8):	Architecture B and B, 131-190. 2/ 8: Article discussion #3: D. Fairchild Ruggles, "The Eye of Sovereignty: Poetry and Vision in the Alhambra's Lindaraja Mirador," Gesta vol. 36, no. 2 Visual Culture of Medieval Iberia (1997): 180-189. (JSTOR)
Week 6 (2/13-15):	Calligraphy and Textiles B and B, 193-246 2/ 15: Article Discussion #4: Sheila S. Blair, "The Development of the Illustrated Book in Iran," Muqarnas, Essays in Honor of Oleg Grabar (vol. 10, 1993): 266-74. (JSTOR)
Week 7 (2/20-22):	Ceramics, Metalwork and Glasswork B and B, 249-283 2/ 22: Exam Two
	Section Three: The Great Empires and Contemporary Cultures
Week 8 (2/27-3/1):	Architecture B and B, 287-328 Article Discussion #5: tba
Week 9 (3/6-8):	Calligraphy and Textiles B and B, 331-388
Week 10 (3/13-15):	Ceramics, Metalwork, and Glasswork Contemporary Islamic Arts B and B, 391-422 Article Discussion #6: tba
3/19:	Exam Three, during scheduled final: Monday, 3/ 19, 8-10am