FAH 21/121: Early Islamic Art, 690-1250
Spring 2014
Tues./Thurs. 3-4:15pm
Jackson Hall, Room 6

Instructor: Jennifer Lyons
Office: 11 Talbot Ave. (#107, first floor)
Hours: Thurs. 1:30-2:30 & by appt.
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Course Description: A survey of visual arts in Muslim lands from Central Asia to Spain between the seventh and thirteenth centuries, emphasizing the role of visual arts in the formation and expression of cultural identity. We will explore painting, sculpture, and architecture, as well as portable arts including ceramics, ivory, metalwork, and illuminated manuscripts. We will engage with topics including the uses of figural and non-figural imagery, calligraphy and ornament, religious and secular art, public and private art, the art of the court and the art of the urban middle class, and the status, function, and meaning of the portable arts.

Learning Objectives:
In this course, students will gain an understanding of the visual arts produced in Islamic lands between the seventh and thirteenth centuries. In addition, the course aims to improve students’ abilities to read actively and to think critically about the readings covered over the course of the semester. Students will also sharpen their powers of visual analysis by engaging with images through slow and careful looking. In addition, students will develop and practice the ability to present their research in oral and written forms.

Requirements and Assignments:
- Attendance, class participation, and short responses to selected readings posted to the class forum on Trunk (10%)
- Exhibition review (due 2/25) [10%]
- Midterm (3/13) [20%]
- Final Paper:
  - Annotated bibliography (due 4/3) [10%]
  - Short in-class presentation (4/8 and 4/10) [10%]
  - 8-10 page research paper (due 4/24) [20%]
- Take-Home Final Exam (due 5/5 by 5pm) [20%]
Course Materials:

- **Textbook** (available in the bookstore and on Amazon):
- **Additional readings** will be available digitally (on Trunk) or on library reserve.
- **Images** covered in lecture will be available on Trunk.

**Library Research Page:**
http://www.library.tufts.edu/tisch/tutorials/earlyIslamicArt.html

Course Policies:

- More than three unexcused absences or excessive lateness will result in a lower grade for the course.
- Late work will not be accepted unless the student arranges for an extension prior to the due date.
- Except in special circumstances in which you have received prior permission from me, assignments should be submitted in hard copy.
- Make-up exams will be given only in the case of documented illness or emergency.
- Because bright screens, typing, and the lure of the web pose distractions for you and your neighbors, I ask that you do not use laptops or other devices in this class.

Special Needs:
Students requiring academic accommodations for a documented disability should register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and contact the instructor to discuss the implementation and logistics of their accommodations.

Academic Integrity:
It is your responsibility to follow the guidelines of academic integrity, as outlined in the Tufts University Student Affairs Handbook (see link below). Academic dishonesty including plagiarism will result in a failing grade in the course.

Schedule of Classes:

**Week 1**

Thurs., 1/16  Course Introductions and Slow-Looking Exercise

**Week 2**

Tues., 1/21  The Art Before Islam: The Late-Antique Mediterranean and Sasanian Worlds

Thurs., 1/23  Interactions Between the Mediterranean and Sasanian Worlds

Week 3

Tues., 1/28  Umayyad Art: Visual Representation on the Public Sphere  
Read: Islamic Art and Architecture, 3-20

Thurs., 1/30  Umayyad Art: Visual Representation on the Public Sphere, cont.  
Due: Post response to Dodd to Trunk forum by 1PM

Week 4

Tues., 2/4  The Congregational Mosque: Form and Function/The Great Mosque of Damascus  
Read: Islamic Art and Arch., 20-35; 83-91; 105-116; 139-60

Thurs., 2/6  The Great Mosque of Cordoba  
Due: Post response to Georgopoulou to Trunk forum by 1PM

Week 5

Tues., 2/11  Umayyad Palace Estates: The Private Sphere  

Thurs., 2/13  Calligraphy and the Art of the Book  

Week 6

Tues., 2/18  No Class (Visit the “Sacred Pages” Exhibition and the Islamic gallery at the MFA)

Thurs., 2/20  No Class (Monday Schedule)

Week 7

Tues., 2/25  The Abbasid Palace-City: The Planning of the Capital City of Baghdad and the Wall Paintings at Samarra  
Read: Islamic Art and Arch., 50-73; Ettinghausen, Arab Painting, 41-44  
Due: Exhibition Review
Thurs., 2/27  Ornament: Stucco Decoration and Pottery from Samarra
Due: Due: Post response to Allen to Trunk forum by 1PM

Week 8

Tues., 3/4  Fatimid Art in Egypt
Read: Islamic Art and Arch., 200-213.

Thurs., 3/6  Luxury Arts of Al-Andalus
Due: Due: Post response to Prado-Vilar to Trunk forum by 1PM

Week 9

Tues., 3/11  Artistic Interchange in the Mediterranean: Egypt, Spain, and Norman Sicily
Due: Post response to either Hoffman or Golombek to Trunk forum by 1PM

Thurs., 3/13  Midterm Exam

Week 10

Tues., 3/18  No Class (Spring Break)

Thurs., 3/20  No Class (Spring Break)

Week 11

Due: Submit Paper Topic
Thurs., 3/27  Meet in Tisch Library in the Tisch Research Center for library instruction and hands-on research session.

Week 12
Tues., 4/1  Metalwork: Iran

Thurs., 4/3  Art of Mesopotamia and Syria: Inlaid Metalwork of the Thirteenth Century
Read: *Islamic Art and Arch.*, 243-255
Due: Annotated Bibliography

Week 13
Tues., 4/8  Presentations

Thurs., 4/10  Presentations

Week 14
Tues., 4/15  Painting in Arabic Manuscripts: Image and Text

Thurs., 4/17  Painting in Arabic Manuscripts: The Maqamat of Al-Hariri

Week 15
Tues., 4/22  The Persian Epic: The Shahnama

Thurs., 4/24  Illuminating the Kalila wa Dimna
Due: Research Papers

Take-Home Final Exam due Monday, May 5 by 5PM.