Muhammad: The History of a Prophet  
NEJS 195a  
Spring 2014

Monday and Wednesday 2 to 3:20

Professor Joseph Lumbard  
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Course Description: This course provides a study of the life of Muhammad based upon the earliest biographical accounts and the academic analyses in both Islamic and non-Islamic sources, accompanied by an examination of his legacy in different aspects of Islam, such as Shi'ism, Sufism, and poetry.

Course Evaluation: This will be a lecture class with extensive class discussion. Grading will be based upon class participation (20%), one short paper (15%), an in class presentation (15%), a research paper regarding a particular aspect of Muhammad’s life, legacy, or presentation (25%), and a final take home exam (25%).

Course Objectives: The object of this course for students to gain familiarity with sources for understanding the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the various ways in which they are understood by Muslims and non-Muslims. Students should be familiar with the critical theories regarding the biography of Muhammad and should know about the different ways in which his has been understood by Muslims of different branches.

Policy on Late Work and Incompletes:
Late work will be penalized by half a letter grade for each day overdue (including weekends and holidays). Extensions will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, and in no case after the original deadline for completion has passed. Students who anticipate difficulty in meeting deadlines should contact me as far in advance of the due date as possible. A course grade of incomplete will only be granted for compelling reasons.

Academic Integrity: You must complete all assignments alone. In your writing, you must follow rules of attribution, meaning that you must cite all sources consulted in preparing your papers. As stated in the Student Handbook, “Every member of the University community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. A student shall not receive credit for work that is not the product of the student’s own effort.” Examples of penalties for a student found responsible for an infringement of academic honesty are no credit for the work in question, failure in the course, and the traditional range of conduct sanctions from disciplinary warning through permanent dismissal from the University.
Disabilities: Students with documented disabilities should see me ASAP to be sure that adequate provisions are made.

Assigned Readings
1. Excerpts from translations of primary source materials such as Ibn Ishaq’s *Biography of the Prophet* (*Sirāt al-Nabī*) and al-Wāqidi’s *Book of Campaigns* (*Kitāb al-Maghāzī*).

Course Outline

**Week 1** Jan 13–15
Introduction: Muhammad and the Biographical Tradition

**Week 2** January 22
Pre-Islamic Arabia and Muhammad’s Early Life
- Lings, Chapters 1–14
- Watt, 1–55
- Quran: *Sūrah* 93, 105, 106

**Week 3** January 27–29
Overview of Developments in the Makkan Period
- Brockopp, Chapter 2
- Lings, Chapters 14–30
- Watt, 56–82
- Quran,

**Recommended**
- Watt, *Muhammad at Meccah*, 60–186 (Latte)

**Week 4** February 3–5
End of the Makkan Period and Emigration
- Guillaume, 181–187 (Latte)
- Lings, Chapters 31–36
Haykal, 133-140 (Latte)
Safi, 165–188 (Latte)
Watt, 83–101
Quran 17:1; 53:1–18 (Latte)

**Week 5  February 10–12**

**Early Madinan Period: Battles of Badr and Uhud**

**First Paper Due February 15**

- Lings, Chapters 37–57
- Guillaume, pp. 289-314, 370–391
- Tabari, *History*, v. 7, 28-41
- Al-Waqidi, *Book of Campaigns*, selections
- Watt, 102–175

**Recommended**

- Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 1–29

**Midterm Recess February 17–21**

**Week 6  February 24–26**

**Battle of the Trench, Hudaybiyah and the Conquest of Makka**

- Quran, Surah 48
- Lings, Chapters 58–85 (Note that this is a large chunk, assigned with the fact the break precedes this week in mind)
- Guillaume, 499–503, 543–555
- Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, 148–160
- Al-Waqidi, *Book of Campaigns*, selections
- Watt, 176–228

**Recommended**

- Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 29–77

**Week 7  March 3–5**

**Muhammad and His Family**

- Tabari, *History*, v. 8, 126–141
- Bint al-Shati, *Wives of the Prophet*, selections
- Watt, *Muhammad at Madinah*, 373–388 (Latte)
- Quran, Sūrah 33

**Week 8  March 10–12**

**Reforms Established in Madinah**

- Watt, 229–240
Watt, *Muhammad at Madinah*, 221–335 (Latte)
Brockopp, ch. 9

**Week 9  March 17–19**
**Preserving Muhammad: The Hadith Tradition**
Brockopp, ch. 4
Brown, *The Hadith*

**Week 10  March 24–26**
**Hadith Continued**
Eaton, *The Book of Hadith*, 84-126
Brown, *The Hadith*

**Week 11  March 31—April 2**
**Shi‘ite Views of Muhammad, and His Family and Descendants**
Lings, p. 355
Tabari, *History*, (brief selection)
Shi‘ite narratives (Ya`qubi, Sulaym b. Qays, Majlisi), selections
Khalidi, “The Light of the World: Muhammad in Shi‘ite
“Biographies” in *Images of Muhammad: Narratives of the Prophet in Islam Across the Centuries.*
Amir-Moezzi, *Divine Guide in Early Shi`ism*, ch. 2

**Week 12  April 7–9**
**Muhammad in the Sufi Tradition**
Brockopp, chs. 6 & 10
Busiri, *Burdah* (English translation, excerpt)
Rumi, *Masnavi, Book II*, 165-170
Baqli, *Unveiling of Secrets*, selections

**Passover Break**

**Week 13ish  April 14 and April 23**
**Muhammad in Islamic Popular Tradition**
Brockopp, chs. 5, 7, 13
Film and audio presentations

**Week 14  April 28**
**Popular Tradition Continued—Conclusion**