

**American University of Beirut
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
History and Archaeology Department**

Course Syllabus

History 258 UA: Introduction to Urban History of the Middle East, 1700-1850

Spring 2010

Monday and Wednesday 4:00-5:30 in Nicely 415

Dr. Malek Sharif

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Office: Nicely 208, ext. 4282

Office Hours: Monday 3:00-4:00 pm and Tuesday 2:00-3:00 pm

Course description: This course aims to introduce the students to the social history of urban centres in the Middle East in a period which is described as ‘traditional’, i.e. before the impact of the West and its institutions. The city of Aleppo, the third largest metropolis in the Ottoman Empire, is used as a case study. Secondary literature on Syria and Aleppo are studied parallel to contemporary primary source material available in English. Information from the primary sources on the city and its environs will be examined and interpreted in view of modern theories and interpretations discussed in the readings.

Learning outcome:

introduction to new theories on urban history of the Middle East
study of urban society and its main protagonists in historical context
examining urban institutions and their significance
identification of the complexities of urban amenities
critical reading of primary source material
practicing oral presentations and substantiated arguments

Course requirements: The course will be held in a lecture-discussion format. **Students are expected and encouraged to participate in class discussion. They are also expected to have read the assignments as indicated in the schedule.**

Grading criteria:

Attendance and class participation: 10%

Short presentation: 10%

Mid term exam: 40%

Final exam: 40%

Course etiquette: **Mobile phones** (cellular phones/*cellulaires*) should be **OFF** and **PUT AWAY**. Violators will receive one warning. Each violation thereafter will result in five (5) points being deducted from the student’s final grade.

Course Schedule:

Textbook: Marcus, Abraham: *The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity; Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century* (New York 1989).

- Feb 15 General Introduction
Feb 17 Eldem, Edhem, et. al.: "Introduction: Was there an Ottoman City?", in: Edhem Eldem, et.al., eds. *The Ottoman City between East and West Aleppo Izmir and Istanbul* (Cambridge 1999), pp. 1-16.
- Feb 22 Quataert, Donald: *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (Cambridge 2005), Chapter 3: "The Ottoman Empire, 1683-1798", pp. 37-53.
Feb 24 Khoury, Dina Rizk: "Political relations between city and state in the Middle East, 1700-1850", in: Peter Sluglett, ed. *The Urban Social History of the Middle East, 1750-1950* (Syracuse 2008), pp. 67-103.
- March 1 Text book Chapter 1: "The Place: Setting and Local consciousness", pp. 13-36
March 3 Textbook, Chapter 2: "The People: Groups, Classes and Social Contrasts", pp. 37-56.
- March 8 Textbook, Chapter 2: "The People: Groups, Classes and Social Contrasts", pp. 56-72.
March 10 Russell, Alexander: *The Natural History of Aleppo* (London 1794), vol. 1, pp. 158-185.
- March 15 Textbook: Chapter 3: "Order and Disorder: Power, Politics and the Law", pp. 73-101.
March 17 Textbook: Chapter 3: "Order and Disorder: Power, Politics and the Law", pp. 101-120.
- March 22 Textbook Chapter 4: "Economic Welfare: The External sources of Wealth and subsistence", pp. 121- 154.
March 24 Rafeq, Abdul-Karim: "The Economic organization in Cities in Ottoman Syria", in: Peter Sluglett, ed. *The Urban Social History of the Middle East, 1750-1950* (Syracuse 2008), pp. 104-140.
- March 29 Textbook Chapter 5: "Economic Welfare: The Market, Family, and Charity", pp. 155-177.
March 31 Masters , Bruce: "Aleppo: the Ottoman Empire's Caravan City" in: Edhem Eldem, et.al., eds. *The Ottoman City between East and West Aleppo Izmir and Istanbul* (Cambridge 1999), pp. 17-78.
- April 5 Easter vacation
April 7 Revision

April 12 MIDTERM
 April 14 Textbook Chapter 5: “Economic Welfare: The Market, Family, and Charity”, pp. 177-194.

April 19 Russell, Alexander: *The Natural History of Aleppo* (London 1794), vol. 2, pp., 1-27
 April 21 Textbook Chapter 5: “Economic Welfare: The Market, Family, and Charity”, pp. 195-218.

April 26 Russell, Alexander: *The Natural History of Aleppo* (London 1794), vol. 2, pp. 28-57.
 April 28 Textbook Chapter 6 : “The Mind: Religion, Learning and Popular Culture”, pp. 219-251.

May 3 Textbook Chapter 7: “The Body: Health, Disease and Death”, pp. 252-276.
 May 5 Russell, Alexander: *The Natural History of Aleppo* (London 1794), vol. 2, pp. 114-143.

May 10 Textbook Chapter 8: “The Urban Experience: Space, Services and Public Spirit”, pp. 277-313.
 May 12 Russell, Alexander: *The Natural History of Aleppo* (London 1794), vol. 2, pp. 373-387

May 17 Textbook Chapter 9: “The Urban Experience: Neighborhood Life And Personal Privacy”, pp. 314-328.
 May 19 Russell, Alexander: *The Natural History of Aleppo* (London 1794), vol. 2, pp. 335- 372.

April 24 Primary source material and its analysis
 April 26 Revision.