BETWEEN TOLERANCE & CONFLICT:
MUSLIMS, JEWS & CHRISTIANS IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the history of Medieval Iberia from the perspective of a society characterized by an unprecedented interaction between the Mediterranean’s three civilizations (Muslim, Christian and Jewish). Specifically the course will debate the historical paradigms (e.g. convivencia, tolerance vs. intolerance) frequently used to depict the cultural diversity of Iberian Peninsula’s medieval experience. As well as providing a general introduction to the cultural parameters of Medieval Iberia’s three civilizations, the course will highlight these societies’ modes of interaction and mutual influence. Special attention will be paid to the ways in which contemporary concerns have shaped historians’ depictions of Medieval Iberian societies and the dynamics of cross-faith interaction. Throughout the course the importance of local specificity (for example, the differing social and political circumstances in the Crown of Castile and the Crown of Aragon) will be emphasized in understanding the possibilities of cultural interaction.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION

Lectures, discussion, visual aids. All required readings can be found in the course reading packet.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT

1) Participation and presentation (25%). An analysis of two of the sessions’ readings has to be presented orally to the class. The readings to be presented are proposed by the professor and are of two kinds: Articles and Sources. Every student has to present one Article and one Source. The presentations may be done in group. A written outline of the presentation has to be delivered to the class. All the readings are mandatory for every student of the class. The readings listed for a particular session must be completed before coming to class that day. The professor may test the effective reading.

2) Essay (25%) (maximum 10 pages 12 font pitch, 1,5 space), to be presented about the required reading (Anonymous. The Mirror of Coitus. A Translation and Edition of the Fifteenth-Century Speculum al foderi, edited by M. Solomon, Madison 1990). The essay has to be delivered before the last session of the course.

3) Mid-term exam (25%), about the issues treated in the lessons and the oral presentations (Sessions 2-12).

4) Final exam (25%), about the issues treated in the lessons and the oral presentations (Sessions 14-24).

CONTENT

Session 1
Presentation of the course

Session 2
Introduction: Convivencia: Jews, Christians and Muslims in Iberia
Session 3
The Islamic Conquest of Iberia
Reading: "Two Accounts of the Muslim Conquest (711)", Medieval Iberia. Readings from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Sources, ed. O. R. Constable, Philadelphia 1997, 29-36 (Source)

Session 4
The Period of Splendour: The Umayyad Caliphate

Session 5
The Period of the Taifas Reading: "A Jewish Vizier Describes the Battle of Alfuente", Medieval Iberia. Readings from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Sources, ed. O. R. Constable, Philadelphia 1997, 84-90 (Source)

Session 6
Al-Andalus: an Islamized Society
Reading: Marín, M., "Muslim Religious Practices in Al-Andalus (2nd/8th-4th/10th Centuries)", The Legacy of Muslim Spain, ed. S. Khadra Jayyusi, Leiden... 1992, 878-894 (Article)

Session 7
Al-Andalus: an Arabized Society

Session 8

Session 9
Minorities in a Muslim Society: Jews

Session 10
Sharing Cultures: the Scholars

Session 11
Sharing Cultures: the Physicians

Session 12
Sharing Cultures: the Poets
Reading: Roth, N., "Deal Gently with the young man. Love of Boys in Medieval Hebrew Poetry of Spain", in Speculum Vol. 57/1 (1982), 20-51 (Article)

Session 13
The Holy War

**Session 14**
Midterm exam

**Session 15**
The Triumph of the Cross

**Session 16**
Minorities in a Christian Society: Jews

**Session 17**
Minorities in a Christian Society: Muslims

**Session 18**
A Christian Reception: Translators and Scholars in Iberia
Reading: Conrad, L. I., M. Neve, V. Nutton, R. Porter, A. Wear, The Western Medical Tradition. 800 BC To AD 1800, Cambridge 1995, 139-

**Session 19**
Boundaries in a Christian society

**Session 20**
Preaching the Truth

**Session 21**
A Persecuting Society
Reading: Wolff, Ph., "The 1391 Pogrom in Spain: Social Crisis or Not?", in Past and Present, 50 (1971), 4-18 (Article)

**Session 22**
Conversion and Expulsion: the Conversos

**Session 23**
The Guardians of Purity: the Inquisition
Session 24
Conversion and Expulsion: the Moriscos

REQUIRED READINGS

RECOMMENDED READINGS
Harvey, Leonard Patrick, Muslims in Spain, 1500 to 1614, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005
The Legacy of Muslim Spain, ed. Salma Khadra Jayyusi, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992


Spain and the Jews. The Sephardi Experience 1492 and After, ed. E. KEDOURIE, London: Thames and Hudson 1992
