LHSP 100: Communities of the Book

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Outline

This course is intended to show you how writing was used to shape communities through time. You will see how texts were read and interpreted, examining the way that different communities used the written word. We will be paying particular attention the way that people could have access to a text, and how that affected the use of writing in society. Although we are using religious texts as the basis of our discussion, this is not a course on religion; we will only be tangentially concerned with doctrine (and then only in cases where it impacted the way that people treated the books that they believed to be sacred). All readings can be found on the Course web site (https://coursetools.ummu.umich.edu/2003/fall/lhsp/100/001.nsf). In your sections you will be expected to discuss the readings for each week; for other course requirements—response papers—see the section of the syllabus on course requirements. There will be a final Hour Examination on December 9.

Week 1
September 2: Lecture--Introduction  
Reading: Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, 1-36 (available through the Course Tools site).

Week 2:
September 9: Lecture--The Formation of the Israelite Community  
Reading: Exodus (available through the Course Tools site).

Week 3:
September 16: Lecture--The Formation of the Christian Community  
Reading: Mark, The Didache (available through the Course Tools site).

First Response Paper Due

Week 4:
September 23: Lecture: The Formation of the Islamic Community  
Reading: A.J. Arberry, The Koran Interpreted (selections); B. Lewis, “Medium and Message” (available through the Course Tools site).

Section for this week will concentrate on the iconography of the Islamic book

Second Response Paper Due

Week 5:
September 30: No lecture

Section for this week will concentrate on the Joseph Sura in the Qu’ran.

Third Response Paper Due

Week 6:
October 7: Lecture: Religion and the Formation of the State in Early Modern England  
Reading: B. Bobrick, Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution that it Inspired, 21-136 (available through the Course Tools site).
Fourth Response Paper due

**Week 7:**
select prefaces and commentaries (available through the Course Tools site).

Fifth Response Paper Due

**Week 8:**
October 21: Lecture: Eastern Orthodoxy: Community and text
**Readings:** Hilarion, *Sermon on Law and Grace* (the founding text of the Orthodox tradition);
T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, chapters 4 and 15 (available through the Course Tools site).
Extracts from the *Life of the Archpriest Avvakum, Written by Himself* (available through the Course Tools site).

**Listening Assignment:** Extracts from the Slavic liturgy (available through the Course Tools site).

**Viewing Assignment:** architecture, icons and frescoes (available from the Course Tools site)

Sixth Response Paper Due

**Week 9**
October 28: Lecture: Russian orthodoxy—Between Ancient and Modern; between Sacred and Secular
**Reading:** A. Chekhov, “Easter Eve;” “The Bishop.” These texts can be accessed through the Course Tools web site or through [http://www.eldritchpress.org/ac/jr/200.htm](http://www.eldritchpress.org/ac/jr/200.htm) (“The Bishop”)
[http://www.eldritchpress.org/ac/jr/058.htm](http://www.eldritchpress.org/ac/jr/058.htm) (“Easter Eve”)

Extracts from Erofeev’s *Moscow to the End of the Line* (available through the Course Tools site)

**Viewing Assignment:** The scene “The Passion According to Andrei,” from Tarkovskii’s film, *Andrei Rublev* (available through the Course Tools site or through the Individual Viewing Assignment site at the Language Resource Center in the Modern languages Building)

Seventh Response Paper Due

**Week 10**
November 4: Lecture: Islam and the Modern Arabic State
**Reading:** Selections from G. Antonious and B. Lewis; (available through the Course Tools site).

Eighth Response Paper due

**Week 11**
November 11: No lecture

**Reading:** R.P. Lindner, “The Late Introduction of printing to the Muslim Near East” (available through the Course Tools site).

Ninth Response Paper Due

**Week 12:**
November 18: Lecture: Zionism and the Modern Jewish state
Reading: T. Herzl, “Old New land;” selections from Zionist illustrated books of the 1940s
(available through the Course Tools site).

Tenth Response Paper Due

**Week 13:**
**Monday and Tuesday sections will meet this week**

**Week 14:**
December 2: Conclusion.

**Week 15:**
December 9: **Hour Examination**

**Course Requirements**
Attendance at all sections and lectures. Ten response Papers (one page) and the Final Hour Examination. Students who elect to do so may omit the third, fifth and sixth response papers and write a three-page field study. Students who chose the second option will be required to attend a service at a community of commitment where they have never attended a service; directions on
how to prepare the field study will be made available on the Course Tools site and at the third section meeting of term.

**Grading and Attendance Policy**

This is a Credit/No Credit course. Determination of your status at the end of the term depends upon your attendance at class, and the quality of your work. All response papers must be turned in no latter than the section meeting of the week for which it is assigned. Three or more unexcused absences or papers that do not receive a passing grade may result in No Credit. Failure to complete the final hour exam in a passing way will result in No Credit. Grades on the Response papers will be in the form of C/NCY. If you receive a grade of NCY you may rewrite the paper before the next scheduled section, and you must consult with your GSI about improving your paper before turning in the revised paper.