HPSC3030 Science and Global History

Course Syllabus

2012-13 session | Dr William Maclehose| w.maclehose@ucl.ac.uk

Course Information

This course studies the history of science as a vibrant and dynamic field in the medieval period. We will study Islamic and western Christian science from a comparative perspective and will focus on the transfer of knowledge from the ancient Greek world to the Arabic and then to the Latin West from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries. Taking a thematic approach, we will consider the following fields of scientific knowledge: geography, cosmology, medicine, astrology, technology, and their connections with religion and magic. How did medieval cultures, Muslim, Jewish and Christian, understand sex difference, pleasure, pain and basic human physiology? How did these cultures understand the natural world around them: plants, animals, planets and elements? In what ways did people in the past respond to epidemic disease? What associations existed between magic, religion and science? What can dissection of human corpses tell us about religious and scientific views of body and soul? How did travelers between cultures view themselves and the societies they visited? What impact did new technologies of the period have on architecture, warfare, shipbuilding and other aspects of life?

Basic course information

Course website:	http://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/staff/maclehose/3030
Moodle Web site:	http://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=12899
Assessment:	One essay, 50%, and a final examination, 50%
Timetable:	www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/hpsc
Prerequisites:	No prerequisites. Course is designed for third-year students.
Required texts:	None. Most readings are available on moodle.
Course tutor:	Dr William MacLehose
Contact:	ucgawfm@ucl.ac.uk | t: 020 7679 2929
Web:	www.ucl.ac.uk/silva/sts/staff/maclehose
Office location:	22 Gordon Square, Room 2.3
Office hours:	Monday, 11-12 Thursday, 11-12

Schedule

UCL Week	Topic	Week of	Activity
20	Reorientating the History of Science	07-01-13	Discussion of Sa'id al-Andalus
21	The Transmission of Scientific Knowledge	14-01-13	Meyerhof and Burnett
22	The Body Discovered: Anatomy and Corpses	21-01-13	Park and Meyerhof
23	Sex, Desire and Physiology	28-01-13	Delaney and Green
24	Magic and Alchemy	04-02-13	Linden, Olsan
25	**Reading Week**	11-02-13	
26	Blurred Boundaries: Religion and Science	18-02-13	Lindberg, Perho
27	Astronomy and Alchemy	25-02-13	Saliba, Maimonides
28	Geography and Travel Accounts	04-02-13	Beeston, Edson
29	Medieval Technologies	11-03-13	Gimpel, Villard de Honnecourt
30	Epidemics and Infectious Diseases	18-03-13	Horrox, Dols

Assessments

Summary

	Description	Deadline	Word limit
Essay	Research essay	Monday, 25 March 2013	3000

Assignments

The assignment will allow the student to work with both primary and secondary sources to study a topic of his or her own choosing.
Essays must be submitted via Moodle.
In order to be deemed 'complete' on this module students must attempt to develop a research topic, a bibliography and write an analytical essay of 3000 words.

Criteria for assessment

The departmental marking guidelines for individual items of assessment can be found in the STS Student Handbook.

Aims & objectives

The Aim of the course is to familiarise the student with the field of medieval Islamic and Western science. By the end of the course, the students will be able to analyse both primary and secondary sources critically and develop their skills as researchers into the history of science.

Reading list

Week 1: Reorientating History of Science

Sa'id Al-Andalusi. *Science in the Medieval World: "Book of the Categories of Nations."* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991. (handout)

Week 2: The Transmission of Scientific Knowledge

Meyerhof, Max. 'Sultan Saladin's Physician on the Transmission of Greek Medicine to the Arabs.' *BHM* 18 (1945) 169-178.

Guy de Chauliac, Surgery, selection from Grant, Source Book.

Burnett, Charles. 'The Coherence of the Arabic-Latin Translation Programme in Toledo in the Twelfth Century.' *Science in Context* 14 (2001) 249-88.

Week 3: The Body Discovered: Anatomy and the use of corpses

Park, Katharine. 'The Life of the Corpse: Division and Dissection in Late Medieval Italy.' *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*. 50 (1995) 111-132.

Meyerhof, Max. 'Ibn An-Nafis (XIIIth Cent.) and His Theory of the Lesser Circulation.' *Isis* 23 (1935) 100-20.

Savage-Smith, Emilie. 'Attitudes toward Dissection in Medieval Islam.' Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences 50 (1995) 67-110. (recommended)

Week 4: Sex, Desire and Physiology:

Delaney, Paul. 'Constantinus Africanus' 'De Coitu': A Translation.' *The Chaucer Review* 4 (1969) 55-65.

Green, Monica H. *The Trotula: A Medieval Compendium of Women's Medicine*. Philadelphia, U Penn Press, 2001. (selections)

Jacquart, Danielle and Claude Thomasset. *Sexuality and Medicine in the Middle Ages.* Trans Matthew Adamson. Princeton University Press, 1988. (recommended)

Week 5: Magic and alchemy

Linden, Stanton J., ed. *The Alchemy Reader: From Hermes Trismegistus to Isaac Newton*. CUP, 2003. (selections)

Olsan, Lea. 'Charms and Prayers in Medieval Medical Theory and Practice.' *Social History of Medicine* 16 (2003) 343-66.

Savage-Smith, Emilie. *Magic and divination in Early Islam*. The Formation of the Classical Islamic World 42. London: Ashgate, 2004. (Recommended)

Week 6: Blurred Boundaries: Religion and science

Lindberg, David. 'Medieval Science and Its Religious Context.' *Osiris* 10 (1995) 61-79.

Perho, I. *The Prophet's Medicine: A Creation of the Muslim Traditionalist Scholars.* Studia orientalia 74. Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 1995.

Bartlett, Robert. *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middle Ages. The Wiles Lectures.* CUP, 2008. (recommended)

Week 7: Astronomy and Astrology in society, science, and medicine

Saliba, G. 'The Role of the Astrologer in Medieval Islamic Society.' *Bulletin d'études orientales* 44 (1992) 45-67.

Maimonides, 'Letter on Astrology.' In *A Maimonides Reader*, Isadore Twersky, ed.

French, Roger. 'Astrology in Medical Practice.' In García-Ballester, Luis, Roger French, Jon Arrizabalaga and Andrew Cunningham, eds. *Practical Medicine* from *Salerno to the Black Death*. Cambridge: CUP, 1994, pp. 30-59. (recommended)

Week 8: Geography and travel accounts

Al-Idrisi's map of the world: http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?ammem/gmd:@field(NUMBER+@band(g3200+ct001903))

Beeston, A.F.L. 'Idrisi's Account of the British Isles.' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 13 (1950) 265-280.

Edson, Evelyn. 'World Maps and Easter Tables: Medieval Maps in Context.' Imago Mundi 48 (1996) 25-42.

Week 9: Artisans, Architecture and Artillery: Medieval Technologies

Gimpel, Jean. *The Medieval Machine: The Industrial Revolution of the Middle Ages*. Pimlico Press, 1992.

Villard de Honnecourt, *Sketchbooks*. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Villard_de_Honnecourt

Week 10: Epidemics and infectious diseases: medieval responses

Horrox, Rosemary, trans. *The Black Death*. Manchester, U of Manchester Press, 1994. (selections)

Dols, Michael. 'The Comparative Communal Responses to the Black Death in Muslim and Christian Societies.' Viator 5 (1974) 269-87.

Touati, François-Olivier. 'Contagion and Leprosy: Myths, Ideas and Evolutions in Medieval Minds and Societies.' In Lawrence Conrad and Dominik Wujastyk, eds, *Contagion: Perspectives from Pre-Modern Societies*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000. (recommended)

Course expectations

The course requirements consist of preparation for and attendance at class meetings, a research essay, and a final examination. Participation in discussion of the materials during the term is also required.

Important policy information

Please see syllabus supplement available in Moodle.