HEALTH & THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST
3rd year seminar
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Course no. 1662-3205
2018-9 spring semester
4 credits
Mondays & Wednesdays 10 – 12, Dan David 210
Office hours: Gilman Building, 427, by appointment

Course Description
This seminar examines the interactions between human societies and the natural environment in the Muslim Middle East by emphasizing the long-term relationships between epidemics and disease and human experience. We are used to thinking of epidemics as tragedies and dramas. We will examine therefore how disease have generated profound processes in human reality - politics, society, religion and culture. However, we will also examine disease as a constant companion of the humans, and not just an exceptional and occasional drama. In addition to historical cases (such as the plague in the middle of the 14th century), we will deal with contemporary cases (such as the MERS epidemic or Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome of the current decade). We shall move between local events and global processes, and analyze, for instance, how the hygiene in Mecca during the pilgrimage intimately ties the Middle East and India.

Assessment
The main assignment (50% of the final grade) is a research paper on a topic related to theme of the seminar. You have the option of writing either a short paper (3,000-3,500 words, including notes) or a long one (6,000–7,000, including notes), per the demands of your program. We will discuss the process of researching and writing throughout the course. A detailed timetable and clear benchmarks are posted on "moodle".

Toward the end of the seminar, all students will be required to present their projects to class and receive group feedback (5% of the final grade).

To enter into the spirit of writing, students are asked to submit at least three short response essays to reading materials before discussing them in class (15% of the final grade). It is up to you to follow the number of responses submitted throughout the semester. Details can be found on the course "moodle" website.

As this is a seminar, students are expected to be active contributors to class discussions (30% of the final grade). Please note the phrase "contribution". If you know you are less
inclined towards class participation, make sure you approach me in advance to suggest other formats and venues of meaningful contribution.

Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted a maximum of three unexcused absences without penalty. Any additional absences will affect the final grade and may result in failure of the course.

Academic conduct
Any instance of academic misconduct is taken seriously, whether plagiarism (submitting someone else’s work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously received credit; working in a group for individual assignments) or disrespect to fellow students and the professor. Any of these may result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.

Additional requirement
Since we meet to engage in serious discussions, it is necessary to create a pleasant yet committed atmosphere in the classroom. We will therefore follow the following guidelines:
* Do not eat during meetings.
* Mobile phones, tablets or cell phones are used during the lesson only as educational aids (summary of discussions, access to reading material, search for information according to lesson assignments): No texting, emailing, and catching up on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. Believe me: lecturers see when students are fascinated by social media rather than the lesson content. If you are waiting for an urgent message, update me in advance.
* A late entry to class, an early departure, a trip to the bathroom and / or the cafeteria for coffee during the course of the lesson create un-necessary noise and disturb your fellow students and the lecturer. Respect us all. Again, in case of an urgency, let me know in advance and we will work it out.

Schedule
* Week 1: Medical History and Environmental History – Intro to themes & methodologies
  Green, Monica H. "'History of Medicine' or 'History of Health'?" Past and Future, 9 (2011), 7-9. on "moodle"
  Ooshtoeck, K. Jan. "What is Environmental History?," Environmental History Resources [posted on January 3, 2005]. Online through "moodle"

* Week 2: Nature & Disasters
**Borsch, Stuart and Tarek Sabraa.** "Refugees of the Black Death: Quantifying Rural Migrations for Plague and Other Environmental Disasters," *Annales de démographie historique*, 134 (2017/2), 63-93. *Full text is available through the Central Library*


* Week 3: Leisure & Pleasure


* Week 4: Globalization


**Huber, Valeska.** *Channelling Mobilities: Migration and Globalisation in the Suez Canal Region and Beyond, 1869-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. “Chp. 7: Contagious Mobility and the Filtering of Disease,” 241-71. on "moodle"


* Weeks 5 & 6: Religion, Nature & Health


* Weeks 7 & 8: Progress, Colonialism, Internationalism & Transnationalism


Özen, İlhan Can. “Early Riser, Late Bloomer: Contextualizing Turkish Health Achievements in the Last 50 years vis-à-vis China and the Global Picture of Development,” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 58 (2018): 35-92. Full text is available through the Central Library

* Week 9: Water


* Weeks 10 & 11: The Animal Turn


Jacob, Allan. "Animal Rights Activism Growing in the Middle East," *Khaleej Times*, July 29, 2010. on "moodle"

"No Place for Animals: The Sad State of Egypt's Zoos," *The Economist*, May 11, 2017. on "moodle"

Finn, Tom. "Hunting Houbara: Royal Kidnap Casts Spotlight on Gulf 'Sport of Kings', *Reuters*, February 10, 2016. on "moodle"

* Week 12: Borders -- Internal and External


* Week 13: Presentations

=> This schedule is tentative and may change as the course progresses.