

AH 540: Interactions – Cultures Across the Mediterranean

Thurs 6-9pm, HH 303
Prof. Heather Grossman

FALL, 2009



This Graduate seminar examines the architecture and arts of cultural interaction in the Mediterranean region from c1000-1450CE. The first weeks of the course investigate theoretical and methodological readings from multiple disciplines (art history, literature, anthropology, cultural studies) broadly applicable to graduate studies of interactive communities: on various theories of mixing – hybridity, syncretism, colonialism – and conceptualizations of group identity and classification. Following, we will consider several key loci of intense interaction between the medieval West, Byzantium and Islam in the medieval period, including Greece, Spain, Venice, Sicily, and Palestine. Artistic exchange and its relation to trade, diplomacy, and warfare/conquest (such as the Crusades) will be considered through the architecture and material culture of differing racial, ethnic and religious groups.

4hrs. Seminar with emphasis on student discussion and analysis of monuments/objects and texts. Evaluation is by short presentations of readings/leading group discussion, project presentation and seminar paper on a topic chosen by the student. For AH grads, this course fulfills the Pre-Modern Course Requirement and provides some background for the MA Comprehensive exam.

Graduate students from Art History, Architecture, History, Anthropology and other related disciplines are welcomed.

For permission to register and questions, please email: hgrossma@uic.edu