Annotated Bibliography

Early Islamic Historiography
This section seeks to explore and understand further both modern historiography as well as that of the Early Islamic period. By examining the creation of historical sources in the first Arab centuries, the ways such sources have been used historically, as well as the way modern scholars have (re)-interpreted them will provide a good understanding of the creation of the Islamic world.

Bulliet, Richard W. *Islam, The View from the Edge*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994. This work demonstrates the importance of understanding the Early Islamic period through the writings of non-Muslim contemporaries.

Donner, Fred McGraw. *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writings*. Princeton NJ: Darwin Press, 1998. This book provides a useful summary of modern historiographical debates. Moreover, in light of these debates, Donner argued that early Islamic tradition of narratives and sources are useful materials for understanding the past. The claim is counterbalanced, though, that such use is valid only so long as the intentions behind the tradition’s origins are kept in mind.


Hoyland, Robert G. *Seeing Islam as others saw it: A Survey and evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian writings on early Islam*. Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997. This work also examines the narrative sources for the origins of Islam. Unlike some skeptics, however, Hoyle argued that non-Muslim sources were often very supportive of the Islamic narrative.


Shaban, M.A. *Islamic History: A New Interpretation* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971, 1976. Though dated, this volume is seminal for modern Early Islamic historians. Many ideas and themes of development during this period are attributed to Shaban.

Walker, Paul Ernest. *Exploring an Islamic Empire, Fatimid history and its sources,* London: I.B. Tauris, 2002. This volume deals with a later period than many others in this sections. Its unifying theme, however, is the examination of historical sources from the period and their use in crafting its history.

**Economic History**

By examining economic history, this section seeks to give historical impetus to events and transitions in the Islamic world from a source outside of the religious realm. While “traditional” economic sources have been used, an attempt has also been made to engage newer fields of inquiry including agriculture and the environment.


Von Sievers, P. “Merchants and nomads: the social evolution of the Syrian cities and countryside, 789-969/164-358”, *Der Islam*, lvi, 1979, 212-44. This article demonstrates an economic link between urban and rural economies and between social classes.


**Urbanism**

Urbanism can be an important insight into various other methods of “doing” history. Many of the sources listed here have social implications to their arguments. Culture and politics, also receive their place. On the other hand, economic and physical histories are just as important in understanding the functioning of historical cities.


Bosworth, “The city of Tarsus and the Arab-Byzantine frontiers in early and middle Abbasid times”, *Orient*, xxxiii, 2668-86. Looks at Tarsus as a city with both Arab and Byzantine influences.


Kennedy, Hugh. “From polis to medina: Urban change in late antique and early Islamic Syria.” In *Past and Present* 106 (1985) 3-27. Seminal article using Medina as a model for urban studies during this period.

Hamarneh, Sami. “The Ancient Monuments of Alexandria According to Accounts by Medieval Arab Authors (IX-XV Century)” in *Folia Orientalia* 12 (1971), 77-80. This is an interesting examination of how later medieval residents of Alexandria incorporated the physical remains of the Roman past into their contemporary consciousness.


Northedge, Alastair and C.M. Bennett. *Studies on Roman and Islamic Amman: The excavations of Mrs. C.M. Bennett and other investigations*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992. This archeological study examines the citadel palace of Amman and examines the architectural transition from Roman to Islamic times.


Robinson (ed.), *A Medieval Islamic city reconsidered: an interdisciplinary approach to Samarra*, Oxford: OSiIA xiv, 2001. This is a good book for reviewing
historiographical discussions of urban architecture with its own additions to the field of Abbasid urbanism.


**Transformation and Frontiers**

This section seeks to examine how the Early Islamic world rose in its historical and geopolitical contexts. Just as the medieval West was a series of successor states to Rome, so too, the Early Islamic state was a successor society to Rome and Persia. The transformation of this world, and its relations with its neighbors is the core of this investigation. Byzantium has been singled out, but other neighbors such as Armenia and India may be included if thought necessary.

Bligh-Abramski, “Evolution versus Revolution: Umayad Elements in the Abbasid Regime 133/750-320/932”, *Der Islam* 65 (1988) 226-43. This important article argued that the Abbasid change in dynasty was not such a dramatic change as usually thought, but rather continued many traditions carried over from Umayad rule.

Bowerstock, G .W. *Roman Arabia*. Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press, 1982. This book is important for understanding the roots of the Islamic world and the milieu inherent in Arabia in the Late Antique period.

Bowerstock, G.W., Peter Brown, and Oleg Grabar eds. *Interpreting Late Antiquity: Essays on the postclassical world*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001. With essays from various experts on Late Antique and Early Islamic history, this volume is important for understanding the transition from a Roman and Persian Arabia to an Early Islamic successor state.


world during the later Middle Ages. While many books in this section look at earlier Islamic history, this book takes similar concepts with application to a slightly later period.


Millar, Fergus. *The Roman Near East: 31 B.C. – 337 A.D.* Cambridge. Mass: Harvard University Press, 1993. This study, set firmly in the “ancient” or “classical” period, sets the stage for the systems that would be transformed in the Late Antique and Early Islamic periods.

**Education**


Gellens, S. “Some remarks on Egypt's status as a Sunnī Muslim learning center in the 4th/10th C” American Research Center in Egypt Newsletter, no. 125, pp. 41-45, 1984