

Thought Essay Assignment #2

*This optional assignment is due in class on Friday, March 20

Sources for Your Thought Essay

For this assignment use: Safran, Janina M. *Defining Boundaries in al-Andalus: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Islamic Iberia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-8014-5183-6

Thought Essay Content

In her text, Janina Safran argues, “The way Muslims in al-Andalus understood themselves to be Muslim and different from Christians and Jews was not simply a straightforward matter of belief and ritual practice or adherence to Islamic law but a matter of culture and social practice that was situational and associational” (Safran 2013, 23). For your essay, please identify and discuss three cases from the text that demonstrate how the three faith groups distinguished themselves from one another. More importantly, explain why these cases help us to understand Muslims’ concerns about religious and cultural purity and corruption.

Preparing and Formatting of Your Essay

- You need to argue a position – this means you should use a thesis statement. See: <http://bit.ly/1KlJ2IK>.
- Your essay should be 3-4 pages in length. You may use up to five pages for this assignment if you think you need the additional space. However, 5 pages are not required to earn an “A”.
- Use 11 or 12 point font, 1 inch margins, double-spacing, and page numbering.
- Use a proper introduction, body (several paragraphs), and a brief conclusion in your essay. Indent the start of each paragraph.
- Ideally, use a topic sentence to start each paragraph so that your reader knows what you intend to argue in it.
- You should use and/or quote specific examples from the readings to support your thoughts. (You do not need to include a bibliography.) Lastly, always cite your sources and give authors their due credit.
- If you quote material from the article, then you must properly use quotation marks and parenthetical citations. For example:
 - S.D. Goitein states, “Another impressive illustration of the unity of the Mediterranean world...is the frequency of intermarriage between persons from different countries.” (Goitein 1960, 33).
- You can find more writing advice on my website page, “Writing Resources For Students.” See here: <http://bit.ly/16tj9SV>.