

M. A. History (II and IV Semesters)

State and Society in the Central Islamic Lands: 7th-13th Centuries

Winter 2019 (4 Credits)

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The course provides an understanding of the emergence and consolidation of major political and social institutions in the Central Islamic Lands (Arabia, the Fertile Crescent, Iran, Khurasan and Central Asia) from the rise of Islam to the Mongol invasion. The themes are organized around the issue of the evolution (and reconstruction) of Islamic ideology, polity and society during the process of unification and transformation of the diverse political and social landscapes lying between the Nile and the Oxus.

General Readings: Intended to provide students with a short list of references that might serve as the basis for **Specialized Readings** (below) and navigate the search for further readings. Students can choose as many books as they wish from the list. **The idea is to spend more time on fewer pages, not memorizing a lot of information but rather thinking through some of the issues raised by the readings.**

1. Adam J. Silverstein, *Islamic History A very Short Introduction*, 2010*
2. Gabriel Said Reynolds, *The Emergence of Islam*, 2012* (Must for theme 1)
3. Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought*, 2004 (Chapters 1-3, 7-8, 10-22. Photocopy in SSS3; book in Central Library)*
4. Mathew S. Gordon, *The Rise of Islam* (Lucid Survey with excerpts from primary Sources; photocopy in SSS3)
5. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History. A Framework for Inquiry*, 1991 (Critical survey of modern writings with emphasis on sources; book in Central Library)
6. Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 2004 (Best text book so far)*
7. Gerhard Endress, *Islam: An Historical Introduction*, 2002*
8. Marshall Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vols. 1 and 2 (reflective, a must for theme 4).
9. H. Kennedy, *Caliphate, the History of an Idea*, 2016 (based on no. 6, focused on leadership)*

1. Arabia and the Near East in Late Antiquity and the rise of Islam

The discussion on the origins of Islam is varied and gives us a sense of the nature of the source material and its interpretation by traditional Islamic scholars, Orientalists and Revisionists. The two seminal concepts which Muhammad introduced were monotheism and the community of believers (Donner's discussion that Muhammad's community was ecumenical!)

Themes: Historiography of the origin of Islam. Creation of the community of believers

Readings: Reynolds, *Emergence of Islam**; Conrad, 'The Arabs', *Cambridge Ancient History*, XIV*; Alan Jones, 'The Quran'*; Hoyland, 'New Documentary Texts and the Early Islamic State', *BSOAS* 2006*; 'Early Islam as a Late Antique Religion'*; *Seeing Islam as others saw it**; Donner, *Muhammad & the Believers**; Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins**; Donner, 'Modern Approaches to Early Islamic History', *NCHI*, I, pp. 625-47*; Robinson, 'Rise of Islam,

600-705', *NCHI*, I, pp. 173-208*; Athamina, 'Abraham in Islamic Perspective. Reflections on the Development of Monotheism in Pre-Islamic Arabia', *Der Islam* 2004*; Ali, 'The Islamic Background to Indian History', *JESHO*, 30*; Habib, 'In Defence of Orientalism: Critical Notes on Edward Said', *Social Scientist*, nos. 380-1*; Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam**; Serjeant, 'Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam: Misconceptions and Flawed Polemics', *JAOS* 1990*; Hawting, *Idea of Idolatry and the Emergence of Islam**; Ibn Warraq, *Quest for the Historical Muhammad* (Chs. 1 & 2)*; Crone & Cook, *Hagarism**; Jeremy Johns, 'Archaeology and the History of Early Islam: The First Seventy Years', *JESHO*, 46, 4, 2003.*

2. Islamic state under the Prophet and the Umayyads

The challenges to the unity of the community and the protection of its interests formed the basis for the creation of the Islamic state by Muhammad and the caliphs. The Islamic state leads towards imperialization under the Umayyads (661-750 AD). The death of the Prophet creates opportunities for innovations (Caliphate) but also divisions (sects).

Themes: *Rashidun* Caliphate and Islamic conquests; civil wars (*fitna*); Umayyad state; Abd al Malik's Arabization and Islamization

Readings: Donner (ed.), *Articulation of Early Islamic State Structures* ('Introduction' & Ch. 1*); Donner, *Muhammad & the Believers**; Kennedy, *Great Arab Conquests**; Donner (ed.), *Expansion of Early Islamic State* 2016 (Intr., Madelung, *Succession to Muhammad**; Humphreys, *Muawiya ibn Abi Sufiyan**; Foss, 'Muawiya's State'*; Lapidus, 'State and Religion in Islamic Societies', *Past & Present*, 151*; Hawting, *First Dynasty of Islam**; Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, pp. 29-36*; Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, I, pp. 58-59, 217-30; Crone and Hinds, *God's Caliph**; Robinson, *Abd al-Malik*; *idem*, 'Rise of Islam, 600-705', *NCHI*, I, pp. 208-225*; Hoyland, 'New Documentary Texts & the Early Islamic State'*; *idem*, *In God's Path: Arab Conquests and the Creation of an Islamic Empire*, 2015*; Donner's review of Hoyland's book*

3. Abbasid absolutism and Islamic Public Sphere

The Abbasid Revolution (750 AD) transformed the character of the Islamic state. The key historiographical issues are the nature of the Revolution and its impact. The Abbasids further consolidated the political authority of the Caliph, while *ulama* (Islamic scholars) and Sufis consolidated Islamic public sphere. The official and public spheres collided during the reign of al-Mamun and caused separation between religion and politics

Themes: *Da'wa* and *dawla*; political absolutism & problems of legitimacy; Abbasids & the *ulama*; institutional bases of Islam: *sharia*, *kalam*, *madrasas*; challenges to established order: *tasawwuf*, *shu'ubiya*; *mihna*; Greek learning in the Arab World; political thought; Iran & Islam

Readings: Humphreys, *Islamic History*; Elton Daniel, 'The Ahl al Taqadum and the Problem of the Constituency of the Abbasid Revolution in the Merv Oasis'*; El-Hibri, 'The empire in Iraq', *NCHI*, I, pp. 269-304*; Kennedy, *When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World**; Sharon, *Black Banners from the East*; Cooperson, *Al-Mamun**; Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Theology*

and Law, 1981, pp. vii-xiii, 1-66, 116-166; Schacht, *Introduction to Islamic Law*, pp. 1-56; Zaman, *Religion and Politics under the Early Abbasids*; Karamustafa, *Sufism. Formative Period**; Knysh, 'Sufism' *NCHI*, IV, pp. 60-104*; Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*; Gibb, 'The Social Significance of the Shu'ubiya', in *Studies on the Civilization of Islam*, pp. 62-73; Mottahedeh, 'The Shu'ubiyah Controversy and the Social History of Early Islamic Iran', *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 1976, pp. 161-82*; *Public Sphere in Muslim Societies*, eds. Hoexter, Eisenstadt & Levtzion, 2002; Berkey, *Popular Preaching & Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East*; Watt, *Islamic Theology and Philosophy*; Taylor, 'Philosophy', *NCHI*, IV, pp. 532-63*; Leaman, *Brief Introduction to Islamic Philosophy*; Robinson, 'Education', *NCHI*, IV, pp. 497-531*; Gutas, *Greek Thought Arabic Culture*

4. Unity in the face of political divisions

Periodisation of Islamic History and Marshall Hodgson; Political fragmentation of Islam and cultural efflorescence. Creation of Saljuq and Ghaznavid Sultanates brought Turks into the Central Islamic Lands

Themes: Breakup of the Abbasid Caliphate; *Iqta* & military slave bureaucracy; 'the Shi'i Century' (Fatimids and Buyids); rise of Turkish Sultanates; popular preaching & conversions; efflorescence of literature and art in the tenth and eleventh centuries

Readings: Donner, 'Periodization'*; Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol. 1, pp. 473-95; vol. 2, pp. 12-61; Gibb, 'al-Mawardi's theory of the Caliphate', in *Studies on the Civilization of Islam*, pp. 151-165; H. Busse, 'The Revival of Persian Kingship under the Buyids' and Bosworth, 'Barbarian Incursions: the coming of the Turks into the Islamic World', in Richards (ed.), *Islamic Civilisation 950-1150*, pp. 1-16, 47-70; C. E. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, pp. 98-106; Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant in Persia*, pp. 10-30, 53-76; *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 5, pp. 62-87, 218-22; Bloom, 'Literary and oral cultures, *NCHI*, IV, pp. 668-681*.

5. Social order and economic organization

Whether establishment of the Islamic state led to a new social formation? Does Commercial Capitalism constitute a mode of production? What social order did medieval Islam envisage?

Themes: Secular elites (*ayan* & *amir*); agrarian economy; trade & commercial techniques; Geniza Records; 'Islamic' urbanization; Islam & Capitalism; social order; slavery; gender.

Readings: Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, I, pp. 62-151; II, pp. 64-74, 93-94; Schultz, 'The Mechanics of Commerce', *NCHI*, IV, pp. 332-54*; Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam*; Lapidus (ed.), *Middle Eastern Cities*; Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages*, 1984, pp. vii-xvi, 1-8; Bulliet, *Islam. The View from the Edge* (Ch. 4. 'Islamic Urbanization'); Robinson, *Islam and Capitalism*; Maya Shatzmiller, 'Economic Performance and Economic Growth in the Early Islamic World', *JESHO* 54 (2011), pp. 132-184; Banaji, 'Islam, the Mediterranean and the Rise of Capitalism'*; Heck, *Charlemagne, Muhammad, and the Arab Roots of Capitalism**; Koehler, *Early Islam & the Birth of Capitalism*, 2014*; Abbott, 'Women and the State in Early Islam' & 'Women and the State in Early Islam: Umayyads' *JNES*, 1942*; Marin, 'Women, Gender and

Sexuality', *NCHI*, IV, 355-79*; Ahmed, 'Women and the Advent of Islam'; Mernissi, *Women & Islam*; Schimmel, *My Soul is a Woman*; Ghosh, *In an Antique Land*

6. Islam and the 'Other'

Themes: Houses of Peace and War; protected people (*zimmi*s) and *jizya*; Mongols & the sack of Baghdad; Nomads and state Formations; Islam and Christianity; India and the Islamic Frontier.

Readings: Bonner and Hagan, 'Muslim accounts of the dar al-harb', *NCHI*, IV, pp. 474-94*; Morgan, *The Mongols*; Krader, *Formation of the State* (chapter 6); Pterushevsky, 'Socio-economic condition of Iran under the Il-Khans', *Cambridge History of Iran*, V, pp. 484-94; Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, pp. 18-26*; Lindner, 'What was a Nomadic Tribe?' *CSSH*, 1982*; Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, II, pp. 329-68; Rodinson, *Mystique of Islam*; Richards, 'Islamic Frontier in the East: Expansion into South Asia', *South Asia*, 4, Oct. 1974.

Note: Most readings are available with Shubho Photostat (SSS 3) in a Reader, some in Central Library and CHS Library (Pashchimabad). References marked with asterisk* are available in soft copies on the website of the Central Library. Send mail on snajafhaider@gmail.com to get soft copies. Please note that more readings will be recommended as we go. Students stand to gain from reading the assigned material **before** coming to the class.

Evaluation: Half of the grades come from the two tutorials (critical essay presented with intelligent participation in the discussion which is mandatory). A critical study would mean that you **reflect** upon the theme rather than repeat the readings. The end semester examination carries 50 % of the credit.

Contact Hours: Wednesday and Friday (1 AM to 3 PM), Tuesday (4-5 PM) in room 319, SSS3. If contact hours do not work call 9871575587 or send mail for appointments

Glossary: Islam = Submission [to the will of God]

Allah = Arabic word for God, word for God in Islam. Persian for Allah is Khuda

Rusul = Messenger (Prophet with a message, sometimes contained in a book /scripture, such as, in the case of Islam, the Quran. Notable *rusuls* are Moses, David, Jesus and Muhammad)

Muminun = Believers (according to Donner, all monotheists); sing. *mumin*

Muslimun = Muslims among the believers (Donner's interpretation); sing. Muslim

Umma = Community of believers, later Community of Muslims

Khalifa = Deputy or successor (Anglicized Caliph). Head of Muslim community (also called *amir ul muminun* or commander of the believers)

Imam = Another term for leader of the community or any leader for that matter (such as, *imam* of a mosque who leads the prayers). The term has a special meaning in Shiism (a 'sect' of Muslims)

Chronology: Muhammad 570-632 AD. Four Caliphs 632-661 AD. Umayyads 661-750 AD. Abbasids 750-1258 AD. Buyids 945-1055 AD. Samanids 819-1105 AD. Ghaznavids 977-1187 AD. Seljuqs 1037-1072.