

Centre for West Asian Studies
School of International Studies
M.A. International Relations-West Asian Studies

Course No.	:	WA403
Course Title	:	Introduction to Islam
Course Teacher	:	P. R. Kumaraswamy
Credits	:	4
Instruction Method	:	Lectures, Seminars and Tutorials
Evaluation Method	:	Class Participation, Assignment and End-Semester Examination
Course Duration	:	One Semester
Contact Hours	:	04 per week

Course Objectives: Since its advent in the 7th century CE, Islam has been an integral part of the societies in WANA with deep-rooted social, political, economic and cultural impacts. Often the WANA region is considered as Islamic or Muslim as identified by the majority of the people and countries. As a set of faith, Islam traces its lineage in Abrahamic monotheism with Judaism and Christianity preceding it. Over the years, while the lived experiences of Islam have evolved and varied, the basic tenets and the broad theology have remained set. This has partly been underlined as the cause of Islam's "incompatibility" with modernity. The course seeks to introduce students to the broad tenets of Islam, its history and diversity, and more importantly, its impact on the society and politics in contemporary WANA.

Learning Outcome: The course would enable the students to understand the role of Islam both as a religious and a political force, as well as its interaction with modernity, in shaping the politics and inter-state relations in WANA.

Course Outline

Unit I. Advent and Early Spread: Arabia before Islam; Mohammed's lifetime before and after revelation; Establishment of the Medina state and conquest of Mecca; Four Righteous Caliphs (632 – 661 CE); Dynastic Rules (Umayyad and Abbasid Empires); Conquests, infightings and consolidation.

Unit II. Faith, Tenets and Lived Experiences: The faith and its basic tenets; Quran and Hadith; sects and divisions; *fiqh* and *madhab*; Sharia; Influence of Arab culture and Arabic language; Global Islam

Unit III. Islam and Modernity: Debates on modernity; Fundamentalism; Islamic revivalism; Modernism; Political Islam; Pan-Islamism; Wahhabism; Salafism; Idea of Jihad; Extremism and terrorism.

Unit IV. Islam in Contemporary WANA: Islam and state; Source of legitimacy; Sharia as a source of law; Sectarianism and religious conflicts; Role of ulema; Globalisation and Islam

Readings

Unit I:

Armstrong, Karen, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*, London: Phoenix, 1991

Hitti, Philip K., *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1970

Hitti, Philip K., *History of the Prophet Muhammad*, New Delhi: Goodword Books, 1998

Hitti, Philip K., *The Arabs: A Short History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1943

Husain, S. Athar, *Prophet Muhammad and his Mission*, Bombay: Asia Publishers, 1967

Khan, Wahiduddin, *The Prophet of Peace: Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad*, New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2009

Lecker, Michael, *People, Tribes and Society in Arabia around the Time of Muhammad*, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2005

Lewis, Bernard, *Islam: From the Prophet Muhammad to the Capture of Constantinople*, London: Macmillan, 1976

Nadvi, Sayyid Sulaiman, *Muhammad: The Ideal Prophet*, Lucknow: Academy of Islam Research & Publications, 1981

Rubin, Uri, *Muhammad the Prophet and Arabia*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2011

Unit II:

Abrahamov, Binyamin, *Islamic Theology: Traditionalism and Rationalism*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998

Brown, Daniel W., *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996

Cook, Michael, *Studies in the Origins of Early Islamic Culture and Tradition*, Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2004

Kamal, Ahmad, *The Sacred Journey: The Pilgrimage to Makkah*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1961

Nadwi, Syed Abul Hasan Ali, *Four Pillars of Islam*, Translated into English by Mohammad Asif Kidwai, Islamabad: Da'wah Academy, 1991

Watt, W. Montgomery, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962

Unit III:

Ahmed, Akbar S., "Postmodernist Perceptions of Islam: Observing the Observer," *Asian Survey*, 1991, vol. 31, no. 3, pp. 213-231

Ayubi, Nazih N. M., "The Politics of Militant Islamic Movements in the Middle East," *Journal of International Affairs*, 1982, vol. 36, no. 2, pp. 271-283

Lav, Daniel, *Radical Islam and the Revival of Medieval Theology*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012

Moaddel, Mansoor, *Islamic Modernism, Nationalism and Fundamentalism: Episode and Discourse*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005

Rahman, Fazlur, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982

Roy, Olivier, *The Failure of Political Islam*, Translated by Carol Volk, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994

Zakaria, Rafiq, *The Struggle within Islam: The Conflict between Religion and Politics*, London: Penguin Books, 1989

Unit IV:

Faksh, Mahmud A., *The Future of Islam in the Middle East: Fundamentalism in Egypt, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia*, Westport: Praeger, 1997

MacDonald, Duncan B., *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, New Delhi : Omega Publication, 2016

Milton-Edwards, Beverley, *Islamic Fundamentalism since 1945*, New York: Routledge, 2005

Pierre-Filiu, Jean, *From Deep State to Islamic State: The Arab Counter-Revolution and its Jihadi Legacy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015

Sherwani, A.A.K., *Impact of Islamic Penal Laws on the Traditional Arab Society*, New Delhi: M. D. Publications, 1993

Tibawi, Abdul Latif, *Islamic Education: Its Traditions and Modernization into the Arab National Systems*, London: Luzac, 1972