

**Centre for West Asian Studies
School of International Studies**

Course for Ph.D.

Course No.	: WA635
Course Title	: Intellectual Traditions in the Arab World
Course Teacher	: Md. Muddassir Quamar
Credits	: 04
Instruction Method	: Lectures, Seminars and Tutorials
Evaluation Method	: Class Participation, Semester Assignment & Semester Examination
Course Duration	: One Semester
Contact Hours	: Four hours per week

Objective: The Arab world has a rich history of philosophical, socio-cultural and political debates. Going back to classical poetry in the pre-Islamic era to the advancement of ideas during the medieval period and the literary awakening after encounters with modernity, Arab intellectuals have engaged philosophical and topical issues from different dimensions. The course aims to give students ideas and tools for creative and critical engagement with the contemporary Arab world. For a student to grasp the nuances of the ideological, political and cultural transformations in the Arab world, an understanding of the intellectual traditions in the Arab world is of utmost necessity.

Learning Outcomes: The course seeks to enable the students to engage critically with intellectual debates in the Arab world, appreciate the history of ideas, develop an understanding of contemporary Arab intellectual thought, engage with feminist and civil society discourses on democratisation and critically evaluate the creative expressions through popular culture.

Course Structure

I. Intellectual Traditions and Ideas: History of ideas; Pre-Islamic poetry; Islamic scriptures and philosophy; Evolution of ideas during Abbasid era; External influences; Literary renaissance; Re-reading of classical ideas.

II. Islam and Modernity: Encounters with modernity; Intellectual response to colonialism; Islamic revivalism; Islamic modernism; Islamism; Salafism; Wahhabism; Jihadism.

III. Contemporary Arab Political Thought: Arab identity; Renaissance (*al-nahda al-‘arabīya*); Nationalism (*al-waṭanīya*); Arab nationalism (*al-qawmīya al-‘arabīya*); pan-Arabism; Ba’athism; Egyptian Nationalism; Territorial manifestations of Nationalism.

IV. Feminism and Civil Society Movements: Feminist traditions; Egyptian Feminism; Feminism and Nationalism; Islamic Feminism; Debates on Sexuality; Human rights; Civil society movements; Debates on democratisation.

V. Popular Culture in the Arab world: Films; Arts; Mass media; Digital revolution; Arab public sphere; Cultural expressions; Encounters with globalisation.

Essential Readings

Abu Rabi', Ibrahim (2004), *Contemporary Arab Thought: Studies in Post-1967 Arab Intellectual History*, London: Pluto Press.

Ajami, Fouad (1992), *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice since 1967*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Amin, Qasim (2000), *The Liberation of Women and The New Woman: Documents in the History of Egyptian Feminism*, Cairo: American University in Cairo Press. Originally published in 1899/1900.

Delong-Bas, Natana J. (2004), *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Foley, Sean (2019), *Changing Saudi Arabia: Art, Culture, and Society in the Kingdom*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

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

Hourani, Albert (1983), *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hussain, Taha (2017), *On Pre-Islamic Poetry*, Windsor, UK: Hindawi Foundation [Arabic], 1st edition published in 1927.

Mernissi, Fatima (1991), *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*, Translated by Mary Jo Lakeland, New York: Basic Books.

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

Said, Edward W. (1978), *Orientalism*, London: RKP.

Sharabi, Hisham (1992), *Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Additional Readings

Unit I:

Abdel-Malek, Anouar (1963), "Orientalism in Crisis", *Diogenes*, 11 (44): 103–40.

Ahmed, Akbar (2021), *The Flying Man, Aristotle, and the Philosophers of the Golden Age of Islam: Their Relevance Today*, Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications.

Al-Azm, Sadik Jalal (1981), "Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse," *Khamsin*, 8: 5–26.

Al-Azmeh, Aziz (1990), *Ibn Khaldun: An Essay in Reinterpretation*, London: Routledge.

Al-Jabiri, Muhammad Abid (1999), *Arab-Islamic Philosophy: A Contemporary Critique*, Austin: University of Texas Institute of Middle Eastern Studies.

Hanafi, Hasan (2004), "From Orientalism to Occidentalism", *Studia Philosophiae Christianae*, 40 (1): 227–37.

Ramakrishnan, A. K. (2017), "Cultures and Ideas: Reflections on Arab Cultural Studies," in Bansidhar Pradhan (ed.), *West Asia in a Changing World: The Emerging Regional Architecture and India*, New Delhi: Academic Foundation, pp. 1–18.

Unit II:

Abduh, Muhammad (1966), *The Theology of Unity*, London: George Allen & Unwin.

Al-Azmeh, Aziz (1993), *Islams and Modernities*, London: Verso.

Al-Banna, Hasan (1978), *Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Algar, Hamid (2002), *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay*, New York: Islamic Publication International.

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

Haj, Samira (2009), *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Hamid, Shadi (2016), *Islamic Exceptionalism: How the Struggle Over Islam is Reshaping the World*, New York: St. Martin's Press.

Kedourie, Elie (1997), *Afghani and Abduh*, London: Routledge.

Kepel, Gilles (2002), *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, trans. Anthony F. Roberts (1st ed.), Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

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

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

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

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

Soroush, Abdolkarim (2000), *Reason, Freedom and Democracy in Islam*, translated, edited and introduced by Mahmoud Sadri and Ahmad Sadri, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zakariyya, Fouad (2005), *Myth and Reality in the Contemporary Islamist Movement*, London: Pluto Press.

Unit III:

Ahmed, Jamal Mohammed (1968), *The Intellectual Origins of Egyptian Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Amin, Samir (1978), *The Arab Nation: Nationalism and Class Struggle*, London: Zed Books.

Antonius, George (2001), *The Arab Awakening*, London: Routledge. Originally published in 1938.

Boullata, Issa J. (1990), *Trends and Issues in Contemporary Arab Thought*, Albany: New York University Press.

Darwish, Mahmoud (1995), *Memory for Forgetfulness*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Dawisha, Adeed (2003), *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kedourie, Sylvia (1962), *Arab Nationalism: An Anthology*, Berkley, CA: University of California Press.

Khalidi, Rashid et al. (eds.) (1991), *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Nasser, Gamal Abdel (1959), *The Philosophy of the Revolution*, New York: Smith, Keyenes & Marshall.

Philipp, Thomas (2014), *Jurji Zaidan and the Foundations of Arab Nationalism*, Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Said, Edward (1980) *The Question of Palestine*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Tibi, Bassam (1997), *Arab Nationalism: Between Islam and the Nation-State*, London: Macmillan Press.

Unit IV:

Ahmad, Leila (1992), *Women and Gender in Islam*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Badran, Margot (1995), *Feminists, Islam and the Nation*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

El Fadl, Khaled Abou (2001), *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women*, Oxford: One World Publications.

Ibrahim, Saad Eddin and Nicholas Hopkins, eds. (1986), *Arab Society: Social Science Perspectives*, Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

Massad, Joseph Andoni (2008), *Desiring Arabs*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Saadawi, Nawal (1980), *The Hidden Face of Eve*, London: Zed Books.

Sadiki, Larbi (2004), *The Search for Arab Democracy: Discourses and Counter-Discourses*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Shaarawi, Huda (1986), *Harem Years: The Memoirs of an Egyptian Feminist, 1879- 1924*, New York: The Feminist Press.

Zubaida, Sami (2011), *Beyond Islam: A New Understanding of the Middle East*, London: I. B. Tauris.

Unit V:

Alsharekh, Alanoud and Robert Springborg (eds.) (2008), *Popular Culture and Political Identity in the Arab Gulf States*, London: Saqi Books.

Frishkopf, Michael (2010), *Music and Media in the Arab World*, Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press.

Hammond, Andrew (2007), *Popular Culture in the Arab World: Arts, Politics, and the Media*, Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press.

Mostafa, Dalia Said, Nicola Pratt and Dina Rezk (2021), "New Directions in the Study of Popular Culture and Politics in the Middle East and North Africa, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 48 (1): 1-6.

Sabri, Tarik (2010), *Cultural Encounters in the Arab World*, London: I. B. Tauris.