Where is the Life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

– T. S. Eliot

Islam & Muslim Cultures

fall 2016

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Our goals:

(A) Familiarity with some of the basic teachings and practices that Muslims often associate with Islam.

(B) Awareness of the diversity of religious traditions among Muslims.

(C) Ability to understand Islamic traditions using the tools of comparative religious studies.

Beginnings

Sept 6 Introduction & review of syllabus

Sept 8 Online: Bernard Lewis, Conclusion from “What Went Wrong?”
Online: Andrew Shryock, “Attack of the Islamophobes: Religious War (and Peace) in Arab/Muslim Detroit”
Garrod and Kilkenny, chs 5-6

Muslim lives

Sept 13 Garrod and Kilkenny, chs 9-12

Sept 15 Reader: Frederick Denny, “Muhammad and the Early Muslim Community”
Reader: Kecia Ali, “The Historical Muhammad”

Media analysis assignment #1 due: Provide examples of how contemporary Western news reporting sometimes reflect common stereotypes of Muslims and Islam. Using one counter example, demonstrate how stereotypes can be avoided.

6-10 pm, place to be announced: Special film showing of The Message (attendance required)

~~~~ NOTE: “The Message” viewer guide in Reader ~~~~

Sept 20 Reader: Frederick Denny, “The Arab Conquests and Islamic Rule: The Struggle”
Lawrence, ch. 4
Map quiz

The Quran, Hadith, & their interpreters

Sept 22 Reader: Frederick Denny, “The Nature and Function of the Qur’an”
Quran, Suras 1 & 2:1-228 (in Reader)
Sept 27  Reader: Mahmoud Ayoub, “Introduction” & “Surat al-Fatihah”
Garrod and Kilkenny, ch. 7
Quran browser: http://www.islamicity.com/QuranSearch/

Sept 29  Reader: Jonathan A.C. Brown, from *Hadith*
Reader: Sahih Muslim extracts (in Reader)

Oct 4  Lawrence, chs 3, 5, 6
Reader: Carl Ernst, from *Sufism* (18-31)

Oct 6  Reader: Carl Ernst, from *Sufism* (32-80)
Lawrence, ch. 9

**Media analysis assignment #2 due:** Analyze examples of the contemporary use by Muslims of the mythology of Muhammad and/or the early umma OR the use of the Quran in the construction of their society.

Oct 11  Reader: Margaret Smith, from *Rabia*

**Salafis & “Traditionalists”**

Oct 13  Reader: John Bowen, from *Muslims through Discourse* (3-47)

Oct 18  Reader: John Bowen, from *Muslims through Discourse* (47-76)

Recommended: (in Reader) Asma Afsaruddin, “Jihad and Martyrdom in Islamic Thought and History”

**Media analysis assignment #3 due:** Analyze the social dynamics of Sufi traditions within specific contexts.

Oct 25  **Fall Break yeeehahahahahahahahhahahahahahhahahahaaaal!**

Oct 27  Reader: Islamic practices
Prayer space visit?

**Subjectivity, women’s movements, and the study of Islam**

Nov 1  Hafez, chs. 1-2
Nov 3  Hafez, chs. 3-4
Nov 8  *DON’T FORGET TO VOTE!!!!!*  
Hafez, chs. 6-7

**Nov 9**  *RAW paper outline, thesis statement, and annotated bibliography due by 5 p.m.*

**Islam, race, and America**

Nov 10  Jackson: Introduction & ch. 1

Nov 15  Jackson: ch. 2  
Lawrence, ch 13

Nov 17  Jackson: chs. 4 & 5  
*Media analysis assignment #4 due:* Provide examples of contemporary women’s movements and the intrareligious dynamics at play that make help or hinder their success.

**Law & State: The Arab Uprisings**

Nov 22  Reader: Mohammad Hashim Kamali, from *Shari’ah Law: An Introduction* (15-67)  
*Class won’t gather because of conference, but reading & journal due*

Nov 23-27  Thanksgiving break

Nov 29  Reader: Mohammad Hashim Kamali, from *Shari’ah Law: An Introduction* (68-122)

Dec 1  Lin Noueihed and Alex Warren, *The Battle for the Arab Spring* (chs. 1-3)

Dec 6  *Class cancelled due to conference*

Dec 8  Lin Noueihed and Alex Warren, *The Battle for the Arab Spring* (pp. 96-124, 264-281)

**Tuesday, Dec 13**  
9 am – RAW paper due by 5 p.m.  
7-10 pm – research presentations

**Books to be Purchased:**

Andrew Garrod and Robert Kilkenny, eds. *Growing Up Muslim: Muslim College Students in America Tell Their Life Stories* (0801479150)
Sherine Hafez, *An Islam of Her Own* (978-0814773048)
Sherman A. Jackson, *Islam and the Blackamerican: Looking Toward the Third Resurrection* (0199782385)
Bruce Lawrence, *The Qur’an: A Biography* (0871139510)
Lin Noueihe and Alex Warren, *The Battle for the Arab Spring: Revolution, Counter-Revolution and the Making of a New Era Paperback* (0300194153)

Reader (available at Wesleyan print shop)

*All of these texts (except the Reader) are also on reserve in the library.*

**Class participation**

This constitutes the most important part of the class because of the opportunity it affords you to discuss the issues that are of concern to you and hear those of others. Class attendance is mandatory and students are expected to be punctual and participate in discussions. In addition, each student will participate in one small group discussion with the professor. Students who plan to miss class due to a religious holiday must notify the professor two weeks in advance.

**Classroom etiquette**

Our time together is an opportunity to forge an environment and community of learning. The more focused and respectful we are of that time and place, the more intense our experience and the greater the possibilities for discovery. To that end, please observe the following courtesies during class.

- Disagree with your classmates and professor, but do not disrespect any of them.
- Have no communication with anyone outside of class during class.
- Go to the bathroom before class: folks coming and going disrupt others.
- If you’re loquacious, be mindful of allowing others the chance to speak; if you’re the strong silent type, rise to the occasion of helping carry the conversation.

**Reflective journal**

Each student once a week will submit by 7 am the day of class three sentences regarding that day’s reading that references specific parts of the reading (include page numbers). The first two sentences will offer an insightful observation about the reading. The third will be a significant question regarding the reading itself or what the reading describes. These will be submitted on Moodle and assessed according to the seriousness and intention given to them.

All written work must:

- be double-spaced and printed in 12-point font
- have the page numbers noted for all references to class readings
- be submitted to TurnItIn.com (accessed through your portfolio)
- include no more than one quote of full sentence length (quoting words or phrases is fine).

1. **Media analysis assignments**

The three media assignments allow students the opportunity to fuse their class study with analysis of world events and communities while refining the ability to write succinctly. Using four to five current news sources or websites of Muslim organizations, answer three of the four questions listed on the syllabus with particular emphasis on analysis using the class readings, which must be cited. These must be only three pages long. Your grade will be determined by (a) the applicability of the sources to the question, (b) the analysis of the sources using class materials, and (c) the quality of the writing.
2. RAW Paper
One research, analysis, and writing (RAW) paper (8-10 pages) on any appropriate topic that examines Islamic traditions in a specific culture in light of one of the analytic themes (e.g., myth, ritual, social constructions, modernity, nationalism) discussed in class. Papers allow you an opportunity to explore personal interests and develop writing skills. These papers must be entirely original with sources fully cited and include a bibliography. A hardcopy of the outline, thesis statement, and annotated bibliography of the paper are due by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, November 9. Completed papers are due by 5 p.m. on November 13. BE SURE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THE RULES of PLAGIARISM EXPLAINED BELOW. PLAGIARISM CAN RESULT IN AN IMMEDIATE FAILING GRADE. Please observe all guidelines provided on the handout, which include submitting a copy to Turnitin.com.

Map Quiz
A map quiz will be given on February 11 in order to prompt you to have an understanding of the geography involved in our work.

Basis of grade
The following elements comprise each student’s grade: attendance, participation, & journal – 20%; the map quiz – 10%; each media assignment – 10%; and the RAW paper – 40%.

Disability resources
Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and
generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Disability Resources as soon as possible.

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Dean Patey in Disability Resources, located in North College, Room 021, or call 860-685-5581 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations.

PLEASE! Once you have obtained documentation, don’t hesitate to discuss with me your needs for accommodation.

Honor System
Students are expected to abide by the Honor System in regard to all work and participation in this class. For details, see pages 4-7 of http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/StudentHandbook.pdf

Curmudgeonly notice
The use of computers, tablets, and cell phones is not allowed in the class, except for those with demonstrated need. While I appreciate that some students may find it easier to type than write, the unfortunately inevitable web surfing, Facebooking, and texting by a few students distracts the rest, and the prof. Plus, if you have seen Battlestar Galactica, Her, or any number of Star Trek episodes, I think you’ll agree with me that we don’t want to bring computers into our classrooms and make them any smarter than they already are.

Editorial marks
Note: Although many comments made on your paper mark mistakes that effect your grade, others simply offer suggestions for writing improvement or further reflection.

gen use gender inclusive language              ? meaning unclear
c’n contraction: do not use any              sp spelling mistake
par use a parallel construction aolien delete character
cap capitalization mistake a lien delete space
awk awkward: reword alieninvasion insert space
^ insert here ¶ make this a new paragraph
75¢ use a more sophisticated word ⌼ run together
pl problem with plurality x y exchange x for y
tense problem with verb tense inc incomplete
rep repetitious: avoid the overuse of the same word or sentence structure
trans transition: sentences and paragraphs should flow into one another
cons consistency: be consistent in plurality, tense, capitalization

Multiple mistakes of the same kind may be circled but not labeled.

Common mistakes
The key to successful writing is SIMPLICITY and DIVERSITY. Clearly express yourself in ways that makes reading enjoyable.

Before you write anything, you should know who your audience is and what style best suits their expectations. Unless instructed otherwise, you should assume that university papers need to be formal. Avoid a conversational style. Do not use contractions (“I’ve,” “it’s,” “they’re”).

Introduce your essay with a single paragraph within which you succinctly describe your thesis in a single sentence.

Avoid passive and ‘-ing’ verbs. Active verbs give power to a sentence.

- e.g., Babe was acting like a dog => Babe acted like a dog.

Avoid ‘to be’ verbs in favor of active verbs which express more.

- e.g., She is courageous => She works courageously.

Spellcheck is not enough. You must proofread your work and can best accomplish this by reading aloud to yourself. Your ear often picks up mistakes that your eye will not.