

RLST.S138: The Religion of Islam

Summer Course: TTh 9-12:15, May 30 – June 29, 2017

Instructor: Prof. Gerhard Bowering

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Course Description: Introduction to Islam: Arabia and the rise of Islam. Muhammad and the Qur'an. Muslim tradition and religious law. Islamic philosophy and theology. Muslim society and family. Muslim women and minorities. Basic beliefs and practices of the Muslim community. Jihad, fundamentalism and democracy

Course Rationale: This survey course examines Muslim religious beliefs and practices from the origins of Islam to the present, stressing Islamic religious ideas and institutions in a historical perspective. Central issues --- such as Islamic scripture and tradition, law and theology, sectarianism and mysticism -- - and the variety of Muslim understandings of monotheism, prophecy, ritual and society will be the focus of the course. The primary goal of the course will be to understand what is taking place in the history of Muslim religion. The course is concerned with both the history of ideas and the modern and contemporary issues of Islam as a religion. It has great relevance for our understanding contemporary Islamic societies in theory and practice.

Requirements: About 80 pages of reading per week; regular participation in class; mid-term examination arranged as three twenty-minute tests in the second, third and fourth week of classes. Final exam: June 29, 2017, 9-11 AM.

Syllabus: The syllabus is arranged according to units, each unit focusing on a major topic. In addition to the required readings, listed by page numbers, there are three recommended readings the student may consult with regard to the particular topic of each unit.

Required Readings:

W.M. Watt, Muhammad, Prophet and Statesman (Oxford University Press)

F. Rahman, Islam (Chicago University Press)

I. Goldziher, Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law (Princeton U. Press)

Lecture sequence:

1. Unit: Arabia and Muhammad

Required: Watt, 1-82

Recommended: M. Rodinson, Muhammad

T. Andrae, Mohammed, the Man and His Faith

A. Guillaume, The Life of Muhammad

2. Unit: The Qur'an, the Holy Book of Islam

Required: Rahman, 1-42; Goldziher, 3-30

Recommended: M. Watt, Bell's Introduction to the Qur'an

M. M. Pickthall, The Meaning of the Glorious Koran

H. Kennedy, The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates

3. Unit: Islamic Tradition and Law

Required: Watt, 83-175

Recommended: A. Guillaume, The Traditions of Islam

M.M.Ali & C.E. Bosworth, A Manual of Hadith

J. Schacht, Introduction to Islamic Law

4. Unit: Ritual and Doctrine

Required: Watt, 176-245; Goldziher, 31-66

Recommended: A. Fysee, Outlines of Muhammedan Law

M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, Muslim Institutions

C.E. Padwick, Muslim Devotions

5. Unit: Islamic Theology and Philosophy

Required: Goldziher, 67-115, Rahman, Rahman, 43-99

Recommended: A. J. Wensinck, The Muslim Creed

W. M. Watt, The Formative Period of Islamic Thought

T. DeBoer, The History of Philosophy in Islam

6. Unit: Shi'ism

Required: Goldziher, 167-229

Recommended: H. Halm, Shi'ism

M. Momen, An Introduction to Shi'i Islam

S.H. Nasr, Ideals and Realities of Islam

7. Unit: Sufism

Required: Goldziher, 116-166;

Recommended: A. J. Arberry, Sufism

A. Schimmel, Mystical Dimensions of Islam

J. Baldick, Mystical Islam

8. Unit: Social and Political Institutions

Required: Rahman, 100-180

Recommended: R. Levy, The Social Structure of Islam

J. Pedersen, The Islamic Book

H. A. R. Gibb, Studies on the Civilization of Islam

9. Unit: Jihad and Fundamentalism

Required: Rahman, 181-234

Recommended: B. Lewis, The Arabs in History

G. Endress, An Introduction to Islam

R.S. Humphreys, Islamic History

10. Unit: Contemporary Islam

Required: Goldziher, 230-269; Rahman, 235-265

Recommended: W.C. Smith, Islam in Modern History

D. Pipes, In the Path of God

J. Esposito, Islam The Straight Path