

HH 2004: THE ISLAMICATE WORLD
Semester 1 (2022/2023)

Instructor: Asst. Prof. Faizah Zakaria (SHHK #05-05)

Lecture: Thursdays, 9.30 am to 11.30 am (LT 10, North Spine)

Tutorials: Thursdays, 12.30 pm to 1.30 pm (The Hive, TR+51)

Thursdays, 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm (The Hive, TR+51)

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9.30 am to 11.30 am and by appointment

Course Outline

In this course, you will investigate the historical development of Muslim societies from the classical period to the present. You will analyse diverse theories and practices of Muslim communities that span a global scale while being embedded in their own local political, economic and social contexts. This course will equip you to conceptualize the basic precepts and terminology defining the idea of a Muslim World while inviting you to critique this notion through empirical historical evidence. You will also develop your skills in analysing and interpreting primary and secondary sources, particularly through close readings of how Islamic concepts are employed in literary works, visual art and political rhetoric.

The contents of this course cover the period from the advent of Islam in the 7th century to the present. We will examine key ideas that scholars have used to conceptualize institutions and interactions in the Muslim World, such as: Islamicate, caliphate, shari'a, syncretism, cosmopolitanism and Islamism. It will emphasize the lived experience of Muslims by drawing on case studies from many different parts of the Islamicate World and highlight the complexities of the relationship between religious theology and practice. Such empirical examples will help you understand and analyse the contemporary positioning of Muslims in the modern nation-state and as a global community. This course will be useful in helping you understand the historical roots of contemporary debates about Islam and gain a nuanced view of the ways in which the religion interacted with secular politics.

Learning Goals

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Explain key concepts in Islamic thought, such as "shari'a," "ummah" and the Sunni-Shi'ii divide.
2. Compare and contrast the various ways in which Muslim societies around the world have formulated political, social and economic institutions in the context of their specific historical eras.
3. Describe and critique the idea of an Islamicate World, with empirical examples of diversity in thought and practice.
4. Analyse and interpret religious languages and images in primary sources.

Structure of Class (In person)

Lecture will be in **person**, every Thursday at LT10, NS 4, #04-41 at 9.30 am to 11.30 am.

Tutorials will be carried out **in-person in the Hive, TR 51 (Level 2)**, in hourly sessions 1.30 pm, 2.30 pm and 3.30 pm. It will focus on the readings, which usually comprises of 1-2 secondary sources and/or a primary source.

Course Requirements

This module places emphasis on the analysis, synthesis and evaluation of key historical concepts and interpretations. You will be assessed on the following metrics:

1. Active Participation (15%)

In class, you will learn from each other and build up your skills in close reading, constructing convincing arguments, articulating these arguments verbally and analysing primary sources. You are expected to regularly attend class. Participation in class will be assessed based on lecture quizzes and depth, frequency, quality of your contributions to tutorial discussion.

2. Reading Response (30%) – 15% per response.

Deadline: Ongoing – submit the response before each Thursday's lecture.

Each student is to pick two weeks' readings and write a 500-700 response: one from each half of the course. A reading response is an essay that identifies, contextualizes, and analyses an argument made in the assigned reading(s). It also takes a position on the reading through its own original argument – applauds what is good, connects the two sets of readings and points out a silence/overlooked perspective/limitation to the author(s)' approach in a respectful and critical way. You can use the tutorial questions as a guide to connect the readings or discuss them in your own way.

3. Artifact Reflection from ACM Visit (25%) – Group Work Video (20%) and 5% individual reflection

Deadlines:

Upload your individual responses to the Forum by the end of Week 5 (Sunday 11 September, 2359)

Upload the group video by the end of the break (Friday 7 October, 2359)

Primary source analysis is a key skill that is required for historical research. You will work in groups and choose one artifact from a visit to the Islamic Art Gallery at the Asian Civilizations Museum on Week 5. Following the visit, you will collectively produce a 5-10 min video that introduces the artifact, describes its origins and materiality. Explains why the artifact is important for the history of the Islamic World. Group allocation and more instructions will be given during your tutorial session on Week 3.

To do well on the team assessment, it is necessary for you to demonstrate positive interdependence and teamwork. In principle, you will receive the same marks as your team. However, your individual score may vary based on feedback about your contributions to the group project.

4. Biographical Essay on a Major Figure in the Muslim World (30%)

Deadline: Reading Week Sunday, 20 November 2022, 2359.

This essay centres the life of an individual in the Muslim World as a lens into understanding history. It aims to help you examine at depth the contributions of key Muslim figures to world history, while reflecting on the advantages and disadvantages of the using biography to learn history.

The length of this essay should be around 1500-2000 words. Instructions will be uploaded on NTU Learn by Week 4.

Policy on Academic Integrity

You should adhere to accepted scholarly practices in all your written work. Notes taken for papers and research projects should accurately record sources of material to be cited, appropriately quoted, paraphrased or summarized, and papers and research projects should acknowledge these sources in the appropriate places in the text of the paper as well as in a reference list at the end of the paper, in accordance with Chicago Style of Citation.

(https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

Class Schedule and Readings

Week 1 (11 Aug) – Islam, Islamic, Islamicate

(Optional) Reading:

- Marshall Hodgson, "The Islamic Vision in Religion and in Civilization," in *The Venture of Islam Vol. 1: The Classical Age of Islam*, (University of Chicago Press, 1974), pp. 22-99

No Tutorial

Week 2 (18 Aug) - The Prophet and the Abrahamic Faiths

Readings:

- Chase F. Robinson, "The Rise of Islam, 600-705," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam Volume 1*, (Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 173-225.
- Primary Source: At-Tabari, "Mention of the Account Concerning the Events that Happened When God Wished to Take Away from the People of Persia," in C.E. Bosworth, trans. *The History of al-Tabari Vol. V: An Annotated Translation*, (SUNY Press, 1999), pp. 331-338

(Optional) – Ibid., "Translator's Foreword."

Tutorial Discussion Questions: How similar or different is early Islam from Judaism and Christianity? What are the sources from which we can understand the time of the Prophet?

Week 3 (25 Aug) - The Caliphate

Readings:

- Hugh Kennedy, *Caliphate: The History of an Idea* (Penguin Books, 2016), p. 8 -74
- (Optional), pp. 73-99.

Primary Source: Coins from Early Caliphates (will be shown in class)

Tutorial Discussion Questions: What is a caliphate? How did it change over time from the 8th to 10th centuries?

Week 4 (1 Sep) - The “Golden Age”

Readings:

- Tayeb El-Hibri, “The Golden Age of the Abbasid Caliphate,” in *The Abbasid Caliphate: A History*, (Cambridge University Press, 2021), pp. 69-131.
- Samir S. Amr and Abdelghani Tbakhi, “Ibn Sina (Avicenna): The Prince of Physicians,” *Annals of Saudi Medicine* 27:2, (2007), pp. 134-5.

(Optional) Primary source: Mona Abu-Asab et. al. (trans.), “The Pulse” in *Avicenna’s Medicine: A New Translation of the 11th Century Canon with Practical Applications of Integrative Health Care*, (Rochester Press, 2013), pp. 238-258.

Tutorial Discussion Questions: Why is the Abbasid period called the “Golden Age”? Do you agree with this label?

Week 5 (8 Sep) - Crusades, Conquests and Conversions

*** Lecture/Tutorial to be Online – Class Time for a Trip to Asian Civilizations Museum.**

Submit Reflection Post on the Discussion Forum by Sunday 11 September, 2359.

Readings:

- Kazuhiko Shiraiwa, “Mongol Endorsement of the Islamic Institution of Pious Endowment (Waqf) as Revealed in the Waqf Document of 1272 in Arabic and Mongolian Drawn up in Kirsher for Nur al-Din, the Son of Jaja,” in *New Approaches to Ilkhanid History*, (Brill, 2020), pp. 39-52.
- Urban II’s speech at the Council of Clermont in 1095. Accessible here: <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/urban2-5vers.asp>

(Optional) Ira Lapidus, “The Post Abbasid Middle Eastern State System,” in *A History of Islamic Societies*, (Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 177-207.

Tutorial Discussion Questions: How did Muslims interact with the Mongols and the Crusaders? Can we discern a “Muslim” response to external threat?

Week 6 (15 Sep) - The Ottomans

Readings:

- Alan Mikhail, *God's Shadow: Sultan Selim, His Ottoman Empire and the Making of the Modern World*, W.W. Norton and Company, 2020), pp. 249-341.
- Sanjay Subramanyam, Cornell Fleischer and Cemal Kafadar, "How to Write a Fake Global History," *Cyber-Review of Modern Historiography*. (2021).
[online: <https://oajournals.fupress.net/index.php/cromohs/debate>]

(Optional), Kate Fleet, "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire," in the *New Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 313-331.

Tutorial Discussion Questions: What is the place of the "big man" in world/Muslim World history?

Week 7 (22 Sep) - The Mughals

Readings:

- Richard M. Eaton, "The Consolidation of Mughal Rule 1526-1605," in *India in the Persianate Age*, (Penguin Books, 2020), pp. 266-314.
- Film: Jodhaa Akbar (2008) – excerpt to be viewed in class lecture.

(Optional) J.F. Richards, "The Early Modern World," in *The Unending Frontier*, (University of California Press, 2004), pp. 20-59.

Tutorial Discussion Questions: What is the early modern world? What is the position of Islamicate empires like the Mughals within it?

[Term Break – 26 to 30 Sept]

Week 8 (6 Oct) - Along the Silk Road

*Deadline for submission of group videos: Friday 7 October, 2359.

Readings:

- Kristian Petersen, "The Treasure of the Heavenly Scripture: Engaging the Quran in China," in *Interpreting Islam in China: Pilgrimage, Scripture and Language in the Han Kitab*, (Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 221-262
- James A. Millward and Peter C. Perdue, "Political and Cultural History of the Xinjiang Region through the Late Nineteenth Century," in Frederick Starr ed., *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland*, (Routledge, 2011), pp. 27-63

Tutorial Discussion Questions: How did internal politics impact Muslims in China prior to the nineteenth century? What are the contemporary legacies of this history?

Week 9 (13 Oct) - Everyday Religion

***Sharing of biographical essay topics during tutorial**

Readings:

- James Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints: Everyday Religion in Ottoman Syria and Palestine*, (Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 1-14; 85-112
- Terenjit Sevea, "An 'Ilmu of Violence: The Elephant Bomohs of Modern Malaya," in *Miracles and Modern Life: Rice, Ore, Traps and Guns in Islamic Malaya*, (Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 152-79.

Tutorial Discussion Questions: Is everyday Islam authentic? Why or why not?

Week 10 (20 Oct) - Colonialism and Shari'a

Readings:

- Elisa Giunchi, "The Reinvention of Shari'a under the British Raj: In Search of Authenticity and Certainty," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 69:4, (2010), pp. 1119-1142
- Nurfadzilah Yahaya, "The Question of Animal Slaughter in the British Straits Settlements during the Early Twentieth Century," in *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 43:216 (July 2015), pp. 173-190.

(Optional) Primary Source: Singapore Administration of Muslim Law Act [Singapore Statutes Online: <https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Act/AMLA1966>]

Tutorial Discussion Questions: How did colonialism impact shape "Muslim Law" as we recognize it today? Would there be a Muslim Law without colonialism in Singapore?

Week 11 (27 Oct) - Nationalism, Socialism and Islam

***Sharing of introductory paragraph of biographical essay during tutorial**

Readings:

- Mona Hasan, "In the International Pursuit of a Caliphate," *Longing for the Lost Caliphate: A Transregional History*, (Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 184-216.
- Al-Makin, "Haji Omar Said Tjokroaminoto: Islam and Socialism (Indonesia, 1924/1963)" in *Religious Dynamics under the Impact of Imperialism and Colonialism: A Sourcebook*, (Brill, 2017), pp. 249-64

Tutorial Discussion Questions: Is Islam compatible with modern political ideologies such as nationalism and socialism? Why or why not?

Week 12 (3 Nov) - Political Zionism in the Middle East

***Sharing of introductory paragraph of biographical essay during tutorial**

Readings:

- Avi Shlaim, "The Debate About 1948," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 27, pp. 287-304.
- William Cleveland and Martin Bunton, "The Middle East in the Age of Nasser," and "Israel and the Palestinians from 1940s to 1970s," in *A History of the Modern Middle East* (5th ed.), (Westview Press, 2013), pp. 301-344.

(Optional) Primary Source: Hamas, "Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement of Palestine," in Roxanne Euben and Mohamed Qasim Zaman, ed. *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*, (Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 364-386.

Tutorial Discussion Questions: To what extent is religion important in the Israel-Palestine conflict? Should the conflict be secularized?

Week 13 (10 Nov) – Islamism

Readings:

- William Cleveland and Martin Bunton, "The Iranian Revolution and the Revival of Islam," in *A History of the Modern Middle East* (5th ed.), (Westview Press, 2013), pp. 347-369.
- Mahmood Mamdani, "Good Muslims, Bad Muslims: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism," *American Anthropologist*, 104:3, (2002), pp. 766-775

(Optional) Primary Source: Usama bin Laden, "Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," in Roxanne Euben and Mohamed Qasim Zaman, ed. *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*, (Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 436-460

Tutorial Discussion Questions: What is Islamism? Under what conditions would it thrive?

***Reading Week: Submission of Biographical Essay: Sunday, 20 November 2022, 2359.**

