

Barbara R. von Schlegell

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Introduction to Islamic Religion

Religious Studies 143 (AMES 136)

We will meet in Room 421 Williams Hall on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30 to 12:00

Course Requirements

- 30 % Class participation (attendance and discussion)
- 30 % Take-home midterm
- 40 % Students have two options for the end-of-term work:

You can **either** write a 10-15 page research paper on a topic chosen in consultation with me (due the day of the final exam) **or** you can sit for the final exam (questions handed out last day of class).

If you choose to write a paper, you may, if you turn the paper in **on or before Tuesday Dec 1**, re-write it and turn it in again the day of the final exam for a better grade based on my comments and your own revisions.

Books for Purchase

Penn Book Center 3726 Walnut 222-7600

- *An Introduction to Islam*, Frederick Denny (new ed.)
- *Windows on the House of Islam: Muslim Sources on Spirituality and Religious Life*, John Renard, ed.
- *American Jihad*, S. Barboza

- *Muslim Communities of North America*, J. Smith and Y. Haddad
- *Principles of Sufism*, al-Qushayri (optional)

Reserve Books

Rosengarten

Under my name, all the required books, and

- *The Essential Koran*, Th. Cleary
- *The Holy Qur'an*, Yusuf Ali
- *Qur'an and Woman*, Amina Wadud-Muhsin
- *The Life of Muhammad*, Ibn Ishaq/Ibn Hisham
- *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*, Martin Lings
- *A Reader on Classical Islam*, FE Peters
- *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam*, J. Momen
- *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, Esposito and Voll

Bulkpack

Will be available for purchase

Course Outline

Thursday Sept 10: Introduction to Islam and the Modern Muslim World

Reading (Read for next Tuesday):

- Frederick Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, Part One, especially "Pre-Islamic Arabia" 43-58
- *Begin American Jihad*. Select two individuals from the book: The person with whom you feel the most affinity and the person whose story seems most alien to you. For **Thursday Sept 24** write a two-page commentary explaining why you have chosen these two people. Their background is not as important as their ideas. In their shoes, could you imagine yourself following a similar path? This assignment is required, but it will not be given a letter grade.

Tuesday Sept 15 & Thursday Sept 17: Muhammad and the Background of Islam

Biography, Family of the Prophet, Mecca and Medina

Reading:

- Denny, "Muhammad and the Early Muslim Community" 59-80
- John Renard, ed. *Windows on the House of Islam* 119-129, 336-344 and 353

Bulkpack: Annemarie Schimmel "The Prophet Muhammad as a Centre of Muslim Life and Thought," from *We Believe in One God: The Experience of God in Christianity and Islam*, E. Waugh, "The Popular Muhammad"

Tuesday Sept 22 & Thursday Sept 24: **The Qur'an**

Creation and cosmology, Revelation and prophecy in Islam, Oral to written scripture, Major themes of the Qur'an, Interpretation, Jews and Christians in the Qur'an

Reading:

- Denny, "Nature and Function of the Qur'an" 138-155
- *Windows* 1-27, 35-58, 144-148

Tuesday Sept 29 & Thursday Oct 1 : **Islamic History**

Conquest and conversion, Imperial civilization, After the caliphs

Film "Smithsonian World of Islam"

Reading:

- Denny, "The Arab Conquests and Islamic Rule" 83-103 and 206-212

BP : N. Levtzion, "Toward a Comparative Theory of Islamization" and B. Lewis, "The Judeo-Islamic Tradition" from *The Jews of Islam*

Windows 223-234

Tuesday Oct 6 & Thursday Oct 8: **Islamic Legal Studies**

Codification of the divine law (*Shari'ah*), sayings of the Prophet (*hadith*), Religious professionals and jurisprudence (*fiqh*) in the *sunni* law schools (*madhabs*)

Reading:

- Denny, "The Prophet's Sunna as Preserved in the Hadith" 158-168 and 195-204

BP : Law text selections (hadith and *fiqh* on intoxication; hadith on social interactions; hadith on marriage)

Web: Begin "The *Ajwiba*: An Islamic Catechism" paying attention to norms concerning actions

Tuesday Oct 13: **Theology**

Heresy and normative beliefs ('*aqa'id*), Ontology, Heaven and hell, Free-will and determinism

Reading:

- Denny, "Muslim Creeds and Theologies" 172-193
- *Windows* 269-277

Web: Finish "The *Ajwiba*" paying attention to theological positions, read "*Fiqh al-akbar*" also on my web page

Thursday Oct 15: **Shi'ism**

Sects in Islam, Religious and political authority, Shi'i doctrine and practice

Reading:

- Denny, "Shi'i Law Schools" 204-206 and 313- 320
- *Windows* 95-106 and 149-154

BP : S. Haeri "Temporary Marriage"

Tuesday Oct 20: **Fall Break** (no class)

Thursday Oct 22: **Shi'ism** (continued)

Take-home midterm due in class

Tuesday Oct 27 & Thursday Oct 29: **Islamic Art and Architecture** (slides)

Calligraphy, iconoclasm, mosques, tombs and colleges

Visit to Overbrook Mosque (on Friday)

Reading:

- Denny, "The Mosque" 294-298
- *Windows* 250-268

Tuesday Nov 3 & Thursday Nov 5: **Mystical Islam/Sufism and Spiritual Experience**

Mystical Islam, Drunk and sober Sufism, *unio mystica*, Three masters (al-Ghazali, Ibn 'Arabi, and Jalal al-Din Rumi), Crystallization of Sufi orders and their role in Muslim societies

Film "Sufism in Sudan"

Reading:

- Denny, "The Sufi Way of Mysticism and Fellowship" 219-262 and 305-320
- *Windows* 59-64, 139-143, 155-158, 162-184, 194-207, 235-243, 296-324, 345-352, 355-375
- Al-Qushayri *Principles of Sufism* (optional)

Tuesday Nov 10: **Mystical Islam/Sufism** (continued) & Thursday Nov 12: **The Hajj Pilgrimage**

Personal and communal responsibilities, rituals

Film "Guests of God"

Reading:

- Denny, "Basic Beliefs and Worship Practices of Islam" 107-137 and "Islamic Life Cycle and the Family" 269-293
- *Windows* 85-91 and 107-118

Tuesday Nov 17 & Thursday Nov 19: **Muslim Women**

The "four perfect women," Women in early Islamic history - warriors and scholars, Sufis, Islamic feminism and the revision of tradition

Film "Boys, Girls and the Veil"

Reading:

- Denny, "Islam and the Status of Women" 351-355
- *Windows* 92-94, 130-138, 244-248, 286-290

BP: R. Hassan, "An Islamic Perspective," from *Women, Religion, and Sex*; N. Keddie, "Deciphering Middle Eastern Women's History," from *Women in Middle Eastern History*

Tuesday Nov 24: **Islam in America**

Conversion to Islam, the immigrant population, African-American sunni Muslims, The Nation of Islam, media Muslims

Reading:

- Denny, "Islam and Muslims in North America" 355-366
- *Muslim Communities of North America*, J. Smith and Y. Haddad, eds. (chapters assigned in class for discussion)
- *American Jihad* (second look)

Thursday Nov 26: **Thanksgiving Break** (no class)

Tuesday Dec 1: **Islam in America** (continued)

Thursday Dec 3 & Tuesday Dec 8: **Islamic Revival**

Defining fundamentalism, Renewal and reform in Islam, Colonialism and modernism, Militancy and revolution

Film "Fundamentalism in Egypt"

Reading:

- Denny, "Fundamentalism," 345-351
- *Windows* 217-222 and 325-335

BP : Y. Haddad, "Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of the Islamic Revival" from J. Esposito, *Voices of Resurgent Islam* and "The Clash of Civilizations?" (Huntington and Mottahedeh)

Tuesday Dec 10: **Review and Discussion**

Final exam questions handed out in class



