This course is an introduction to the cultural, religious, and political base of "Islamic societies." For our purposes, an Islamic society is one that shares as operative present or historical past, Islamic social, cultural, and political institutions. During the first half of the course, we will study the formation of the Islamic spiritual tradition, the spread of Islam, and the development of the core of Islamic cultural, social, and political norms. During the second half of the course, we will focus on societies and issues relevant to our times.

The following are required for the course. Readers are available at Advanced Copy on La Guardia Place between West 3rd and Bleecker.

Reader I: In the Footsteps of Muhammad: Understanding the Islamic Experience, by J. Renard (Paulist Press, 1992)

Reader II: Islamic Societies Reader

*An Introduction to Islam*, by Frederick Matthew Denny (Macmillan, 1994 ed.).

*Samarkand*, by Amin Maalouf (Interlink, 1998)


*Voices of Resurgent Islam*, Edited by John Esposito (Oxford University Press, 1983).


Hammond Atlas of the Middle East

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Written:** *papers and exams*: one take-home map assignment, 3 three-page typewritten critiques of three books assigned for this class, and three discussion questions for a fourth book assigned for this class. Papers must be double-spaced, syntactically correct, spell-checked AND proofread. There will also be a mid-term and a final consisting of definitions and essays.

You **must** write critiques of Renard and Weaver. You may write a critique of either Said or Maalouf for your third report. If you choose Said, you must produce three questions for discussion for Maalouf, and vice versa. You will be required to sign up for either Said or
Maalouf before having read either book. Due dates are included in the syllabus. No student will be excused from submitting a critique on time. There will be the loss of one grade for each day your paper is late. Missing a written assignment will result in an incomplete grade ("INC"). Missing an exam will result in an automatic "F" for the course. Don't forfeit your grade!

**Participation in class discussion.** Although this is a lecture class, there is an emphasis on discussion and analysis of the assigned readings in class recitations. It is extremely important that you keep up with the readings. You are expected to have read the assigned readings BEFORE the class for which they are listed, and to actively participate in discussions on a regular basis. Participation will form 30% of your grade. Needless to say, you must attend every class and every recitation. If you cannot attend, you must provide a written excuse, which will be filed. Three unexcused absences in either class or recitation will result in the loss of a grade. In participating, I encourage you to ask questions and share your thoughts about the readings and lecture topics. Our preceptor is available for consultation, guidance, or discussion during office hours, or by appointment. You may also meet with me. Please contact me by e-mail for an appointment anytime.

**CRITIQUES**

**Your critiques are not a research task, and do not require any outside reading.** Each critique should be a final draft that is carefully edited and reflects your understanding and interpretation of the author's ideas. In the case of Renard and Weaver, the purpose of the report is two-fold: 1) to describe the author's thesis or purpose clearly, and, when appropriate, to comment on his/her methodology; and 2) to point out an aspect of the book that contributes to the success or failure of the author to communicate his/her intended purpose, and why that is so. In the case of Said and Maalouf, you should discuss (1) the origins of the novel and its relationship to a particular historical context (as described in the work); (2) an issue of importance to our study of Islamic societies, and how that issue is explored in the narrative. In all written assignments, including exams, where possible, be sure to provide support for your points. One way to do this is to quote the author to either prove or refute the argument you are making. DO NOT SUMMARIZE THE CONTENTS OF ANY BOOK; YOUR INSTRUCTORS HAVE READ IT AND KNOW THE CONTENTS. WRITE AS THOUGH WE KNOW ABOUT THE BOOK, BUT WANT TO KNOW WHETHER IT IS RECOMMENDED. See handout for further information.

**GRADING POLICY**

Grading policy for this course will be as follows:
- Map 5%
- Critiques 30% (each 10%)
- Prepared questions (5%)
- Midterm 15%
- Final 15%
- Class Participation 30%
SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS

(*assignments in readers are asterisked)

Week One: Introduction

1. Wed., Jan. 23: Organizational Meeting; Geographical Overview; Assumptions about Islam
BEGIN READING *RENARD, In the Footsteps of the Prophet. Take home map assignment.

I. Foundations and Expansion

Week Two: Pre Islamic Society and the Rise of Islam

2. Mon., Jan. 28: Pre-Islamic Arabia and World Powers
Read: Denny, Introduction to Islam (hereafter, Denny), pp. 3-56.
MAP ASSIGNMENT DUE TODAY.

Read: Denny, pp. 59-72.

Week Three: The Emergence of the Community; the Qur'anic Message

Read: Denny, pp. 72-82; *Andrew Rippin and Jan Knappert, ed. and trans., Textual Sources for the Study of Islam, “the Constitution of Medina,” pp. 80-82. BRING READER II TO CLASS.

*Michael Sells, Approaching the Qur'an, 1-31; 42-43; 52-53; 100-3; 108-9; 112-13; 150-57; 170-71; 174-79. BRING READER II TO CLASS. Class listening to recitation of the Qur'an. CRITIQUE FOR RENARD DUE TODAY.

Week Four: The Required Practices

Read: Denny, pp. 107-137.
BEGIN READING SAMARKAND.

Read: Denny, pp. 130-136; visual presentation.
Week Five: Succession to the Prophet; Expansion

8. Mon., Feb. 18: Sunnis and Shi'is on Succession and Authority
Read: Denny, 83; 87-93; 206-207.


Week Six: Expansion and the Terms of Peace


Southwestern Persia, and Egypt, trans. H. A. Juynboll (State University of Albany Press) pp. 179-217. BRING READER II TO CLASS.

Week Seven: States and Class Structure

12. Mon., Mar. 4: Early Dynasties, Independent Polities, and Early Modern Empires
Read: Denny, pp. 93-104.
CRITIQUE OR QUESTIONS FOR SAMARKAND DUE TODAY.


SPRING RECESS — NO CLASSES MAR. 11-16.

Week Eight: The Colonial Era I

14. Mon., Mar. 18: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

15. Wed., Mar. 20: Colonialism: The Levant
Read: Denny, pp. 206-21; John Esposito, ed. Voices of Resurgent Islam (hereafter Esposito Voices), pp. 5-15; visual presentation.
Week Nine: The Colonial Era II; Society

CRITIQUE FOR ALI AND NINO DUE TODAY.

II. The Structuring of Society

17. Wed., Mar. 27: Sources of Islamic Law; Tradition; Theology

Week Ten: Alternative Islam; Women

18. Mon., Apr. 1: The Sufi Path
Read: Denny, pp. 219-266.


Week Eleven: Women; Family

Read: selections from the articles “mutah,” “nikah,” “talaq,” in the Encyclopaedia of Islam.

Read: Denny, pp. 269-293.

Week Twelve: Nomadic Society; Urban Society

22. Mon., Apr. 15: The Nomadic Family Structure: The Case of the Kirghiz
Read: *Charles Lindholm, An Historical Anthropology of the Middle East (Blackwell Publishers, 1996), pp. 18-27; visual presentation.

Read: Denny, pp. 294-315; visual presentation.
BEGIN READING WEAVER.
III. Politics: Resurgence, “Fundamentalism,” The Islamic State

Week Thirteen: Ideas about Society

Read: Denny, pp. 321-344; Esposito Voices, pp. 63-133; 150-174.

25. Wed., Apr. 24: An Islamic State: The Islamic Republic of Iran

Week Fourteen: Current Conflict and Islamic Societies in the News


27. Wed., May 1: Islamic Societies in the Media
Readings: *Edward Said, Covering Islam (Pantheon Books, 1981 ed.), “Introduction.” pp. ix-xxxi; one newspaper article and one news magazine article on Egypt, Afghanistan, or Saudi Arabia. Prepare two comments on and two questions about how the media has covered, or has not covered (silence may be a comment), the subject you have read.
CRITIQUE FOR WEAVER DUE TODAY.

IV. Visual Representations

Week Fifteen: Art and Society

Read: Denny, pp. 97-98; visual presentation.

Final exam will be announced.

Instructor: Rosemary Stanfield-Johnson: 998-8918; e-mail: r558@nyu.edu
Office hours: Friday 2-4, and by e-mail appointment
304 Kevorkian (Center for Near Eastern Studies)
50 Washington Square South/facing Sullivan St.

Preceptor: Joshua Levy: 998-8973; e-mail: jll222@nyu.edu
Office hours: TBA, and by e-mail appointment
King Juan Carlos Center, 206
53 Washington Square South/facing Washington Square Park
In this course, Islam will be considered as a religion, culture and civilization.

There will be two examinations: a midterm and the final.

Each student is expected to visit the Islamic Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, (5th Avenue at 82nd Street) and to write a short essay (two pages or so) about the visit. The essay may be descriptive or impressionistic.

Course materials: three books and one photocopy package. The books are to be found at the NYU Bookstore and the PHOTOCOPY PACKAGE is to be purchased at: Advanced Copy Center, Inc. 552 La Guardia Place, Tel. 212 388 1001.

Roy Mottahedeh’s book, The Mantle of the Prophet hereinafter referred to as Mottahedeh, is a novel describing the life of a certain Ali Hashimi. It is a very easy, fast-reading book. Students in this course MUST read a chapter a week, and write a half a page response to that chapter. This response could be a paragraph or two about the plot development, or simply a list of names or geographical places which appear in the chapter. Every Wednesday there will be a 30 minute discussion of that week’s chapter; student participation is required.

The main book for the course is: Islam The Straight Path by John L. Esposito, hereinafter referred to as Esposito.

A book by Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, Islam a Thousand Years of Faith and Power, hereinafter referred to as Bloom and Blair, is suggested reading. This book treats Islam as an entity of religion, culture and civilization. It is exquisitely written with a pleasant flow of narrative.

The photocopy package, hereinafter referred to as Photocopy, is as important as Islam The Straight Path, it contains half the course material.

Class Schedule:

Wednesday, January 23, Course Introduction.

Monday, January 28, Esposito, Chapter 1" Muhammad and the Quran: Messenger and Message," (pp.1-31); Suggested reading: Bloom and Blair, (pp. 11-64).
Wednesday, January 30, Mottahedeh, “Note to the Reader” and “The Prologue” (pp. 7-17); continue reading: Esposito, chapter 1.

Monday, February 4, Esposito, "The Five Pillars of Faith; Muslim Family law", (pp. 88-100)

Wednesday, February 6, Mottahedeh, “Chapter 1”, Esposito, Chapter 3, “Religious Life Belief and Practice”, (pp. 68-100).

Monday, February 11, Esposito, Chapter 2, “Muslim Community in History”, (pp. 32-67); Bloom and Blair, Chapter 6, pp.(79-102).

Wednesday, February 13, Mottahedeh, Chapter 2; Esposito, continue reading chapter 2, with special emphasis on the Abbasid Caliphate; Bloom and Blair, Chapters 7 and 8, pp.(103-155).

Wednesday, February 20, Mottahedeh, Chapter 3; Photocopy, Tales from The 1001 Nights.


Wednesday, February 27, Mottahedeh, Chapter 4; Esposito “Popular Religion, Sufism: The Mystic Path of Love”, pp. (100-109)

Monday, March 4, Photocopy, The story of Layla and Majmun, as an allegory for a Sufi Path without a Master.

Wednesday, March 6, Mottahedeh, Chapter 5; The memory test: the story of The Conference of the Birds as an allegory for the Sufi Path with a Master.

Monday, March 18, Photocopy, The Sufi interpretation of the story of Khosrow and Shirin,

Wednesday, March 20, MIDTERM EXAM.

Monday, March 25, Photocopy, Roger M. Savory “Land of the Lion and the Sun”.

Wednesday, March 27, Mottahedeh, Chapter 6; Photocopy, The story of “The Seven Princesses,” Islamic globalization; Bloom and Blair, Chapters 9 and 10, pp. (158-219).

Monday, April 1, Concert of Sufi Music, suggested reading: Photocopy, A. Shiloah, “The Dimension of Sound”.

Wednesday, April 3, Mottahedeh, Chapter 7; Photocopy, Emilio Garcia Gomez, “Moorish Spain”; Bloom and Blair, Chapters 9 and 10, pp. (158-219).
Monday, April 8, Photocopy, Norman Itzkowitz, "The Ottoman Empire"; Bloom and Blair, Chapters 9 and 10, pp.(158-219).

Wednesday, April 10, Mottahedeh, chapter 8; continue reading "The Ottoman Empire:" Bloom and Blair, chapters 9 and 10, pp. (158-219).

Monday, April 15, Photocopy, S. S. A. Rizvi "Muslim India"; Bloom and Blair, Chapters 9 and 10, pp.(158-219).

Wednesday, April 17, Mottahedeh, chapter 9; Photocopy, Frank Korom and Peter Chelkowski, "Community Process and the Performance of Muharram Observances in Trinidad".

Monday, April 22, Esposito, Chapter 4, "Modern Interpretation of Islam" pp.(115-157).

Wednesday, April 24, Mottahedeh, Chapter 10; Esposito, chapter 5, "Contemporary Islam: Religion and Politics," pp.(158-222)

Monday, April 29, Esposito, Chapter 6, "Islam in Change: Issues of Authority and Interpretation." pp.(223-252)

Wednesday, May 1, Mottahedeh, "Epilogue"; The Islamic Revolution. Slide presentation.

Monday, May 6, Course Review.

Final Exam: Date To Be Announced.