Islam in Central and South Asia

Student Guide

V55.0523

Prof. R. D. McChesney

Preceptors:

Sabri Ates
Munir Fakher Eldin
Liat Kozma

Monday/Wednesday
8:00-9:15
714 Silver Center

CONTACT INFORMATION:

robert.mcchesney@nyu.edu
saatbir@yahoo.com (sabri)
mf409@nyu.edu (Munir)
lk412@nyu.edu (Liat)

phone: 212-998-8902

Prof. McChesney’s Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 10-12 or by appointment
Rm. 306 Kevorkian Building
50 Washington Square South
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I. Course description:

Asia, not the Middle East, is the home of most Muslims. Nearly three-quarters of the world’s Muslims, some 950 million people, today live in Central, South, Southeast, and East Asia. More than 300 million live just in the two countries of Bangladesh and Pakistan. The Muslim population of these two countries alone is nearly twice as great as far exceeds the total population of all Arab countries combined. (Egypt, for example, has about one-fifth and Saudi Arabia about one-twelfth the population of these two countries.) More than 120 million Muslims live in India, a non-Muslim country but with a Muslim population nearly twice that of Egypt.

This course begins with coverage of the basic features of Islam, the ways in which it spread into Asia from the Arabian peninsula and the region now known as the Middle East, the nature of the ensuing and continuing dialogue between Muslims and adherents of other Asian religious traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, shamanism, Zoroastrianism), the diversity of outcomes of those encounters, and the situation of Islam today in South and Central Asia.

We will be looking at how Asian Islam defines itself against external and internal alternatives, whether those alternatives are in the next house, the next village, the next country, across the sea, or across the globe.

These self-definations will emerge through examining a number of related issues: the expansion of Islamic authority in Asia; religious conversion, Islamic law and society, religious and political identity, the role of reformism in religion, and intra- and inter-religious conflict.

Expansion/Conversion will cover the rise of Islam and the early vectors of its transmission from the Arabian peninsula eastward, the ways in which Islam was represented to non-Muslim populations in South and Central Asia, the theories concerning conversion to Islam, and the ongoing dialogue in South and Central Asia between Muslims and non-Muslims and between different Muslim denominations.

The regulation of society will consider how the ideology of Islam, expressed in formal ordinances, translates in practice into the way individuals expect and are expected to live in their own communities. We will focus on the regulations and social norms governing
sexuality and gender relations, including marriage and divorce as these are understood to be governed by Islamic law.

Sectarian conflict will consider not only the contests between Muslims and non-Muslims but the history and nature of conflict and contest between different Muslim groups as well.

Religious and political identities and reformism will examine the ways in which ideas about Islam are formulated in political discourse and the efforts made, especially in (the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the (transitional) Islamic State of Afghanistan to create a true Islamic state.

II. Course objectives:

The general goals of the course are to increase understanding of the characteristics and common features of Asian Muslim world; to examine how Islam is used as a form of self-identification and how that identity plays out in the public and private domains of life; to consider the various forms of social expression identified as Islamic or Islamist; to highlight the nature of dialogue and conflict between the adherents of Islam and those of other religious traditions as well as among the adherents of Islam itself; to consider the economic and social issues behind conflicts expressed in religious terms.

The more specific goals are:

1) to learn the basic tenets and practices of Muslims and how those play out in Asia,
2) to better understand the social, economic, and political issues critical today and how religion is used to give those issues local meaning,
3) to learn something of the human geography of Muslim South and Central Asia and the networks of communication that connect South and Central Asia.
III. The Course Readings

A. Required to buy (available at NYU Book Center and at Unique Copy Center [The Reader]):
   1. David Waines, *An Introduction to Islam*
   2. Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan*
   5. National Geographic Society, *Political Map of Asia*
   6. *The Reader* (Unique Copy Center)

B. On reserve
   All the books in the course as well as the books from which many of the selections in *The Reader* are taken are on reserve at Bobst Library (A level) for those who do not wish to purchase the material. Some of the items could not be put on reserve because the library doesn’t have them but for those you can ask your TA for a copy.

IV. Course structure:

A. Lecture sessions
TIME: Mondays and Wednesdays, 8:00-9:15 (September 8-December 8, 2003)
PLACE: Silver 714 (Main Building)
FORMAT: I will try to keep the lectures to an hour. The remaining 15 minutes will be taken up with a variety of activities, including, but not limited to, pop quizzes, brief essays, images, film clips, music.

B. Recitations:
You are expected to attend every recitation. All absences, however valid, will be noted and will affect your final grade.
C. Important dates and deadlines:

Week of October 4: First short paper due.
October 18: Midterm exam
Week of November 8: Second short paper due.
December 22: Final exam

V. What You'll Be Graded on:

A. PARTICIPATION: 25%

There are two components to participation:

1. Attendance at recitations (10%)
2. Active participation at the recitation. Your preceptor is the sole judge of this. To encourage participation and the sharing of the work, your recitation leader will assign you to three- or four-person study groups to address issues raised in the lectures and reading. (15%)

B. GEOGRAPHICAL AWARENESS (5%): A basic knowledge of geography—human, political, and environmental—is essential to understanding the topics and objectives of the course. There is a blank map that is part of this manual. There will be two unannounced quizzes at the lectures based on this map. For the first quiz you should know country names and capital city; for the second, besides country and capital city, you should know the major rivers and their locations, principal cities and their locations, the names of adjacent seas or oceans (if any) the approximate number of Muslims and their percentage of the population—this information may be found in any world almanac). A study guide on the principal cities (other than capital), and the main natural features of the land will be handed out well before the second quiz.

C. MIDTERM: October 2 (20%)
D. THE SHORT PAPERS (10% each)

By the second precept you will choose an Asian country or region as your special focus for the short papers. You should also focus on an Islamist group active in your country. Your first short paper (due the week of September 23: at the recitations of Sept. 26 and 29) will address the first part of the suggested format (see below).

Your second short paper (due the week of November 17: at the recitations of November 20 and 23) should address the contemporary scene in the country you’ve chosen.

Recommended paper length: 1,000–1,200 words.

E. FINAL: Week of December 15 (30%)

SHORT PAPER FORMATS

Countries and some of the Islamist groups associated with each country:

Afghanistan: Jama’at-i Islami, Taliban, Wahdat-i Islami, Hizb-i Islami
India: Harakat ul-Mujahideen, Hizb-i Mujahideen (Kashmir), Ahl-i Hadith,
Pakistan: Jam’iyat-i Ulama-yi Islami, Jama’at-i Islami, Sipah-i Islam, Sipah-i Ansar,
Jaysh-i Muhammadi
Uzbekistan and Tajikistan: Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

Short paper 1: (due at recitation, week of October 4)

Subject: The Arrival of Islam in (your chosen country).

Background: How and when is it generally believed that Islam first came to your region/country? Are there legends associated with its arrival? What was the religious environment when Muslims appeared on the scene? How successful have Muslims been in expanding in your country? And under what circumstances?
Short paper 2: (due at recitation, week of November 8)

Subject: Islam Today in (your chosen country).

Contemporary scene: What is the situation of Islam today in your country? How diverse is Islam in your country? Does the Shari’ah play a significant legal role? In what areas are there important divisions and conflicts between Muslim groups? What are the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, if any, in your country? Are there politically powerful Islamist groups? When were these groups founded? Who are their leaders? What are their policies and goals? What is the condition of women generally in your country?

These are suggested issues to address. You may certainly go beyond these after consultation with your TA.

VI. Research Guide

Ms. Paula Feid, the head of undergraduate services at Bobst Library runs a series of workshops at Bobst Library. To sign up: library.nyu.edu/research/classes/html These are highly recommended.

Basic research sources you can check out on your own:

Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition: (Both the reference room of Bobst Library and the CNES Library have copies.) This is a scholarly reference source with a comprehensive discussion of most issues (though rather more focused on the Arab world than on Asian Islam. It has excellent bibliographies with each entry.

Tip: sometimes the country or person or term you are seeking will be under its Arabized name or under a name by which it was known in history. For example “India” is under “Hind” while “Pakistan” is under “Pakistan.” (Usually, if you look up the modern name there will be a reference to the main entry if different.)
Index Islamicus: A guide to articles and monographs published on Islam. It is arranged both by subject matter and by country/region. It is published quarterly and every five years compiled into one volume covering the five-year period. There is also a searchable CD-ROM in the Bobst reference room (1st floor south side) and in the CNES Library. Oftentimes the best information on a topic is found in an article rather than a book and the Index Islamicus is the best source for locating articles.

Other good reference sources for this course:

Encyclopedia Iranica (much of the Asian Muslim world was deeply affected by Iranian (Persian) civilization and although this encyclopedia so far only covers the letters A-H, there is much in it pertaining to South and Central Asia. Its entries are more thematically organized than the Encyclopedia of Islam

The Cambridge History of Islam (2 vols.) (Bobst)

The Cambridge History of India (Bobst)

To find books in Bobst (online at http://library.nyu.edu):

Tip: Look under country entry and subject in Bobcat or subject and subcategory. (India. Social customs, e.g.) When you find the book on the shelf, check the index of the book (at the back) for specific topics. If there is no index, try another book. A good index is not necessarily a sign of a good book but no index or a poor one is almost always a sign of a book you can probably safely ignore.

Tip: The Library of Congress (LC) cataloguing system (used by Bobst) organizes books (and thus their place on the library shelves) by general discipline (history, social science, religion, literature) and then by country
so that you may find other books of interest by browsing the area around the spot where you are looking for a particular book.

**Tip:** The BP and DS shelf sections of the library are particularly good areas to be looking.

Using the Internet:

Google.com is still the best search engine. Your recitation leader will help you find appropriate websites for your country.

Newspapers and periodical literature: Many are online through the Internet. Most English language newspapers from Asia are online and sometimes searchable.

Some US newspapers (New York Times, for example) have foreign coverage to be found through indexes available in Bobst. Check with the reference desk at Bobst.

*Writing a research paper: some things to think about*

1. In writing for others you have to establish your credibility. No one expects you to be knowledgeable, let alone an expert, on a subject until you have studied it for a long time and established your credibility. Coming to a subject for the first time and writing about it requires that you let your reader know that you have consulted authorities on the subject. You do this by citing the work of those you consult. If you use other people’s work and do not give them credit for it (by citing them) you have committed the intellectual crime of plagiarism (theft of intellectual property). Normally you do not need to cite widely known facts (for example, the first Mughal ruler of India was Babur,” “the capital of Afghanistan is Kabul” “Central Asia is an arid region”) but you do need to indicate where you found lesser-known information or precise data or ideas “Muhammad b. Qasim led the first Arab army of conquest into Sind at the beginning of the eighth century” (footnote should give author, title, date of publication, and page of the reference) or “The Muslim
population of India is presently estimated at about 12% of the entire population, or some 120 million people." (World Almanac p.  ) for example.

It is generally better to over-cite at first until you develop a feel for it. It is also sometimes acceptable in a general survey to give a bibliographic note and say, for example, “the following discussion of the social structure of Bangladesh is mainly based on (then give the authors and titles of the works it’s based on).”

To cite a source on the internet give the name of the site and the URL of the page.

2. It is important to keep in mind the distinctions between fact, belief, and opinion/speculation:

What are facts? (According to Webster’s a fact is: “something that has actual existence, an actual occurrence or event, a thing presented as having objective reality”) This might include:

a. Specific data (measurements); “the birthrate of India is (whatever it is); Uzbekistan celebrates September 1st as Independence Day,” “The Mughal emperor Akbar reigned from 1556–1605 A.D.”

b. Widely observed and generally universally agreed-upon phenomena, “The earth orbits the sun,” “The Amu River separates Afghanistan from Tajikistan.”

What is belief?

Religious: “Muhammad is the seal of the Prophets,” “Christ died for the sins of man.” (But it is a fact that Muslims on the whole believe Muhammad is the last of the divinely inspired prophets and Christians on the whole believe that Christ died for their sins.)

Secular: “A college education is important.” “Democracy is better than autocracy.” (But it is a fact that many Americans believe a college education is important and a large percentage of the world’s population believes democracy is preferable to autocracy.)
What is opinion/speculation?

"The Arab armies were able to eventually occupy all of Central Asia because the princes facing them were unable to coordinate their resistance," "Dowry remains a social problem in India because the laws against it are not strictly enforced," "In Afghanistan, the neo-Taliban are behind the attacks on UN voter registration workers."

Opinion/speculation forms the heart of scholarship and the development of knowledge and information. But it is most effective and most credible when the author's opinion/speculation is supported by fact as well as the reasoned opinion and speculation of others, especially recognized authorities. Here is where the need to cite your sources as evidence of your conclusions is most critical. The credibility of your sources and of your sources' sources is often assessed by the questions, "How do they know? Are you/they in a position to know what you/they are proposing or concluding?"

In writing it is useful to pose explicit questions as you go along. "How do we know that communalism is deeply engrained in the fabric of Indian society?" Then you answer it with, for example, "We know this from the historical record and from the numerous writings and newspaper articles on the subject published in India today, for example,..."

When you have an idea but the data is not overwhelming, be tentative. Use qualifying phrases like, "It seems that..., " or "It would appear from the evidence we do have, that..." This is effective in establishing your point and your credibility.

AVOID TOTALIZING STATEMENTS: "Muslims are anti-Western," "Americans are anti-Muslim" This is something you may believe but such statements are utterly ineffective, even counter-productive, when stated in writing and offered in a semi-authoritative context.
Style sheet for Footnotes and Bibliography

For footnotes:

1. Citing from a book for the first time:

Author's first name, middle initial and last name followed by a comma and a space.

Title of the book in italics or underlined followed by a space

Open parentheses: the place of publication followed by a colon and a space the name of
the publisher followed by a comma and a space the year of publication close
parentheses and comma.

(This information is generally found on the title page.)

the page number or the page range where the information is found.

FOR EXAMPLE:

R. D. McChesney, Kabul Under Siege: Fayz Muhammad’s Account of the 1929 Uprising

Citing from the same book thereafter: (use short form of author’s name and title of the
book, omit the publication information and the date.)

FOR EXAMPLE:

McChesney, Kabul Under Siege, 235.

2. Citing from an article in a journal or a chapter in a collected work (many articles
by different authors in one volume)

Author's first name, middle initial and last name followed by a comma and a space.

Title of the article in double quotation marks with the comma before the closing
quotation mark and space.

name of the journal in italics or underlined followed by a space the volume number of
the journal followed by a space the year of publication in parentheses followed by a colon
and a space then the page numbers.

FOR EXAMPLE: (on first citation)

**On further citation:**


**Or in the case of a collected work**

(after the author’s name and title of the work) “in editor(s) name, ed. comma space title of the work and the same publication data and page number as above under “citing a book.”

**FOR EXAMPLE: (on first citation)**


**On further citation:**


**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**For Books:**

Author’s last name, first name period space title of the book period space place of publication colon space publisher’s name comma space, date.

**FOR EXAMPLE:**


**Articles and chapters the same:**

VII. Schedule of lectures and readings

Week One

Wednesday, September 8, 2004 / Rajab 22, 1425

Introduction: Course objectives and requirements

Week Two

Monday, September 13 / Rajab 27

The Fundamentals: Prophet Muhammad, the Qur’an, and Early Community

Wednesday, September 15 / Rajab 29

Foundational Beliefs and Practices

Reading for recitation:
Waines, *Introduction to Islam*, pp. 1–59
*The Reader*, pp. 1–50 (Selections from the Qur’an, from al-Bukhari’s collection of hadith, the “Constitution of Medina” and al-Busiri’s *Burdah.*

What you should know by the end of the week:
Where Islam began and under what circumstances. What the Qur’an is and how it came into existence. Some idea of the nature of God as portrayed in the Qur’an. What sunna and hadith mean. Basic beliefs, practices (“five pillars”) and structures (mosque, madrasa). The early community (lifetime of the Prophet), how Arabs became Muslims, the caliph (*khalifa*) and the caliphate.

Terms and names you should know:
Qur’an, ayah and surah, sunnah and bid‘ah, hadith (hadis), the Ka‘ba, hajj, salat, shahadah, the Muslim/Hijri calendar, Mecca, Medina, Ummah Muhajirun, Ansar, the “Companions” and the “Successors”

Week Three

September 20 / Sha‘ban 5

Expansion and Division in the Ummah (Islam Comes to South and Central Asia)

September 22 / Sha‘ban 7

Consolidation of Islam in the Imperial Period (8th–16th Centuries)
Reading for recitation:
The Reader, pp. 51–103 (Selection from Ibn Battuta’s *Travels*)

What you should know:
Why the early Muslim community divided. Theories of conversion to Islam.

Terms and names you should know:
Riddah wars, caliph and imam, Karbala, ‘Ali b. Abi Talib, Fatima, Hasan and Husayn,
Abu Bakr, ‘Uthman, ‘Umar I, ghaza and ghazi, jihad and mujahid, Mongols, Genghis Khan, qadi (qazi, kadi, kazi), dhimmi

Week Four

September 27 / Sha’ban 12

*The Age of European Christian Empires (British and Russian) 19th and Early 20th Centuries*

September 29 / Sha’ban 14

*Muslim Responses to European (Christian) Domination*

Reading for recitation:


Things you should know:
The different forms the Muslim response to Christian colonization took. What was happening away from the centers of Christian domination (Aini’s experience)?

Terms and names you should know:
ulama (ulema), Shah Waliullah and his son Shah ‘Abdu’l-‘Aziz, Muhammad Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, *fatwa* (plural, *fatwaei*), Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi (from Rae Bareli or Bareilly, Oudh, India), Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *kafir*, Anglo-Muhammadan law, the Jadids, Dar al-Islam (*daru’l-islam*) and Dar al-Harb (*daru’l-harb*), jihad, the Fara’idi (or Fara’izi) movement, the “Mutiny”, Deoband Madrasah and Delhi College
Week Five

Note: 1st short paper due at this week’s recitation

October 4 / 19 Sha’ban

War, Revolution, and Independence: The End of Empire and Its Consequences

October 6 / 21 Sha’ban

Partition: Its Causes and Consequences (film by Iqbal Ahmad)

Readings for recitation:

The Reader, 180–207 (Gandhi, Eight Lives [life of M. Ali Jinnah]);
Khushwant Singh, Train to Pakistan (entire)

What you should know:
The causes of Partition, the creation of Bangladesh

Names and Terms you should know:
Khilafat movement, Muslim League, Ali Jinnah, Mohandas Gandhi, the October
Revolution, national delimitation, Awami party, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

Week Six

Islamic Law in Context

October 11 / Sha’ban 26

Islamic Family Law: Sexuality, Marriage, and Divorce (excerpt from film Being
Muslim in India)

October 13 / Sha’ban 28

Film: Divorce Iranian Style

Readings for recitation:
Waines, Introduction to Islam, 63–102, 237–239 (“Reformers and Family Law”)
The Reader, 106–119 (Esposito, Women in Muslim Family Law, 13–39)

What you should know:
The four basic principles (usul) of law, marriage as a contract, the taboo relationships, the
issue of polygyny, concepts of illicit sexual relationships, the different forms of divorce,
how an Islamic court functions (as seen in the film)
Terms and names you should know:
Shari‘a, madhhab (mazhab), the three-fold talaq, Hanafi school, waiting period (‘iddah), maintenance (nafaqah), dowry or bride price (mahr, sadaq), (zina), mut‘a marriage, guardianship (wala)

Week Seven

Islamic Law: Economic Aspects

October 18 / Ramadan 3 (MIDTERM EXAM)

October 20 / Ramadan 5

Unifying Symbols: The Hajj

Readings for recitation:

Week Eight

October 25 / Ramadan 10

Inheritance, Charity, and Philanthropy

October 27 / Ramadan 12

Property and Finance

Readings for recitation:
The Reader, 208–223 (Aramco World, “Islamic Banking” and McChesney, Charity and Philanthropy)

What you should know:
How Islamic views property, women and property rights of women (in law and practice), succession to estates, the main forms of charity, the nature of the permanent endowment

Terms and names you should know:
Riba, waqf, zakat, sadaqah, fara‘id
Week Nine

Sufis and Saints

November 1 / Ramadan 17

Central Asian Sufism: Past and Present

November 3 / Ramadan 19

Shrines and Saints in India and Pakistan (film “I Am A Muslim, I Am a Sufi”)

Readings for recitation:

Waines, *Introduction to Islam*, 132–150 (Chapter 5, omit the last five pages)
The Bijak of Kabir, pp. 1–37

What you should know:

The main ideas of Sufism, the characteristic practices of Sufism.

Names and terms you should know:

tariqa, Naqshbandis, Chishtis, dhikr (zikr), khanaqah, murshid or pir and murid, Baha al-Din Naqshband,

Week Ten

“The Way of the Imams”

November 8 / Ramadan 24

Shi‘ism in Central Asia

November 10 / Ramadan 26

Shi‘ism in India

Readings for recitation:

Waines, *Introduction to Islam*, 155–172 (Chapter Six)
The Reader, 274–283 (I. Ahmad, “The Shia-Sunni Dispute”)
What you should know:

What are different forms of Shi‘ism? What are the main areas of disagreement between Shi‘i sects? Between Shi‘is and Sunnis?

Terms and names you should know:

Imam, Hidden Imam, Isma’ilism, Aga Khan, ta‘ziyah, Muharram

Week Eleven

Exile, Emigration, Expatriation

Note: Second short paper due at this week’s recitation.

November 15 / Shawwal 1

Dislocation in Central Asia: The Case of the Kirghiz of Afghanistan (film: “Kirghiz of Afghanistan”) (Part 1)

November 17 / Shawwal 3

Dislocation in South Asia: The Kirghiz of Afghanistan (Part 2)

Readings for recitation:
Film notes (in Student manual) and handout

What you should know:
Islam in a remote rural environment

Week Twelve

Re-Islamizing Society

November 22 / Shawwal 8

Afghanistan: An Impoverished Muslim Society (film; Prayers of the Warlord)

November 24 / Shawwal 10

Islamist Movements in South and Central Asia

No recitations—Have a Happy Thanksgiving!
Week Thirteen

Community and Communalism

November 29 / Shawwal 15

Hindu-Muslim Conflict Past and Present: The case of the Babri Masjid (film excerpt, “Among the Unbelievers”)

December 1 / Shawwal 17

Hindu-Muslim Conflict (con’t): The Shah Bano Case

Readings for recitation:


Week Fourteen

Creating an Islamic State

December 6 / Shawwal 20

*The Islamic State in Afghanistan: The Case of the Taliban, 1994–2001*

December 8 / Shawwal 22

Pakistan’s Struggle to Create an Islamic State

Readings for recitation:


What you should know:

the essential elements of an Islamic state; how Afghanistan managed (albeit briefly) to achieve what it considers an Islamic state while Pakistan, despite decades committed to the idea, has not; who the Taliban were/are; the role rural/urban divisions play in Islamization of state structures; the impact on women and minorities, the Islamist organizations that have formed.
Terms and names you should know:

The Muslim “Golden Rule” (Qur’an III: 109); Taliban, purdah and hijab, burqa or chador/chadri, General Zia al-Haq

FINAL EXAM- December 22

* * * * *
Miscellaneous

Film Notes:

**Being Muslim in India**

(Segment on a polygynous household) The household is in New Delhi and is headed by a man who was a teenager when Partition came (1947) but did not go to Pakistan with his parents. Although the participants in this film seem very conscious of being filmed and of the intended (Western) audience and in many ways gloss over the kinds of difficulties and conflict a polygynous household is likely to face, nevertheless the film is excellent for showing the practical side of polygyny. The head of the household has three wives, the first of whom is in purdah, refused to be filmed, and is referred to a number of times as the manager of the house and its finances. She is also the only one to have borne children (the small children seen in the film are the grandchildren of the head of the household.) The second wife is a woman of Irish Catholic lineage (her father, an Irishman, worked in India and married an Indian woman). Her role in the family seems least clear in the film. The third wife is a widow who brings managerial expertise to the marriage. As she is portrayed, the viewer might ask what did she gain from the marriage?

**Divorce Iranian Style**

The film is shot in a family court in Tehran, Iran, not technically part of our region but useful for thinking about gender relations and power, as well as for its depiction of the workings of an Islamic court. The presiding magistrate is called “Judge Dildar.” His official title is “Qazi,” the Arabic/Persian word for judge. The other officials of the court that figure in the film are Mrs. Maher, the court secretary, her daughter Paniz, and Mr. Jamshidi, keeper of the all-important files.

You will see four main cases presented, plus bits and pieces of a couple of others. The first involves a woman who seems simply to want her husband to come home and treat her better. Another involves a woman seeking a divorce by decree from her husband on the grounds of his impotence. A third involves a sixteen-year-old girl seeking to have her husband declared insane so she can get a divorce from him, and the fourth is a case of a divorced woman who has remarried but is seeking custody of a four-year-old daughter from her previous marriage. A bit of another case, heard in another judge’s courtroom is also filmed, this involving a woman’s complaint about a man’s taking a second wife.

Some of the more hotly contested issues are not divorce itself but related questions like maintenance (something a man must provide his wife while they are married), who gets child custody, and “the marriage gift.” The marriage gift, sometimes called “dowry” or “bride-price” is an essential feature of Islamic marriage, something that every bride is entitled to, but relinquishing her claim to it seems to be the only leverage she has in the end if she wants her husband to consent to a divorce.

Note the informality of the court proceedings, the absence of lawyers, the way paper (the “file”) is used to control the pace of the proceedings, the judge’s apparent willingness to give credence to the assertions of the plaintiffs and defendants without witnesses or evidence, and the role of negotiation as opposed to a judicial decision in deciding outcomes.

Note too how issues central to Islamic law are brought up to bolster the women’s cases. Two of the women refer to their husbands drinking (drinking wine is one of the violations of God’s rights or “limits” the _hudud_) and the claim of false accusation of adultery is brought up several times by at least one of the women. In those instances the judge will ask, “do you have
witnesses?" In some cases a confession is sufficient for a verdict but in the case of “God's limits” witnesses are required.

**The Kirghiz of Afghanistan and Afghan Exodus**

The first film depicts the life of a group of Kirghiz herders who had fled the Soviet Union in the 1940s. Their pastures are located in the high Pamir region of northeastern Afghanistan, a thin strip of land called the Wakhan Valley which was created by British and Russian treaty in the 19th century to ensure that the Russian and British Indian borders would not touch. The Kirghiz raise sheep and yaks in the valley at an elevation of some 14,000 feet. The film gives a good picture of their economy and lifestyle.

The second film covers the flight of this same group of Kirghiz after the Communist coup in April 1978 in Afghanistan. They take their herds and emigrate en masse to Gilgit in northern Pakistan. There they attempt to adapt to a different ecological and economic environment and attempt to get the US State department to issue them visas to go to Alaska and re-create their former way of life there.

Some things to look for in the films:

*Economic conditions:* Who owns the wealth represented by the herds? What is the system by which the herds are managed and increased how does it work to distribute wealth through the community? How self-reliant are the Kirghiz?

*Social conditions:* Note the political order, the khan Rahman Qul and his son Akbar and their power over the rest of the community. Is there dissent against the power of the khan and how is it expressed? The role of women is well delineated in the first movie and the difficulties of life are eloquently expressed by the khan’s wife. Note the fate of the daughters of the opium addict who is in debt to the lowland traders. Then compare the apparent openness and freedom women enjoyed in the Pamir pastures with what awaited them in the town in Gilgit.

*The role of Islam:* Are the Kirghiz Muslims? How can you tell from the film? How prominent are the outward signs of Islam? How are the tenets of Islam passed from generation to generation? (Pay special attention to the little boy who has trouble with the pages of his notebook. His ultimate fate is of some interest.)

Now read the newspaper article that will be handed out and consider how the life of the Kirghiz has been radically transformed by political events beyond their control.
New York University • Morse Academic Plan

Academic Guidelines for Students

To help foster common academic expectations among students and instructors, the following guidelines for MAP courses are offered to students. While these represent minimum expectations across the curriculum, individual faculty members may set additional course requirements. Students should therefore be sure to consult the course syllabus for details of policies in each class.

Attendance
Inasmuch as students have voluntarily sought admission to the University, they are expected to attend all class meetings, including all lectures and all meetings of associated recitation, workshop, or laboratory sections. Students may be excused for documented medical or personal emergency and will receive reasonable accommodation for the observance of religious holidays. In these cases, they should contact their instructors in advance or, in cases of emergency, as soon as is practicable. Students are responsible for making up any material or assignments they miss.

Classroom Decorum
The classroom is a space for free and open inquiry and for the critical evaluation of ideas, and it should be free of personal prejudice. Students and instructors alike have an obligation to all members of the class to create an educational atmosphere of mutual trust and respect in which differences of opinion can be subjected to deliberate and reasonable examination without animus.

As a matter of courtesy to their fellow students and instructors, students should arrive at class promptly, prepared and ready to participate. Students are reminded particularly to shut off all cellular telephones and pagers and, except in cases of emergency, to remain in the classroom for the duration of the lecture or section meeting. If it is necessary to leave or enter a room once class has begun, students should do so quietly and with as little disruption as possible.

Under University policy, disruptive classroom behavior may be subject to faculty review and disciplinary sanction.

Completion of Assignments
Students are expected to submit course work on time and to retain copies of their work until a final grade has been received for the course. Instructors are not obliged to accept late work and may assign a failing or reduced grade to such assignments.

Students who encounter sudden and incapacitating illness or other comparably grave circumstance that prevents them from completing the final examination or assignment in a course may request a temporary mark of Incomplete from the course instructor. To receive an Incomplete, students must have completed all other requirements for the course, including satisfactory attendance, and there must be a strong likelihood they will pass the course when all work is completed.

Questions and Concerns
Up-to-date course information is available on the MAP website, http://www.nyu.edu/cas/map. Questions, concerns, comments, and feedback may be directed to the following members of the MAP staff, both located in 903 Silver, (212) 998-8119. Complaints will remain confidential.

• Foundations of Contemporary Culture: Dr. Vincent Renzi map.fcc@nyu.edu
• Foundations of Scientific Inquiry: Dr. Trace Jordan map.fsi@nyu.edu

Autumn, 2002
Statement on Academic Integrity

As a student at New York University, you have been admitted to a community of scholars who value free and open inquiry. Our work depends on honest assessment of ideas and their sources, and we expect you, as a member of our community, likewise to maintain the highest integrity in your academic work. Because of the central importance of these values to our intellectual life together, those who fail to maintain them will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University.

Plagiarism consists in presenting ideas and words without acknowledging their source and is an offense against academic integrity. Any of the following acts constitutes a crime of plagiarism.

- Using a phrase, sentence, or passage from another person's work without quotation marks and attribution of the source.
- Paraphrasing words or ideas from another's work without attribution.
- Reporting as your own research or knowledge any data or facts gathered or reported by another person.
- Submitting in your own name papers or reports completed by another.
- Submitting your own original work toward requirements in more than one class without the prior permission of the instructors.

Other offenses against academic integrity include the following.

- Collaborating with other students on assignments without the express permission of the instructor.
- Giving your work to another student to submit as his or her own.
- Copying answers from other students during examinations.
- Using notes or other sources to answer exam questions without the instructor's permission.
- Secretly or destroying library or reference materials.
- Submitting as your own work a paper or results of research that you have purchased from a commercial firm or another person.

Particular emphasis is placed on the use of papers and other materials to be found on the World-Wide Web, whether purchased or freely available. In addition to having access to the same search engines as students, faculty also have at their disposal a number of special websites devoted to detecting plagiarism from the web.

Plagiarism and other cases of academic fraud are matters of fact, not intention. It is therefore crucial that you be diligent in assuring the integrity of your work.

- Use quotation marks to set off words not your own.
- Learn to use proper forms of attribution for source materials.
- Do your own original work in each class, without collaboration, unless otherwise instructed.
- Don't use published sources, the work of others, or material from the web without attribution.
- Ask your professor or preceptor if you have questions about an assignment or the use of sources.
- For further information, consult the Bulletin of the College of Arts and Science, the CAS Academic Handbook, and the Student's Guide to NYU.

Autumn, 2002