This course is an introduction to the common religious, cultural and political base of what is generally and popularly called “Islam.” There is no “thing” called “Islam,” of course, but there are assuredly Muslims, many, many of them, who share what we, and they, call Islam. For Muslims Islam is not simply a set of present day beliefs or observances but includes, as a significant part, a long and varied history, a deep-seated and pervasive culture and a remarkable civilization. The course cannot cover all those elements but will concentrate on fundamentals from the Quranic origins of the faith and the career of the Prophet Muhammad to the beliefs and observances shared by most Muslims and some of the differences among them. By the end of the semester you should be able to offer a reasonably sophisticated answer to the question “What is Islam?”

SYLLABUS

The following syllabus will also be found on the “Blackboard” version of the class (available to registered students), along with—and this is very important—some essential and very helpful material for this complex course. Log onto your NYU Home account and you will find Blackboard there. Problems getting on? Try 998-3333 or send an email to: problems.blackboard@nyu.edu.

Note: The following syllabus is also a study-guide. It lists the topics that will be covered in each lecture and is keyed to the reading assignments. A really clever person might also conclude it would be useful for purposes of review.

"Readings" refer to assignments to be done before each class.
**Please print out and bring to our first meeting the selections from the Quran that you can find on Blackboard under “Course Documents”**

1. W. 5 Sept. = 22th of Sha’ban 1428 A.H./2007 A.D. Wha?

* Salaam alaykum, ya shabab! 

What is Islam? Who is a Muslim? Reading the Word of God

*Is a “religion” a “something” or a collection of “someones”?* Islam as the (political? social?) community of Muslims.

**Islam as a Religion:** a body of informing notions about God and man delivered through a unique prophetic revelation and universal in their application

**Islam as Community:** The body of religious notions interpreted into a society (umma) of shared beliefs (“the community of Muslims” [al-muslimûn] or “of Believers” [al-mu’minûn] and under a common sovereignty [so, dâr-al Islâm, the “Abode of Islam,” the lands under that sovereignty]. Exceeding the ideological or behavioral limits of the community leads to the problem of sectarianism, while living under non-Muslim sovereignty creates a Muslim diaspora.

**Islam as a Culture:** the consequence of the development of those same religious notions into a natural anthropology or way of life, affected, to be sure, by other, more secular norms and customs.

**Islam as a Civilization:** Islamic culture conditioned by time and place.

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**Readings: Selections on Blackboard**

It all starts with a book. You now have some selections from that book, called in Arabic al-Qur’ân (and in English Qur’an or Koran as well as Quran), which is a collection of 114 chapters representing the revelations given by God to Muhammad over the course of some twenty-two years in Mecca and Medina, towns in Arabia. These selections illustrate some of the primary and persistent themes in Muhammad’s—that is, God’s—message to humankind: there will one day be a reckoning, when humans are judged by their deeds and rewarded or punished accordingly. So “submit to God” (islâm; a muslim is someone who has so submitted) and acknowledge His prophet and message. We are likewise introduced to the figure of Abraham and other prophets of the Jewish and Christian past. Islam, it turns out, is a biblical type religion!

[You can do a lot of your own research on the subject of this course. A good place to start is the university websites of Georgia, Texas, Columbia:

http://www.arches.uga.edu/~godlas

http://menic.utexas.edu/

http://www.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/indiv/area/MiddleEast]
Check them out now.

2. [M. 10 Sept]: The Prophet and the Quran: An Introduction.


This course will deal with Islamic matters mostly in the Muslims’ own words. These latter are not generally designed for beginners and so it may be a good idea to begin with an over-all look at Muhammad’s life and the book that Muslims regard as the Word of God. The role of Muhammad in Islam: a prophet by God’s design (Esposito, *Islam*, pp. 5-8; see Meeting #4 below), a statesman by history’s unfolding (pp. 8-11; see Meeting #5 below), and, increasingly, a role model in the eyes of Muslim piety (pp. 11-14). Non-Muslims have seen it quite otherwise, however (pp. 14-17). The Quran is not Muhammad’s book but God’s (pp. 17-21), and reveals the will of God—whose name in Arabic is Allâh, but whose identity is the same of the God of Abraham and Moses and Jesus and Paul—both in its general principles and in some detail (pp. 21-31).


**Readings:** Denny, *Introduction*, pp. 16-56 (read this first, then); Peters, *Reader*, Chap. 1, nos. 1-7, 12-15.

There are two ways of looking at the world before Islam, through the eyes of the historian who investigates the environment of the sparsely settled, isolated and bedouinized Arabia and of the mercantile shrine-city of Mecca where Muhammad was born; or through the eyes of the Qur’an, which reads the past as “sacred history,” beginning, like the Bible, with Creation (Peters Chap.1/#1), and, beginning with Adam (1/2) traces the history of both prophecy and the Ka’ba (Peters 1/3) down through history. Abraham is a very critical figure in this Sacred History (Peters 1/4-7) and for the understanding of Islam, which the Qur’an describes as “the religion of Abraham.” [Note that Abraham’s final resting place is in Hebron, where possession of his tomb is heatedly disputed by Jews and Muslims]. There is also emphasis on the figures of Moses [“Musa”] (Peters 1/8) and Jesus [“‘Isa ibn Miryam”] (Peters 1/10). The Qur’an does not much speak of Mecca, but the later Muslim tradition filled in the details of how the town lapsed from its Abrahamic sanctity into a “state of ignorance” (*jahiliyya*) (Peters 1/12), though in Muhammad’s day there were still traces of the monotheistic past (Peters 1/13-15).

And who is an Arab?
Tomorrow, Thursday, 13 September, will be the first day of Ramadan in the Muslim hijri calendar and the beginning of the statutory month of fasting for all Muslims. Ramadan is also the month when the Quran was “sent down” to Muhammad.

4. [M. 17 Sept.]: The Call of the Prophet: Muhammad at Mecca


Writing and reading a life of the Prophet (Peters, pp.43-44); Muhammad’s antecedents and youth (Peters, Chap 2/#1-3); his marriage to Khadija (2/4); his call and the beginning of revelation (2/5-6); the earliest preaching (2/8); persecution by the Quraysh (II/9-11); the Night Journey (2/12), a profound element in Muslims’ attachment to Jerusalem, and often connected with his “ascension” (see Peters, p. 168 and Meeting #6 below); the deterioration of Muhammad’s position at Mecca (2/13); an invitation from Yathrib (2/14); the use of force (2/15), which raises the issue of jihād or “holy war”.


5. [W. 19 Sept.]: The Head of the Community: Muhammad at Medina


**The Tentative Chronology of Muhammad’s Career at Medina**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning of Muslim Era</td>
<td>16 July 622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration (hijra) to Medina</td>
<td>September 622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of Qibla</td>
<td>December 623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle of Badr</td>
<td>February 624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expulsion of Jewish Banu Qaynuqa</td>
<td>March 624</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meccan raid on Medina</td>
<td>April 624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle of Uhud</td>
<td>March 625</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expulsion of Jewish Banu Nadir</td>
<td>September 625</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Day of the Trench”</td>
<td>(all) March 627</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slaughter of Jewish Banu Qurayza</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Expedition against Mustaliq, and Aisha's misadventure</td>
<td>December 627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expedition/treaty of Hudaybiyya</td>
<td>April 628</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expedition against Khaybar       May 628  
Pilgrimage to Mecca            April 629  
Expedition to Mu'ta (Jordan)    September 629  
Conquest of Mecca               December 629  
Battle of Hunayn                January 630  
Expedition to Tabuk             October 630  
Farewell Pilgrimage            March 632  
Death at Medina                June 632

The Hijra [622 AD=1 AH](Peters, Chap.2/#16; see 2/32);the first umma: the "Constitution of Medina" (2/17); initial encounters with the Jews (2/18) and its consequences: qibla, ashura ;the violence issue again (2/19); the miraculous victory at Badr Wells [624 AD] (2/20); dealing with the Jews of Medina (2/21-23); Hudaybiyya [628 AD](2/24-25); Mecca capitulates [630 AD](2/26-28); basic instruction on Islam (2/29); the farewell pilgrimage (2/30) and the death of the Prophet [632 AD](2/31).

6. [M. 24 Sept.]: The Quran as Revelation


A quranic history of prophecy (Peters, Chap. 4/#1); the “People of the Book”: the Jews and Christians as recipients of revelation (Peters, Chap 3/#1); the Jews stray from the truth of the Torah (“Tawrät”) (3/2-3) and the Christians from the Gospel (“Injîl”) (3/4); the tampering with Scripture (Chap. 4.2); the divine origin of the Qur’an: an answer to doubters(4/3); Muhammad’s ascension (4/4; see p. 64) and the “Night of Destiny” (4/5); Qur’an, Heavenly Book or created copy? (4/6-8); the earliest sûra (4/9); abrogation and the “Satanic verses” (4/11; see also pp. 196, top, and 243); putting together our Qur’an (4/12-13); Muhammad, the last prophet (4/18); how a Muslim should read the Quran (4/21-25).

7. [W. 26 Sept.]: The Great Debate: Sunni & Shi’ite on Islam as a Religio-Political System

Some important dates:

632: Death of Muhammad; election of Abu Bakr as khalîfa or “successor”
632-661: The four Rashidun or “Rightly Guided” Caliphs
  632-634: 1) Caliphate of Abu Bakr; “wars of secession”
  634-644: 2) Caliphate of Umar; beginning of institutionalization of a Muslim state; murder
  644-656: 3) Caliphate of Uthman; preparation of standard Quran; assassination
  656-661: 4) Caliphate of Ali; discord with Mu‘awiya; separation of Kharijites; assassination; accession of Mu‘awiya to caliphate
661-750: Umayyad dynasty in Damascus
  680: Ali’s son Husayn slaughtered by Umayyad troops at Karbala in Iraq
750-1258: Abbasid dynasty in Baghdad
The community of Muslims (Peters, Chap. 3/#5); an Arab community? (3/6); “catholic” Islam: staying with the tradition (3/7); the Shi’ite view of the community (3/8); the beginning of the caliphate: Migrants and Helpers confer on a khalîfa (#10); the powers of the caliph, Sunni-style (#11 & 20-23); the Imam, Shi’ite style (#12); Ali as the first Imam (#13-14); the martyrdom of Husayn at Karbala (10 Muharram 680): the ta’ziyah or Passion Play (#15); “People of the House” (16); Shi’at Ali and Sunnis (some percentages); “dissembling”; the Shi’ite succession (#17); “Sevener” (Isma’ili) and “Twelver” (Imami) Shi’ites (#19); the “concealment” of the Imam (874 and 941 AD) (#18); The Safavids (1501-1733) CE and Iran as a Shi’ite state [Some Terms: khalîfa; imâm; Sunni; Shi’at Ali; ta’ziyah; nass; Isma’ili; Imami; taqiyya]

Readings: Denny, Introduction, pp. 86-93; Peters, Reader, Chapter 3, nos. 5-8, 10-23; Esposito, Islam, pp. 43-48.

8. [M 1 Oct.]: The Spread of the Faith: The "Abode of Islam"


Some dates: [>> = expansion; << = contraction of Abode of Islam]
640: Muslims occupy Egypt and Iraq >>
670: Muslims in Central Asia, and Tunisia >>; stopped before Constantinople<<;
Anatolia remains under Christian sovereignty until 11th century.
711: Armies cross into Spain>>; halted at Poitiers in 732<<
750: Armies at borders of China<<
825: Invasion of Sicily>>
1061-1091: Normans retake Sicily<<
1063-1071: Seljuq Turks conquer Armenia, Georgia, Anatolia>>
1085: Spanish Christians capture Toledo<<
1099: First Crusade takes Jerusalem, then rest of Palestine<<
1187: Saladin defeats crusaders in Galilee, regains Jerusalem>>
1236: Spanish Christians take Cordoba

9. [W. 3 Oct.]: The Beliefs and Practices of Islam

Readings: Esposito, Islam, pp. 87-98; Peters, Reader, Chapter 3, nos. 24-28; Chap. 5, nos. 21-24.

Though both are important, Islam as a religious system stresses orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy, and both “obligatory” and “forbidden” behavior is found in the Qur’an and elaborated in the “law” or shari’a [Esposito, Islam, pp. 870-88 and see #10 below]; A Muslim’s obligations are programmatically summed up—the reality is far more complex!—in the so-called “Five Pillars” (Esposito, pp. 88-93; Peters, Chap. 3/#24): 1) the Shahâda or profession of faith [lâ ilâha illa’llâh wa Muhammad rasûl allâh]; salât or liturgical prayer, offered 5 times daily and in common at noon on Fridays (see Meeting #13 below);
zakât or alms-tithe; sawm or fast of lunar month of Ramadan; the haji or pilgrimage. In addition there is considerable family law (Esposito,
pp. 93-98) governing marriage and divorce (Peters, Chap.5/#22; see Meeting 16 below), as well as criminal offenses (5/21). In the past some would have made ji̇hâd or “holy war” a “Sixth Pillar” (Peters, Chap.3/27-28), and the issue has come to the fore again in more recent times.

**M. October 8th No Classes Scheduled... Bummer!**

Tomorrow, Oct. 9th (=27 Ramadan), is the day generally observed by Sunnis as anniversary of Laylat al-Qadr, the “Night of Power,” when the entirety of the Quran was sent down to Muhammad. Shi‘ites will have marked it on Oct. 5th (= 23 Ramadan).

10. [W. 10 Oct.]: The Roots of the Law: Tradition and Legal Authority in Islamic Societies

**Readings:** Esposito, Islam, pp. 74-84; Denny, Introduction, pp. 195-199; Peters, Reader, Chapter 5, nos. 1-15.

How the early Islamic societies functioned (Peters p. 213); basis of tradition: “I am the one who knows most...” (p.215); the sunna of the Prophet: how hadîth functioned (Peters, Chap 5/#2 [Important!]); the religious sciences (pp. 218-219); the inspiration (5/3) and transmission (5/4) of hadîth; their scrutiny (5/5-9); the canonical collections (5/10); the roots of shari‘a (p. 228); consensus (5/12); personal effort or ijtihâd (5/13); how analogy works: Intoxicants, coffee; legal knowledge and legal obligations of the Muslim [5/14-15].[Terms: shari‘a; sunna; hadîth; ulama; ijtihâd; qiyâs]

**Saturday, the 13th of October, will be the first day of the hijri month of Shawwal and the celebration of the “Feast of the Breaking” (id al-fitr), that is, of the fast of Ramadan.**

11. [M. 15 Oct.]: The Ruling Elite: Lawyers and their Methods

**Readings:** Denny, Introduction, pp. 199-215; Peters, Reader, Chap. 5, nos. 16-24.

Administration of Islamic justice: the qadi and the lawyers (fuqaha; ulama); the judge’s judgment and the mufti’s fatwa [the fatwa against Salman Rushdie [2/14/89] and its lifting; lawyers as the Islamic elite; how lawyers were trained: the madrasa; the institution of waqf (a personal foundation whose income is bound over to a pious cause); Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and the four “schools” of Islamic law (Chap. 5/#16-17); allowable differences (5/23); ab is a rogation (5/19); criminal law in the Quran (5/21); divorce as a contract (5/22); you fasting (#24) [Terms: qadi; alim/ulama; faqih/fuqaha; mufti; fatwa; madrasa; waqf; fiqh]

12. [W. 17 Oct.]: Islamic Morality
Reading: Selections on Blackboard

Muhammad as Moral Exemplar; Muhammad’s Personal Life; Islamic Morality; Free Will and Predestination in Islam; A Rationalist Solution; Acquiring Responsibility; Consensus on Matters Moral.

Midterm Take-Home Exams Distributed

13. [M. 22 Oct.] The Worship of God (slide lecture)

Readings: Peters, Reader, Chap. 6, nos. 1-11

The prayer obligation (salât) [Peters 6/3]: when? Where? Women [6/4]; the qibla: Jerusalem or Mecca [6/4]; the mosque and the Friday service [6/5-9]; 3 holy days: 10th of Dhu al-Hijja (id al-adhâ = sacrifice at Arafat); 1st of Shawwal (id al-fitr = closing of Ramadan fast)[6/10]; 10th of Muharram [6/11; Esposito, pp. 109-114]; mawlid al-nabi [March 20th in 2008]. [Some terms: salât, masjid, jâmi’, qibla, mihrab, minara, mu’adhdhan, adhan, minbar]

14. W. 24 October: MIDTERM EXAMS DUE

in my office before 12:15

15. [M. 29 Oct.]: The Fifth Pillar: The Hajj (slide lecture)

Readings: Peters, Reader, Chap. 6, nos. 12-18; Selections on Blackboard

The pre-Islamic hajj [Peters, Chap.6/#12]; Muhammad’s farewell hajj [6/13]; Islamicizing the hajj [6/14]; the evolution of the haram at Mecca [6/15]; spiritualizing a Muslim ritual [6/16]; Medina and Islam [6/17-18]; Shi’ites on pilgrimage.


Readings: Esposito, Islam, 100-109; Denny, Introduction, pp. 219-266; Peters, Reader, Chap. 7, nos. 1-19.

The “other-worldliness” of revealed religions: God’s way and ours [Peters, Chap.7/#1]; asceticism: voluntary taking up of a life-style for religious ends and characterized by self-denial and increased devotions [7/2]; definition of Sufism [7/2]; Sufi “conversions” [7/3]; role of women [7/3]; the two ways of law and Sufism [7/3:314]; baraka, a spiritual grace or blessing [7/3: 317]; Ghazali [7/3: 319]; community living [ribât, zâwiya, khânaqâh; cf. waqf] [7/6-7]; the dhikr or
“remembrance” [7/7:327]; convent life [7/8]; religious “orders” (tarîqas) in Islam [Esposito, pp. 105-107]; A classic text [Peters, 7/9]; mysticism: the direct experience of God; nearness or “infusion,” “union” or “identity”? “Lifting the veil” [7/10]; the “sober” (Junayd) and the “intoxicated” (Bistami) tradition in Sufism; being one with God: prospects and problems [7/11,13]; obliteration of self [7/12]; Hallaj, a Sufi “martyr” [7/14-15]; an evaluation of the Sufi tradition [7/19]

17. [M. 5 Nov.] Muslim Europe: Moorish Spain (711-1492 CE)

**Readings: Selections on Blackboard**

Some dates:

- 550-580: Visigoths establish themselves in Hispania
- 711: Arab & Berber armies cross into Spain>>; halted by Pelayo in Asturias in 722;
  halted at Tours-Poitiers by Franks in 732<<
- 756: Abd al-Rahman establishes Umayyad line at Cordoba
- 785: Construction of Great Mosque of Cordoba begun
- 780-800: Carolingians push Arabs out of Catalonia; take Barcelona
- 822-852: Abd al-Rahman II of Cordoba
  [825: Arab Invasion of Sicily>>]
  ca. 850: Earliest indications of a cult of the relics of Saint James (Santiago) at Compostela in northwestern Spain; later, as Santiago Matamoros (the “Moorslayer”) he becomes the patron of a number of Christian kingdoms and pilgrimage becomes popular
- 912—961: Abd al-Rahman II in Cordoba
  929 Declaration of independent Caliphate
- 961-976: Al-Hakam II in Cordoba
- 976-1002: Al-Mansur in Cordoba
  [1002-1003: Ibn Gabirol (Avicebron) in Valencia]
- 1021-1058: Ibn Gabirol (Avicenna) in Valencia
- 1037-1065: Fernando I of Leon-Castile
  [1049-1109: Hugh, Abbot of Cluny]
  1061-1091: Normans invade and conquer Sicily<<
- 1065-1119: Alfonso VI of Leon-Castile and Totius Hispaniae Imperator
  1065-1109: Alfonso VI of Leon-Castile, imperator totius Hispaniae
  1080: Council of Burgos orders Mozarab liturgy replaced by Roman
- 1085: Alfonso VI takes Toledo, capital of Visigothic Spain<<
- 1086-1147: Al-Murabitun (Almoravids) defeat Alfonso VI and rule al-Andalus>>
- 1094-1099: Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar (El Cid) rules Valencia
- 1095: Urban II preaches crusade at Clermont; Jerusalem taken 1098
- 1118: Alfonso I of Aragon takes Zaragoza and founds military orders to defend lands south of the Ebro
- 1121: The Berber Ibn Tumart proclaims himself mahdi in North Africa
- 1147-1200: Al-Muwahhidun (Almohads) rule al-Andalus; Jewish exodus
- 1130-1163: Abd-al-Mu‘min Almohad Caliph
- 1147: Christians take Lisbon
- 1163-1184: Abu Ya’qub Almohad Caliph
  d. 1185: Ibn Tufayl in Granada and Marrakesh
1126-1198: Ibn Rushd (Averroes) in Cordoba, Seville, Marrakesh
1135-1204: Musa ibn Maymun (Maimonides) Cordoba and (after 1165) in Cairo
1184-1199: Abu Yusuf al-Mansur Almohad Caliph
1187: Saladin defeats crusaders in Galilee, regains Jerusalem
1212: Alfonso VIII of Castile and a Christian coalition defeat Almohads as Las Navas de Tolosa
1229-1245: Valencia captured by Aragonese
1232-1492: Nasrid dynasty in Granada
1236: Fernando III of Castile takes Cordoba
1248: Fernando III takes Seville
1252-1286: Alfonso X of Castile conquers al-Andalus; amirate of Granada reduced to vassal status
1348: Black Death begins to ravage Mediterranean and Europe
1391: Jewish pogroms throughout peninsula
1469: Marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile
1478: Inquisition established in Spain
1492: Fall of Granada; Jews forced to convert (=Conversos, Marranos) or be expelled; Columbus in Americas
1496: Jews expelled from Portugal and (1498) Navarre
1499-1501: Muslim insurrections in Alpujarras
1502: Muslims in Crown of Aragon forced to convert (=Moriscos) or be expelled
1516-1556: Charles I of Spain
1556-1598: Philip II of Spain
1558: Second Morisco revolt in Alpujarras
1571: Christian naval coalition defeats Ottoman Turkish fleet at Lepanto
1598-1621: Philip III of Spain
1609: Expulsion of Moriscos from Spain

Spain before the arrival of the Arabs: A Christian Visigothic kingdom; the Arab-Berber advance across the peninsula (711 CE); the establishment of a Muslim province; the Caliphate of Cordoba; convergences and conversions; civil wars and the “Party Kings”; North African arrivals: Murâbitûn and Muwâhhidûn; convivencia: Arabized Christians (Mozarabs) and Jews under the Islamic dhimma; the growth of the Christian Crusade: Reconquista; convivencia: Jews and “tolerated” Muslims (Mudéjars) in the Christian kingdoms; the last days of Granada and of al-Andalus. The conversion or expulsion of the Jews (1492); the conversion of expulsion of the Muslims (1502); the Spanish Inquisition and the Conversos and Moriscos. Insurrection and expulsion of the Moriscos; Muslim Spain, an Islamic and a European reckoning.

18. [W. 7 Nov.] Custom and Popular Religion in Muslim Societies

Readings: Denny, Introduction, 269-293
Islam is not sacramental: redemption through rituals of everyday life which are (like the celebration of Christmas and Hanukka) a blend of religious (hadîth) and local custom; birth rituals (Denny, pp. 269-270); names (pp. 270-271); circumcision (khitan, tahara) and cliteridectomy (pp. 271-273); marriage (nikâh): contract not a sacrament (pp. 274); traditionally arranged (pp. 274-275); sexual morality (p. 275); polygamy (p. 276); mahr or marriage gift (reverse of dowry); divorce (talaq): male initiated, bride keeps mahr (pp. 278-279); waiting period (iddah); prescribed inheritance laws (p. 280); property, waqf [= pious foundation; see Meeting #11] and interest (pp. 280-281); food and wine regulations: halal or haram (pp. 283-285); burial customs (pp. 287-292).


Readings: Selections on Blackboard

Do women emerge as important in crises and then recede as change becomes more gradual? (Smith, pp. 19-20); role of women in pre-Islamic Arabia (pp. 20-23); what changes did Islam introduce? (pp. 23-26); the case of Khadija (p. 26); Muhammad’s view of women (pp. 27-28); a diminished role for women? (pp. 28-29); the caliphate of Umar (634-644 AD) (pp. 29-30); the hijab: veiling and seclusion (p. 30); women in the religious life of Islam (pp. 31-33); Smith’s conclusions (pp. 33-34); the distinction of men and women: from a religious perspective, and from a cultural one; the Traditionist-Modernist argument about women in the Qur’an and the shari’a; different attitudes in different Muslim cultures (pp. 325-326); note: conclusion (p. 326); women and religious obligations (p. 327-328); compare “Women and the Pillars” under Meeting #13); women and Sufism (pp. 328-329; see Meeting #16); popular religion (p. 329-330); women in contemporary religious movements (pp. 330-331);

There are a number of websites:
All about everything links: http://answering-islam.org.uk/Women/inoislam.html
Clothing and much more:
http://www.sfusd.k12.ca.us/schwww/sch618/Clothing/Islam_Clothing_Jewelry_Ma.html
http://www.islamfortoday.com/women.htm

20. [W. 14 Nov.] Castes, Classes and Nationalities in Islamic Societies

Readings: Selections on Blackboard

The conquests and the demography of the Abode of Islam; conversion and assimilation: the mawâli; ethnic diversity; Persian and Turkish identity: the shu’ubiyya movement; Muslims and non-Muslims, inside and outside the Abode of Islam: dhimma and jihâd; slavery: accepted
and modified; a new religious distinction: the slave as believer; uses of slaves: domestic, commercial, military (mamluks); who may be enslaved; sources of slaves: 1) offspring of slaves, 2) captives in jihâd, c) importation by tribute or purchase; the slave trade.

Who is an Arab, you ask. The Prophet himself defined an Arab. He is reported as saying: “Oh my people! God is one and the same. Our father [i.e. Adam], is the same for all. No one among you inherits Arabic from his father or mother. Arabic is a habit of the tongue, so whoever speaks Arabic is an Arab”

21. [M. 19 Nov.]: The Colonial Era in the Middle East

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Readings: Selections on Blackboard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some significant dates:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1098: Urban II announces Christian crusade to regain the “Holy Land.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1099-1187: The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem</td>
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<tr>
<td>1218-1221: Fifth Crusade attacks Egypt</td>
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<td>1248-1274: Seventh Crusade attacks Egypt</td>
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<td>1261: Crusaders driven from Acre, their last foothold in the Middle East</td>
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<td>1270: Eight Crusade attacks Tunis</td>
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<td>1507: Portuguese occupy Hormuz on Persian Gulf</td>
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<td>1531: First Capitulations Treaty between Ottomans and France</td>
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<tr>
<td>1571: Christian coalition fleet defeats Ottomans at Lepanto</td>
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<tr>
<td>1798-1799: Napoleon occupies Egypt</td>
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<td>1820: British conclude first treaties with Gulf shaykhs</td>
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<td>1830-1840: French invade, then occupy Algeria</td>
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<td>1839: British occupy Aden</td>
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<td>1841: European Powers sign Straits Navigation Treaty</td>
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<td>1869: French-built Suez Canal opens</td>
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<td>1875: Britain buys controlling shares in Suez Canal corporation from Egypt.</td>
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<td>1878: Anglo-French Dual Financial Control established in Egypt</td>
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<td>1881 Europeans take control of Ottoman public debt; France occupies Tunis</td>
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<td>1882: British occupy Egypt</td>
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<td>1883-1907: Lord Cromer British consul in Egypt</td>
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<td>1890: Iran grants tobacco monopoly to British</td>
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<td>1901: British company gets first oil concession in Iran</td>
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<td>1911-1912: Italians first invade and then occupy Ottoman Libya</td>
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<td>1914-1918: World War I; Ottoman Empire on the side of Germany</td>
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<td>1916: The Sykes-Picot Agreement</td>
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<td>1917: The Balfour Declaration</td>
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<td>1919: Paris peace conference</td>
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<td>1920: San Remo Agreement grants mandates to Britain in Iraqi and Palestine, and to France in Syria; Ottomans sign, and Ataturk rejects, Treaty of Sèvres, dismembering the Ottoman Empire. French drive Faysal from Damascus.</td>
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<td>1921: Churchill holds British colonial summit in Cairo. Faysal, ousted by the French from Damascus, is put on the throne of Iraq and the new state of Transjordan is carved from the part of Palestine east of the Jordan for his brother Abdullah, who originally had been promised Iraq</td>
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22. [W. 21 Nov.]: No Class. Sorry, guys.

23. [M. 26 Nov.]: From Islamic Modernism to Islamic Revival

Decadence and its diagnosis; Islâh and tajdîd; Modernism attempts to establish a continuity between an (authentic) Islamic past and modern change. How? Through “progressive” interpretation of Scripture (ijtihâd), to “interpret the Quran by the Quran,” i.e., without the hadith (cf. Protestant “sola Scriptura”), to “demythologize” the Quran and rationalize its teachings; was the Quran “conditioned” by the historical Muhammad? Traditionalists saw such “progressivism” as “innovation” (bida), the Muslim equivalent of heresy; the Modernists condemned Traditionalism as taqlîd, the blind acceptance of authority (Esposito, pp. 142-145); the modernist reform of family law (pp. 145-148); in Islam what came to be called “revivalism” (or “fundamentalism”; see Meeting #22) arose from a growing rejection of the West and of modernism; this latter was seen as atheistic and secular in its moral outlook, pluralist in its political permissiveness, and relativist in its values: Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949) in Egypt and al-Mawdudi (1903-1979) in India as the modern founders of organized opposition to Westernism and modernism (pp. 149-150); the Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwân al-Muslimûn) in Egypt (1928 AD) and the Islamic Association (Jamaat-i Islami) in India (1940 AD) (pp.151-154)

24. [W. 28 Nov.] The Rise of the Modern State

It is at this point that we must begin to insist on the distinction between a
“Muslim society,” one in which the majority of the population is Muslim, and an
“Islamic society,” one based to a greater or lesser extent of the shari‘a.

Readings: Esposito, Islam, pp. 166-179, 191-203; Selections of
Blackboard.

Muslim states and Islamic states in the modern world (pp. 167-169);
Ataturk and the Turkish Republic [Blackboard]; the case of Egypt: from
Nasser to Sadat to Mubarak (Esposito pp. 169-175); the Libya of
Mu‘ammar Qaddafi (pp.175-179); Saudi Arabia (pp. 191-195); Pakistan
(pp. 196-203)

25. [M. 3 Dec]: The Iranian Revolution

Readings: Esposito, Islam, pp. 179-186; Selections on
Blackboard

Nasir al-Din Shah (1848-1896) and attempted reforms; the sale of the
tobacco concession (1890); the Constitutional Revolt (1905-1911) and
the end of the Qajars; The "Strangling of Persia"; the rise of Reza Khan
(1921-1925) to Reza Shah Pahleви (1925); reforms and secularization;
WWII: the abdication of Reza Shah, accession of Muhammad Reza
(1941) and the Soviet-British occupation of Iran; oil and the rise and
fall of Muhammad Mosaddeq (1950-1953); the shah in control; (1959)
the US-Iranian alliance; 1961: the "White Revolution"; the Celebration
(October 1971); dissolution of political parties (1975).
The causes of the Iranian Revolution: inflexibility of the shah and increasing government centralization; repression of moderate dissent and growth of police state; uneven distribution of the new prosperity, accompanied by inflation; cultural Westernization; exile of Ayatollah Khomeini (1964); Khomeini publishes (1970) Veleyat-e faqih (Mandate of the Jurist) arguing a government by clerics; demonstrations of theological students repressed with 70 dead (Jan. 1978); a cycle of violence and repression begins; general strikes (summer 1978); million people demonstrate in Tehran on 10 Muharram (Dec. 11, 1978); Shah leaves Iran (Jan. 1979), Khomeini returns (Feb. 1979).

Almost immediately Khomeini directs the provisional government to draw up a constitution. On 30-31 March 1979, a national referendum is held to determine the kind of political system to be established. Khomeini rejects demands by various political groups that the voters be given a wide choice. The only form of government to appear on the ballot was an Islamic republic, and voting was not by secret ballot. The government reported an overwhelming majority of more than 98% in favor of the Islamic republic. Ayatollah Khomeini proclaimed the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran on 1 April 1979.

A newly created seventy-three member Assembly of Experts convenes on 18 August 1979 to consider a draft constitution; clerics and members and supporters of the Islamic Republican Party dominate the assembly, which revises the constitution to establish the basis for a state dominate by the Shi'ite clergy. The constitution was approved by a national referendum on 2-3 December, 1979, once gain, according to government figures, by more than 98% of the vote...

As a result of the concentration of power in the hands of the leader, there is no question that under the Islamic Republic's political system popular sovereignty is restricted. It is also a fact that an unelected body called the Council of Guardians (six clerics appointed by the leader, six "lawyers" are nominated by the judiciary and approved by the Majlis) can reject any legislation it deems "un-Islamic." Islamic elements appear throughout the constitution, in the preamble as well as in its 175 articles. Note the following:

*The constitution describes the state and the revolution leading to the creation of that state as Islamic. It defines the tasks and goals of the state in accordance with its Islamic character. It binds legislation to the shari'a. It ensures that positions of leadership will be reserved for Islamic jurists. It places Islamically defined restrictions on the democratic rights of individuals, of the nation and of ethnic groups. It sets up institutions whose task it is to ensure the Islamic character of the state.*

The official religion of the state is Islam as interpreted by the mullas of the Twelver Shi'a. This religious definition of the state, in view of the eternal truth of Islam, can never be altered [art. 12]. An additional distinguishing feature of the state's Islamic character is the national flag which bears as the special emblem of the Islamic Republic the inscription *Allahu Akbar* [art. 18]. Members of parliament and the
president are required to swear an oath of allegiance exclusively to Islam [art. 67, 121], and high school students are obliged to study Arabic, the language of the Quran and the Islamic sciences [art. 16]. [The complete text of the Iranian Constitution is available at: http://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/law/ir00000_.html#1000]

26. [W. 7 Dec.]: **Revivalism/Fundamentalism in Islam**

**Final Take-Home Exams Available**

**Readings: Esposito, Islam, pp. 158-169.**

Islamic “revivalism” is an example of the more general world-wide phenomenon called “fundamentalism” (a term originally applied to Evangelical Christian sects in the 1920s), which is theological (Scripture is infallible); philosophical (Scripture not subject to critical method); sociological (“Church” within the “Church”); historical (return to origins); political (revolution in the name of religion).

A Muslim reading of the problem facing Islam: secularization is an ideology with its own social ethic; Western dominance with consequent institutional changes; and division of education into secular and religious; crisis of leadership. Solution: Adopt the Western solution (= Modernism) or struggle for the preservation of the past (=Traditionalism) or seek a renewal or revival (tajdid) of the past. Islam as the decisive factor in life, impossible in a pluralist India (so Mawdudi), hence Pakistan. The “call”: 1) to a moral and social movement to establish the Islamic order (Jamaat-i Islami in Pakistan, Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt); 2) revival as a denial of nationalism in the name of a single umma; 3) it is non-sectarian: it seeks the reconciliation of Shi'ite and Sunni differences; 4) it is willing to embrace modernity (but not modernism). It notes the failure of Western models in Turkey and pre-Revolutionary Iran (NB Two non-colonized states). What distinguishes Fundamentalism from Traditionalism is the flexibility of the former, its willingness to practice ijtihad. It is a critique not only of the West but of the Muslim status-quo. Islamic fundamentalism understands Islam as a “totalizing” experience and so rejects its separation from politics of any other aspect of modern life (Esposito, pp. 158-159); it was precipitated by 1) sense of a loss of identity; 2) disillusion with the West; 3) newfound sense of power from the “victory” over Israel in the 1973 war (after the disaster of the Six Day War of 1967) and the oil embargo; and, finally, the success of the Iranian revolution of 1978-1979 (pp. 160-165); the ideological framework of Islamic Revivalism/Fundamentalism (pp. 165)

27. [M. 10 Dec.]: **The Changing World of Islam**

**Readings: Esposito, Islam, pp. 203-252; Denny, pp. 355-366**

What is Islam and who is a Muslim today? Most Muslims have lived under Muslim sovereignty, but over the course of the centuries have spread west and east out from the Abode of Islam. Here we have already seen example from Europe: Spain [see Meeting #17], where, as in Sicily and the Balkans, a receding tide of Muslim political power left behind Muslim populations of varying sizes. But since WWII migration and conversion has created a Muslim Diaspora in Europe and the US: France has 6 mil (10% of pop.), mostly North African refugees and workers; UK 2 million, mostly immigrants, though with citizenship; Germany has Turkish guest-workers. US: 4-6 million,
soon will be second largest religious community after Christians. 2/3 are immigrants of first or 2nd generation; 1/3 converts, mostly African Americans.

The African-American discovery of Islam: Wallace D. Fard Muhammad 9d. (1934), the Mahdi, preached an ethnic “Islam” as “Black man’s religion; succeeded by Elijah Muhammad, who claimed prophethood for himself, but with same racial message, though now with an emphasis on self-help and self-reliance. It was an apocalyptic, millenarian message and by 1970 there were 100,000 members of Nation of Islam, or “Black Muslims,” as they were called at the time.

Elijah Muhammad’s chief disciple was Malcolm Little (1925-1965), converted in 1948 and soon Malcolm X, for “ex-Christian and ex-slave.” A dynamic and charismatic leader, appointed “national representative” in 1954, he preached the same racial message, but now with an emphasis on direct political action. In 1964 he left the Nation of Islam and went on Hajj, and as El Hajj Malik al-Shabazz increasingly pursued mainstream Islam. He was assassinated in Feb. 1965. The same turning had been happening with Elijah Muhammad’s son Wallace, who succeeded his father on the latter’s death in 1975 and became Warith Deen Muhammad; gradually the Nation of Islam moved into the Sunni mainstream.

There were dissenters to this new direction, and they, under the leadership of Louis Farrukhan, broke from the movement in 1978 as the genuine Nation of Islam.

In Diaspora Islam the issue of adaptation and assimilation took on new urgency. Muslims were confronted by rival cultural and social claims in the secular societies in which millions of them now lived (Esposito, pp. 216-222).

Was Islam now a polity on the Iranian model? A church on the Catholic model? A personal creed on the American Protestant model?

Islam & democracy: in democracies, sovereignty is assumed to reside in the people; in the Quran, all sovereignty is declared to be God’s. Do Muslims get to vote on the type of Islam they wish? The ongoing struggle between taqlid and ijtihād, between tajdīd (renewal) and islâh (reform), between modernity [check out http://www.islamworld.net for just one website among many now maintained by Muslims] and modernism (pp. Esposito, pp. 225-228); Muslims are now exposed to many different Muslim points of view:

The secularist: Islam restricted to private life (Turkey, the emerging American model?)

The conservative: “Islam is expressed adequately and completely in the classical formulation; limited ijtihād; willingness to compromise on an interim basis.
The **neotraditionalist**: return to the fundamental sources and apply *ijtihād* to adapt them to modern circumstances. Most **fundamentalists** fall here.

The **reformist**: Distinguish between the Quranic heart of the Islamic law and later human additions; these latter must be updated and revised in the light of the needs of modern society (pp. 228-232)

Who will define Islam? The *ulama*? (pp. 232-234); the present state of Islamic law; women’s rights and Islam (pp. 235-241); the *dhimma* question in the contemporary world (pp. 242-243); Islamicizing politics (pp. 243-250); conclusions (pp. 250-252).

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28. [W. 12 Dec.] Final Exams due in my office by 5 PM

**Readings** (available in NYU Campus Bookstore)


[For some it might be easier to approach Islam from the angle of their own Jewish or Christian background. If that is the case, you might try my *Islam, A Guide for Jews and Christians* (Princeton, 2003), which is also in the bookstore as an option.]

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<tr>
<th>There will be both a midterm and final examination.</th>
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<td>Each will be a take-home essay exam with choices.</td>
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**THE “A” OPTION:**

If you take the midterm and get an “A” grade on it, you then have the option of writing a paper instead of taking the final take-home exam. The only stipulation is that you have the paper topic approved before Meeting #24.

Failure to take the midterm and the final examination (it’s been known to happen; the reasons are described in my course “Judaism, Christianity and Islam” under the meeting entitled “Original Sin”) will result in an automatic grade of "F", also known in the trade as “the wages of sin.”

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**Interested in a Middle Eastern Studies major?**
The basic requirements are 4 semesters work (or qualifying out) in a Middle Eastern language, plus 8 additional non-language courses in the history, religion, literature or art of the area, including the always popular *Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (V77.0800). For further details, see the CAS Bulletin or call 998-8880.