Course Syllabus
EMT 3607/6607HS Islamic Thought in the Classical Age (7-13 cent. CE)
Emmanuel College
Toronto School of Theology
Winter 2018

Instructor Information

Instructor: Nevin Reda, PhD, Assistant Professor
Office Location: EM 215
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Office Hours: Thursdays, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm or by appointment (not during reading week)

Course Identification

Course Number: EMT 3607/6607H L0101
Course Name: Islamic Thought in the Classical Age (7-13 Cent. CE)
Course Location: EM 302
Class Times: Thursdays 2:00pm – 4:00pm
Prerequisites: None

Course Description

This course is a historical and topical survey of the origins and development of Islam. The course is primarily concerned with the life and career of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, the teachings of the Qur'an, the development of the Muslim community and its principal institutions, schools of thought, law, theology, cultural life and mystical tradition, to about 1300 A.D. Lectures, Readings, Class discussions. Class participation 15%; Biography and book review: 35%; Research paper: 50%.

Course Resources

Required Textbooks

Additional Course Materials
Additional readings will be chosen from the following sources:
- Baer, Eva. “The Human Figure in Early Islamic Art” Muqarnas, vol. 16 (1999) 32-41.
• Massimo Campanini, “The Mu’tazila in Islamic History and Thought” Religion Compass 6, 1 (2012), pp. 41 - 50

The Qur’an in Translation
For the meaning of the Qur’an, students are welcome to use any of the translations of the following scholars: Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Marmaduke Pickthall, Laleh Bakhtiar, Muhammad Abdel Haleem and Ahmad Zaki Hammad. ‘Abdullah Yusuf ‘Ali’s The Meaning of the Holy Qur’an is one of the oldest and tends to be the most widely disseminated. It is available on-line. Bakhtiar’s The Sublime Qur’an has the advantage of formal equivalence: She tries to use the same English word for the same Arabic word consistently. Students have found Hammad’s The Gracious Quran: A Modern-Phrased Interpretation in English to be very smooth and easy to understand. Abdel Haleem’s translation tends to be popular in academic circles.

Course Website(s)
• Blackboard https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/
This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at http://portal.utoronto.ca and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the My Courses module, where you’ll find the link to
the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students. Students who have trouble accessing Blackboard should ask Wanda Chin for further help.]

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students are expected to:

Religious Faith and Heritage

- Demonstrate knowledge of the history of classical Islamic thought, its complexity, and its diversity.
- Identify and respect the diversity of theological viewpoints and practices within the Islamic tradition.

Culture and Context

- Demonstrate critical understanding of the relationship between faith practices and cultural contexts in classical Islamic history.

Ability with Scholarly Tools and Skills

- Demonstrate competence in the use of a library and in the construction of a bibliography
- Demonstrate familiarity with pertinent web-based resources and skills.
- Demonstrate competence in the following skills:
  - Clear and effective communication in both oral and written forms;
  - The construction of a logical argument;
  - The making of informed judgments on complex issues;
  - The use of standard conventions of style for scholarly writing.
- Give evidence of an understanding of the nature and processes of research.

Evaluation

Each student should know from the outset that this course requires daily reading, both written and oral assignments, and regular class participation. More than two unexcused absences will negatively affect the student’s grade. Any student with more than four unexcused absences will receive an automatic failing grade, without possibility of supplemental examination.
Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in three areas.

(1) Preparation, participation and reading (15%) – In addition to participating in the regular activity of the class, including the reading of the required texts, students are expected to devote two hours or more outside of class for every hour of classroom instruction. Use this time to prepare the required readings and primary texts in advance. Always be ready to provide a brief summary of each reading, list the main points and explain how the readings relate to one another. Your class participation mark will reflect your participation in classroom discussions and an oral presentation on your biography/book review.

(2) Biography and Book Review (35%) – Classical Islamic thought is characterized by the diversity of its disciplines and the multiplicity of its perspectives, which are often in conversation with one another within their respective intellectual environments. This assignment consists of two parts: a biography of a classical author and a book review of one of his major books. Like any essay, it should have an introduction, a body and a conclusion.

For the biography, you should provide a brief history of the scholar’s life (early life, education, achievements, his impact on his society and/or the world at large, his importance for today). Most importantly, you should explore his location within the intellectual context in which he was active. (Were there any particular discussions or controversies in his time period? With whom/which intellectual trends is he in conversation? For example, is he writing from a Shi'i perspective in conversation with Sunni ideas? Is his work in conversation with certain gender-related social realities? Is he introducing an esoteric (Sufi) dimension into a more exoteric (Zahir) frame of reference? Is he a Traditionalist (of the ahl al-hadith) in conversation with Rationalists (ahl al-ra'y)?)

For the book review, you should consider things like genre, purpose, assumptions or tendency and intended audience. Ensure that you identify the author’s thesis and that you state your own. If you choose to include a brief summary of the book in your review, ensure that it does not exceed one third of your review, preferably less. Ensure that you focus on what kind of job the author did when writing his book, and not the theological contents of a particular discipline. For example, if you are reviewing Ibn Ishaq’s Biography of the Prophet Muhammad, you should focus on critiquing how well Ibn Ishaq presented the life of Muhammad, not the person and actions of the prophet Muhammad himself. If you choose to explore how others have reviewed the very same book and incorporate some of their ideas, you should always reference them appropriately. For advice on how to write a book review, go to http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/specific-types-of-writing/book-review. For editing your review, go to http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/style-and-editing.

This assignment should be 6-8 pages in double-spaced 12 pt Times New Roman font. Footnotes and bibliography should consistently follow Chicago Manual of Style.

Choose one of the following authors and one of their books in translation in any edition available in English. (Students must each choose a different author. Authors will be assigned on a first come first served basis in consultation with course instructor. Advanced degree students will have first choice.)


OR


OR


OR


3- Ibn Rushd (Averroës) (d. 595/1198), On the Harmony of Religions and Philosophy. A translation, with introd. and notes, of Ibn Rushd’s Kitab fasl al-maqal, with its appendix (Damina) and an extract from Kitab al-Kashf’an manahij al-adilla (London: Luzac 1961)


10- Muḥammad ibn Ahmad ibn Jubayr (d. 614/1217), The Travels of Ibn Jubayr, Being the Chronicle of a Mediaeval Spanish Moor Concerning his Journey to the Egypt of Saladin, the Holy Cities of Arabia, Baghdad the City of the Caliphs, the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, and the Norman Kingdom of Sicily, translated by R.J.C. Broadhurst (London J. Cape [1952]).


OR


(3) Research paper (50%) – This assignment should be 12-15 pages in double-spaced 12 pt Times New Roman font. For EMT 6607 students, it should be 20-25 pages long. Footnotes and bibliography should consistently follow *Chicago Manual of Style*. Your paper should include the following:

**Title page.** This includes the paper title, the student’s name, the course code and name, the name of the instructor and the date of submission.

**Introduction.** The most important part of the introduction is the thesis statement, setting out in the briefest possible form the exact proposition or hypothesis which the thesis will demonstrate. The introduction also provides the context necessary to show why the thesis statement is important. To this end it identifies the research question and describes its broader setting in academic research. It gives attention to previous enquiry and available secondary literature (the *status quaestionis*). The introduction should also include a description of the project as a whole.

**Exposition.** The main body of the thesis is the clarification, development, and demonstration of the thesis statement, using authoritative evidence. The exposition is typically organized as parts of an argument. The interrelationship of the parts of the exposition, and the direct relevance of each part of the exposition to the thesis statement, should be clear to the reader.

**Conclusion.** The thesis statement should be recapitulated, the demonstration should be summarized, the limitations of the demonstration and the remaining uncertainties should be acknowledged, and the implications of the study for the faith community, the wider scholarly community, and/or the world should be set forth.

**Bibliography.** Books, articles, and other sources that have been used must be listed. Ensure that you distinguish between primary sources and secondary sources, e.g. by having two parts to your bibliography. For the differences between primary and secondary sources, see http://writing.utoronto.ca/advice/specific-types-of-writing/history

(This assignment is based on the TST Basic Degree thesis requirements with modifications.)
Requirement Due Dates

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biography and book review</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Feb. 15 @ 2:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Mar. 29 @ 2:00 pm</td>
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Grading System

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<tr>
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Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Late work. Students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Penalty for late assignments is 2% reduction in mark per day of lateness. Assignments will not be accepted after one week of the due date. This penalty is not applied to students with medical or compassionate difficulties; students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor. The absolute deadline for the course is the last day of classes. Students who for exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this date may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar’s office in the student’s college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy ([http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm)) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at [http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/](http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/). The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within
quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST Basic Degree Handbook (linked from http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks) and the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871. A student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges (http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm).

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up a utoronto email address which is entered in the ROSI system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. Forwarding your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. All email communications from students should be sent from a utoronto email address. Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses.

Course Schedule (may be subject to change)

Week 1 (Jan. 11)

Introduction

Required Readings:

Week 2 (Jan. 18)

The Sacred Sources of Islam

Required Readings:
1. Knysh, Chapters 5-6.
4. Quran 1, 2: 1-40.

**Week 3 (Jan. 25)**

**Muhammad**

**Required Readings:**
4. Qur’an 73-74, 96-114.

**Week 4 (Feb. 1)**

**The Caliphate**

**Required Readings:**
1. Knysh, Chapters 3-4.

**Week 5 (Feb. 8)**

**Debating Leadership and Community**

**Required Readings:**
1. Knysh, Chapters 7-8.

**Week 6 (Feb. 15)**

**Belief and Practice**

**Required Readings:**
3. Eva Baer, “The Human Figure in Early Islamic Art” *Muqarnas*, 16 (1999), pp. 32-41.

**Reading Week**

**No Classes on Feb. 22**
Week 7 (Mar. 1)  

Dialectical Theology (*kalām*)

**Required Readings:**

Week 8 (Mar. 8)  

Islamic Philosophy and Law

**Required Readings:**
1. Knysh, Chapter 9, 15.

Week 9 (Mar. 15)  

Shi’ism

**Required Readings:**
1. Knysh, Chapters 11-12.

Week 10 (Mar. 22)  

Sufism

**Required Readings:**
1. Knysh, Chapters 13-14, 16.

Week 11 (Mar. 29)  

Women and Islam
Required Readings:

Optional Readings: (Warning: Some readers may find this text disturbing, due to its depiction of a dialogue between a fornicator and a pederast in ninth-century ‘Abbasid society.)

Week 12 (Apr. 5)
Islam and Christendom

Required Readings:

Additional Bibliography


Holcomb, Justin. “Comparative Revelation: The Qur’an and the Christ.” *IIIM Magazine Online* 2, no. 10 (March 2000).


