



RELS220/320

Representing Islam

Course Outline 2017

SEMESTER 2 2017

Lecturer:

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What comes to mind when you hear the word “Islam”, or the word “Muslim”? Why? What do you know about how you came to associate some ideas (and not others) with those words? Many of most prominent contemporary stereotypes about Islam and Muslims have long histories in the way Europeans and Christians have responded to what they knew of Islamic religion and Muslim peoples. This paper focuses on the ways in which Islam has been represented in the West, locating them within this longer historical tradition with the

goal of understanding the implications of these discourses for contemporary relationships between Muslims and others.

We begin with an examination of the earliest encounters between Islam and the West, followed by a consideration of enduring themes which have been carried through to the contemporary period. Drawing on influential scholars such as Edward Said, Michel Foucault, and Stuart Hall, we examine how Islam has been constructed as the West’s ‘Other’, whether as a site of sexual decadence to be civilised, or as a military threat to be overcome. We will also contextualise contemporary representations of Islam—from newspaper reports to science fiction—within the legacies of colonialism which helped produce these discourses.

You may take this course either:

- At 200-level or 300-level by enrolling either in RELS220 or RELS320;
- On campus or by distance

No prior paper in Religion is required to enrol at Stage 2.

LEARNING OUTCOMES / GRADUATE PROFILE

The aim of this paper is to teach you to understand the history of Western representations of Islam and the importance of this history for the development of important and enduring themes regarding Islam as well as the uses to which these representations were put in European discourses about the Middle East. Students who successfully complete the paper will be able to demonstrate:

- a sound knowledge of the historical contexts in which Islam has been represented in

- the West;
- recognition of the persistent themes in Western representations of Islam;
- an ability to discuss the recent scholarly critique of those representations; and
- an awareness of the context in which contemporary use of images of Islam in the West are situated within its longer history

Students who successfully complete RELS320 will, in addition to the four learning outcomes listed above, be able to:

- demonstrate a critical understanding of the implications of the representations of Islam for recent debates in Islamic Studies

LECTURER'S INTRODUCTION

Keziah Wallis lectures on Asian Religions, in particular on Buddhism and Islam. She is a final year PhD Candidate in both the Theology & Religion Department and the Archaeology & Anthropology Department. Her thesis, based upon fieldwork in Myanmar, examines the interaction between 'official' religion endorsed by the state and the 'unofficial' religious beliefs and rituals which constitute part of the field of lived religious practices of many Burmese. Her wider research interests focus on the changing nature of the relationship between religion, culture, and modernity in the wake of colonialism and the current push for modernisation of both religion and society.

Please contact her either by telephone or email:

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Office hours: after class or by appointment.

RESOURCES

- Blackboard, the University's online learning tool;
- The course book and this accompanying course outline
- eReserve, a resource for extra readings, which you can access via Blackboard;
- The Department's "Study and Style Guide" which recommends students use the 16th edition of the Chicago Style Guide when writing essays. It is available online at <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

THIS IS IMPORTANT!

Please Note: You must have access to Blackboard and your University email address in order to complete this paper. You will receive access once your enrolment is complete. Communications from your lecturer regarding teaching matters will be provided **only** through Blackboard and your University email address (as outlined in the University's Student Communications Policy), so you must check these emails regularly, or arrange to forward them to your main address. eVision will also send important messages through your University email. If you have any concerns about your access to Blackboard or to other

course resources, please contact the lecturer or administrative staff immediately so that these can be resolved.

You will find there is a lot of helpful information and resources on the Department's website. In particular, we require you to read the section called "Essential Student Information." You will find it here:

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

This page provides a number of useful resources such as the *Study and Style Guide* and the Plagiarism Declaration Form you must attach to your assignments. It supplies detailed information on assessment and student support. In particular, it contains guidance on the topics of plagiarism and deadlines, both of which can incur penalties if not heeded. This also is where you will find instructions for making online discussion posts and submitting assignments electronically. So it is very important you make yourself familiar with this material. Our assumption is that you have read it.

We will make reference to information on the website in the following pages, so do take the time to follow the links and absorb the material. It will save you from making costly mistakes and help to make the practical experience of distance study a straightforward one.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

On-campus students will meet every weekday at 10am for lectures and students taking the paper by distance are encouraged to log in and participate at this time via streaming. Recordings of the streamed lectures will be available a couple of hours after the lecture time.

MODULE ONE: The West and the Islamic World

Lecture 1.1: Introduction to the Course

Lecture 1.2: Islam 101: A Very, Very Brief Introduction to Islam

Lecture 1.3: The Abrahamic Religions: Sibling Rivalry

Lecture 1.4: Muhammad as 'false prophet' or 'imposter': The Theological Rejection of Islam

Lecture 1.5: The Persian Wars: Origins of the narrative

Assessment 1: Critical Response Paper 1

MODULE TWO: A Clash of Civilisations?

Lecture 2.1: Violence and the spread of Islam

Lecture 2.2: The Ottoman Empire: Turks at the Gates of Vienna

Lecture 2.3: The Age of Empires: Napoleon in Egypt and the British in India

Lecture 2.4: Oriental Despotism versus Western Republicanism

Lecture 2.5: Ideology

Assessment 2: Take-Home Test 1

MODULE THREE: Constructing the Muslim 'Other'

Lecture 3.1: Sexual Deviancy: Polygamy, Incest, and Bestiality

Lecture 3.2: Sodomy

Lecture 3.3: Sensual Paradises: Harems and Heavens
Lecture 3.4: Islamic Women: From Liberation to Oppression
Lecture 3.5: Orientalism

Assessment 3: Critical Response Paper 2

MODULE FOUR: Demonising the Enemy

Lecture 4.1: The Mad Mullahs
Lecture 4.2: Converting Islam: Iran, the Oil Shocks, and the Arab-Israeli Wars
Lecture 4.3: 9/11 and 'The War on Terror'
Lecture 4.4: Trump's War on Islam
Lecture 4.5: Reverse Orientalism?

Assessment 4: Take-Home Test 2

MODULE FIVE: Popularising Islam

Lecture 5.1: The Visual Arts: Orientalism
Lecture 5.2: The Romantic Sheik: Literary Representations of Islam
Lecture 5.3: Fanatics and Un-restrained: Islam in Film
Lecture 5.4: Cylons and Muslims: Battlestar Galactica and the War on Terror
Lecture 5.5: Representing the Other

Assessment 5: Research Essay

ASSESSMENT

Take-Home Tests (2 x 5%)

The first component of assessment for both 200- and 300-level students comprises of two short-answer take-home tests. There will be different tests for RELS220 and RELS320 students. These will be made available on Blackboard on the Thursday prior to the due date.

The tests will be limited to material in the lectures, coursebook, and readings up to the end of the week prior to the due date of the test. Answers should be at most 1-2 sentences long for each question.

Critical Response Papers (2 x 10%)

This is an opportunity to engage more fully with the texts we are reading while also critically responding to them. I will provide you with a set of guiding thoughts to help focus your essay while allowing the space for your own considered reflections on how the texts engage with our course's overarching themes. RELS220 students are expected to write 800 words, while RELS320 students should write 1,000 words.

Research Essay (20%)

The final component of internal assessment for this course is a research essay that should demonstrate sustained engagement with one of the questions listed below. The word-limit for this essay is 2,000 words for RELS220 students and 3,000 words for RELS320 students:

1. Islam as Europe's other
2. Misconceptions and misinterpretations about the veil

3. Constraints of orientalism discourses
4. Colonial oppression and representations of Islam
5. Islam in political rhetoric

Exam (50%)

There is a two-hour examination for RELS220/320. In the examination you will be required to answer a series of short-answer questions, write one short response essay, and one longer essay. The short answer section will assess whether you have listened to the lectures, done the readings, and reviewed the key concepts discussed in the course. The essays, in contrast, will assess that you have gained a deeper understanding of at least two of the units' key themes.

The date for the examination will be sent to you as soon as it has been set by the Examinations Office.

REFERENCING SYSTEM

For writing essays, the Department requires that you use the 16th edition of the Chicago Style Guide, which is the norm for many academic journals in the Humanities and is often recommended for theses in the humanities. The Department has prepared a *Study and Style Guide*, which outlines the Chicago Style and offers other advice on essay presentation. You may find it via the Department's "Student Resources and Information" page: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

SUBMITTING WRITTEN WORK

All assignments shall be submitted **electronically** via the "Assignment" feature on Blackboard by **midnight** on the due dates notified. Please do not submit paper copies. For full instructions about how to submit assignments electronically via Blackboard as well as other important information on plagiarism, grading, and deadlines, please see the "Essential Information" web page.

All Assignments submitted in the Department of Theology and Religion must be prefaced with a student **Plagiarism Declaration Form**. They will not be deemed to have been submitted unless and until the Plagiarism Declaration Form has been submitted.

It can be downloaded from <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/> It is also on the Blackboard site for this course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity means being honest in your studying and assessments. It is the basis for ethical decision-making and behaviour in an academic context. Academic integrity is informed by the values of honesty, trust, responsibility, fairness, respect and courage. Students are expected to be aware of, and act in accordance with, the University's Academic Integrity Policy.

Academic Misconduct, such as plagiarism or cheating, is a breach of Academic Integrity and

is taken very seriously by the University. Types of misconduct include plagiarism, copying, unauthorised collaboration, taking unauthorised material into a test or exam, impersonation, and assisting someone else's misconduct. A more extensive list of the types of academic misconduct and associated processes and penalties is available in the University's Student Academic Misconduct Procedures.

It is your responsibility to be aware of and use acceptable academic practices when completing your assessments. To access the information in the Academic Integrity Policy and learn more, please visit the University's Academic Integrity website at www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity or ask at the Student Learning Centre or Library. If you have any questions, ask your lecturer.

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116838.html>
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116850.html>

STUDENT SUPPORT

The “**Essential Information**” web page provides helpful information on how to access the University Library's resources, as well as a guide to the support services available to students at the University of Otago, including the Student Learning Centre and Disability Support.

For all **administrative enquiries**, please contact:
The Administrative Assistant for Theology and Religion.
Email: theology@otago.ac.nz Phone: 03 479 8516

We recommend that you contact the Department as soon as possible if you have any problems participating in the course or accessing resources. Please remember to check your University email account regularly for updates and announcements.

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGION
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