

## **WORLDLY ISLAM: The Sacred, the Secular**

Instructor: **Raymond Baker**

### **This course addresses two challenges:**

1) the inadequacy of dominant interpretive frameworks for understanding the global changes brought by the Information Revolution and the new Network Economy and Society; and 2) Western incomprehension of Islam in the Global Age, with particular emphasis on Islam as a worldly as well as spiritual force. While these two crises are widely discussed, they are rarely, if ever, discussed in tandem. The course opens with a theoretical consideration, derived from complexity theory, of the changed character of our world in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War, and the transformations of societies and economies around the world by the new information technologies and the global market they enable. At the same time, the course proposes new ways of understanding Islam in our time, based on critical rereading of the Islamic heritage. What resources does the Islamic historical and philosophical heritage offer to contemporary Muslims to develop effective ways of contending with our globalized world? How have Islamic thinkers and power holders responded to assertive Western secularism? Why, with material conditions almost everywhere in decline, is Islam thriving in the new conditions of globalism, despite the weakness of its material base in failed societies, while secularism as a compelling ideological force appears to weaken?

The discussion format for the course requires that readings be completed for each meeting. Please do not attend class meetings for which you are not prepared, without indicating at the beginning of class that you have not done the reading. **(Please note that the readings for this course are heavy and difficult; drop the course now if you cannot put in the time required.)** Course requirements: take home exam (25), hour exam (25), participation (25), final paper (25.)

### **Books for purchase:**

Mark Taylor, The Moment of Complexity; David Waines, An Introduction to Islam; Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age; John Esposito Unholy War; Raymond Baker, Islam Without Fear; Khalidi, Medieval Islamic Philosophical Writings; Williams, The Word of Islam; Stephen Zunes, Tinderbox; Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age; Mahatir Muhammad, Excerpts from Collected Works. In addition a packet of readings from Muahmmad Abduh, Ali Shariati, Yusuf al Qaradawy will be provided.

*Final Paper assignment: Write a brief essay (4-5 pages maximum) on the topic: Does the notion of Islamic secularism make sense to you and, if it does, in what ways? How does the thought and practice of Mahatir Mohamad figure into your analysis?*

## ***INTRODUCTION: ISLAM IN OUR WORLD***

### January

- \* Introduction
- \* Taylor, The Moment of Complexity, Introduction, chaps 1 and 2
  
- \* Taylor, The Moment of Complexity, chaps 3 and 4

### February

- \* Taylor, The Moment of Complexity, chaps 5, 6 & 7.
  
- \* Waines, An Introduction to Islam, chaps 1-2
- \* Waines, An Introduction to Islam, chaps 3-4
  
- \* Waines, An Introduction to Islam, chaps 7-8

## ***BUILDING THE WORLD (ISTIKHLAF): ISLAM'S CHARGE TO HUMANITY***

- \* THE HERITAGE: Quran, Hadith, Fiqh. Williams, chap 1. "Word of God", chap 2 "The News of God's Messenger" ***Take home exam distributed electronically.***
  
- \* Quran, Hadith, Fiqh. Williams, 3 "The Law of God"; 4. "Interior Religion: Sufism" 5. "The Statements of the Theologians"  
Thursday, Feb 23 Abduh, "Tawhid"  
. ***Take home exam due. Late exams will be downgraded.***

TRINITY DAYS no regular class

### March

## ***THE HERITAGE: ISLAMIC THOUGHT, HISTORY, AND THE VENTURE OF ISLAM***

ISLAMIC THOUGHT/ philosophers, Islamic scholars, and Sufis. Khalidi, Medieval, Introduction and al Farabi, X1 - 26

THE HERITAGE: ISLAMIC THOUGHT Khalidi, Medieval, Ibn Sina and al Ghazali, pp. 27 - 98

THE HERITAGE: ISLAMIC THOUGHT Khalidi, Medieval, Ibn Tufayl, and Ibn Rushd, pp. 99 - 180 (read Ibn Rushd first and carefully; skim Ibn Tufayl)

## ***THE AWAKENING: ENCOUNTERING THE WEST***

THE WEST AND ISLAMIC AWAKENING: Hourani, Arabic Thought, preface, chap 1, 2, 3  
THE WEST AND ISLAMIC AWAKENING: Hourani, Arabic Thought, chaps 4, 5, 6.

Tuesday, March 21 Spring Vacation  
Thursday, March 23 Spring Vacation

THE WEST AND ISLAMIC AWAKENING: Shariati, Religion vs Religion, entire.(handout)  
THE WEST AND THE ISLAMIC WORLD: Zunes,chaps 1-3

*April*

THE WEST AND THE ISLAMIC WORLD Zunes, chaps 4-7.

***ISLAM IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD: The ISLAMIC SECULARISM of Mahatir Mohamad (Malaysian case study)***

ISLAM IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD: The Islamic Secularism of Mahatir Mohamad  
(Malaysian case study)

ISLAM IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD: The Islamic Secularism of Mahatir Mohamad  
(Malaysian case study)

***ISLAMIC PLURALISM IN A GLOBAL AGE***

Esposito, chap 1 and 2

THE WEST AND THE ISLAMIC WORLD Esposito, chap 3 and 4

**In-Class Exam.**

THE WEST AND THE ISLAMIC WORLD Baker, Islam Without Fear, Prologue, chap 1 and 2

THE WEST AND THE ISLAMIC WORLD Baker, chap 3 and 4

THE WEST AND THE ISLAMIC WORLD Baker, chap 5 and 6

**Final Papers:  
Selected Research References for Course Development**

**Ibn Sina (Avicenna), <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/sina/default.htm>**

**Works:**

Avicenna on Theology, A. J. Arberry,  
<http://umcc.ais.org/~maftab/ip/pdf/bktx/arb-sin-2.pdf>

Risala fi'l 'ashq (Treatise on Love) Translated by E. Fackenheim,  
<http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/sina/works/avicenna-love.pdf>

Both files are PDF format and quite large. Each work is in English and can be easily downloaded.

**Al-Ghazali, <http://www.ghazali.org/site/ihya.htm>**

**Works:**

Books of the Ihya by Al-Ghazali

This collection includes the following:

First Quarter: Acts of Worship

Second Quarter: Norms of Daily Life

Third Quarter: The Ways to Perdition

Fourth Quarter: The Ways to Salvation

*All works in this collection are accessed through the main URL indicated above. The language of the work's translation is noted for each link. The site is well organized by Quarters and books. All book titles within the Quarter are listed but there are several that are not available on this site. File formats are a mix of PDF, WORD and HTML. Files are quite large but can be easily downloaded. A link to the copyright information is provided at the bottom of the page.*

**Ibn Rushd (Averroes), <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ir/>**

**Works:**

Tahfut at Tahafut (Incoherence of the Incoherence), Translated by Simon Van Den Bergh, <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ir/tt/default.htm>

On the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy,  
<http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ir/art/ir100.htm>

On the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy, new translation by G.F. Hourani,  
<http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ir/fasl.htm>

Faith and Reason in Islam- Averroes' Exposition of Religious Arguments,  
translated by Ibrahim Y. Najjar, <http://www.oneworld-publications.com/books/texts/faith-and-reason-intro.htm>

*These works are all provided in English but are in an HTML format and therefore not in an easily downloadable form and best viewed at their source URL.*

### **Secularism Definitions:**

The Secular Society, <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Rsecular.htm>  
A brief history of the origins of the Secular Society beginning with George Holyoake.

Garver Joel S., Professor of Philosophy, LaSalle University, Deconstructing the Secular, a Summary of John Milbank's *Theology and Social Theory*,  
<http://www.joelgarver.com/writ/revi/milbank.htm>  
A commentary on Milbank's theory on the causes for the development of a secular society.

Robert Green Ingersoll, Secularism, 1887, The Independent Pulpit, Waco, TX,  
[http://infidels.org/library/historical/robert\\_ingersoll/secularism.html](http://infidels.org/library/historical/robert_ingersoll/secularism.html)  
An essay on the meaning of Secularism.

Einstein on Science and Religion,  
<http://www.einsteinandreligion.com/scienceandreligion.html>  
An essay by Einstein on the conflict between knowledge and belief.

The Secular Web, <http://www.infidels.org/>  
A website focused on an atheistic perspective of secularism.