



Introduction to Shia Traditions, Beliefs, and Practices (DI-513-2)

Spring 2024

Hartford International University for Religion & Peace

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Meeting Time: Thursdays: 5:00-6:50PM Hybrid Synchronous
Office Hours: Tuesdays, Fridays, 11:00-11:59 AM + by appointment (Zoom)

This course surveys the development of Shī'ī (henceforth Shia for the sake of uniformity) Islam as a principal current in Muslim thought and practice. Major events and developments are examined, including views on succession after the Prophet, the formation of the caliphate, and the key Shia notion of Imamate. Various forms of early Shias will be introduced, including the Imāmīs, Zaydīs, and Ismailīs. The substantive implications of the centrality of the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt* and the pivotal notions of *wilā'* and *walāya* are emphasized throughout the course. Consequential developments in Iran and Iraq as well as the Fatimid Shia caliphate, which extended from Egypt and North Africa to Yemen and reached as far as India, will be studied through the prism of doctrine as well as art. Zaydi Shia thought will be presented as well. This course focuses on 12th Imami traditions, beliefs, and practices among the Imami (also known as 12ther) Shias, taking a thematic as well as historical perspective. The development of views on the Quran, hadith, and theology (*kalam* and *falsafa*) will be discussed.

Syllabus: First Draft 1st January 2024 (Subject to multiple revision):

Pedagogy: This course is based on reading and in-depth discussion: Primary and secondary sources will be read and discussed.

Instead of restricting the reading to a secondary monograph, all reading materials will be provided online. Also, recorded clips will be made available on CANVAS for the exclusive use of the students.



Required Work & Evaluation:

On the average, 70-140 pages of readings are assigned per week.

Students should prepare for class by reading all assigned texts for each session.

Online participation & Attendance:

Attendance, keeping up with assigned readings and active participations are important in this class.

Note: More than two unexcused absences result in a failing grade.

Offline discussion

Students are expected to respond to assigned readings before each class session by posting questions and comments on weekly discussion threads on CANVAS. Responses posted closer than three hours to class time will be disregarded.

Writing assignments:

- 1) Two short responses (each about 700-1000 words in length):
- 2) A final research paper, 3500-4000 words: specific topic to be decided in conference with the instructor. Topics will be assigned in class. (Progress to be assessed beginning the fifth week of the semester).

Note: Late submissions are *not* accepted.

Grading: The following formula will be used to calculate the final grade for each student:
Regular and timely online attendance & participation (15%) + Short responses (2 x 20%) + Final Paper (50%) (adds up to 105% in favor of the students)

Note: This course description, syllabus, and reading list is subject to multiple revisions. For updates, visit CANVAS.



Readings: (assigned selectively depending on class dynamics)

- Abisaab, Rula Jurdi. The Ulama of Jabal 'Amil in Safavid Iran, 1501-1736: Marginality, Migration and Social Change. *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1/4, Religion and Society in Islamic Iran during the Pre-Modern Era (1994), pp. 103-122.
- Abisaab, Rula Jurdi. Shi'i Jurisprudence, Sunnism, and the Traditionist Thought (Akhbari) of Muhammad Amin Astarabadi (d. 1626-27). *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 47.1 (Feb 2015): 5-23.
- Adams, Charles J. The Role of Shaykh Al-Tusi in the Evolution of a Formal Science of Jurisprudence Among the Shi'ah. *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (SEPTEMBER 1971), pp. 173-180.
- Al-Abdul Jader, Adel S. The Origin of Key Shi'ite Thought Patterns in Islamic History. *Living Islamic History: Studies in Honour of Professor Carole Hillenbrand* (2010).
- Alatas, Syed Farid. Shia in Indonesia and Malaysia.
- Ansari, Hassan & Schmidtke, Sabine. The Shī'ī Reception of Mu'tazilism: Twelver Shī'īs. *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Theology*, Edited by Sabine Schmidtke, 2016.
- Bayhom-Daou, Tamima. The Imam's Knowledge and the Quran according to al-Faḍl b. Shādhān al-Nisābūrī (d. 260 A.H./874 A.D.). *BSOAS* 64, no. 2 (2001), pp. 190-8.
- Bayhom-Daou, Tamima. Kitab Sulaym ibn Qays revisited. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London; Cambridge Vol. 78, Iss. 1 (Feb 2015): 105-119.
- Buckley, Ron P. On the origins of Shi'i Hadith. *The Muslim World*, Vol. 88, no. 2 (Apr 1998): pp. 165-184.
- Calder, Norman. Khums in Imāmī Shī'ī Jurisprudence, from the Tenth to the Sixteenth Century A. D. *BSOAS*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (1982), pp. 39-47.
- Calder, Norman. Zakat in Imami Shi'i jurisprudence, from the tenth to the sixteenth century A. D. *BSOAS*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (1981), pp. 468-480.
- Calder, Norman. Doubt and Prerogative: The Emergence of an Imāmī Shī'ī Theory of Ijtihad. *Studia Islamica*, No. 70 (1989), pp. 57-78.
- Calder, Norman. Accommodation and Revolution in Imami Shi'i Jurisprudence: Khumayni and the Classical Tradition. *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Jan., 1982), pp. 3-20.
- Esmi, Amir & Saremi, Hamidreza. Mysticism and Its Impact on Safavid Dynasty Architecture (Mosque of Sheikh Lotfollah in Isfahan). *Research Journal of Environmental and Earth Sciences*, 2014, pp. 333-339.
- Friedman, Yaron. *The Shī'īs in Palestine: From the Medieval Golden Age until the Present*. Brill, 2020. (selections only)
- Gleave, Robert. Recent Research into the History of Early Shi'ism. *History Compass*, 7/6 (2009), pp. 1593-1605.
- Gleave, Robert M. Early Shī'ī Hermeneutics: Some Exegetical Techniques Attributed to the Shi'i Imams. In Karen Bauer (ed.), *Imams, in Aims, Methods, and contexts of Qur'anic exegesis* (2nd/8th-9th/15th centuries) (Oxford University Press, 2013).
- Gruber, Christiane. The 'Restored' Shī'ī muṣḥaf as Divine Guide? The Practice of fāl-i Qur'ān in the Ṣafavid Period. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2011), pp. 29-55.



- Khaleeli, Alexander. Hisham ibn al-Hakam: Arch-Heretic? *Journal of Shia Islamic Studies*, Summer 2010, Vol. III · No. 3.
- Rieck, Andreas. Shias in Pakistan: Historical Background. In *The Shias of Pakistan: An Assertive and Beleaguered Minority*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Rizvi, Sajjad. New Sociopolitical Formations and the ‘Renaissance’ of Philosophy. *The Wiley Blackwell History of Islam* (2018).
- Surani, Iqbal. Satpanthī Khoja-s to Shī‘a Imāmī Ismā‘īlī Ṭarīqa: The Construction of Religious Identity of the Khoja-s Imāmī Ismā‘īlī of South Asia. *Studia Islamica* 112 (2017) 1-28.
- Vilozny, Roy. Pre-Buyid Hadith Literature: The Case of al-Barqi from Qumm (d. 274/888 or 280/894) in Twelve Sections. In Farhad Daftary & Gurdofarid Miskinzoda (eds.), *The Study of Shi‘i Islam History, Theology and Law* (2014).

