

BCRE04 The Qur'an and its history of reception

Semester: B

ECTS Credits: 5

Duration: 11 weeks

Contact Hours: 22

Quota: None

Prerequisite subjects: None

This is an introductory course on the Qur'ān, the sacred text of Islam, and on its reception both in the classical Islamic period and modernity. The course does not require prior knowledge of the subject and will introduce students to some of the major Qur'ānic themes and to the ways in which this foundational work has been interpreted by generations of medieval and modern readers. Topics to be discussed include the social, religious, and historical circumstances surrounding the emergence of the Qur'ān; the structure, style, and literary techniques underlying the Qur'ānic text; the tradition of religious exegesis (tafsīr) that developed in Islam; and key Qur'ānic narratives and themes. Students will acquire a basic understanding of the place of this scripture in the Islamic tradition and of its role in Muslim worship and cult. The class will consist of both lectures and student discussion on key themes covered by the readings. We will also be reading various Qur'ānic verses in a comparative perspective with the other monotheistic traditions.

Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Be familiar with the historical, religious, linguistic and cultural contexts in which the Qur'ān emerged.

Have read a number of key sūras of the Qur'ān in English translation.

Be able to describe and discuss the structure and main themes of the Qur'ān.

Be familiar with tafsīr – the Islamic science of Qur'ānic exegesis.

Have an understanding of the role played by the Qur'ān in Islamic practice and belief in the classical and modern periods.

Have engaged with some of the critical issues in western academic scholarship of the Qur'ān.

Indicative Reading:

Abdel Haleem, M.A.S. *The Qur'an: A New Translation*. Oxford World's Classics; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. McAuliffe, Jane Dammen (ed.).

The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Neuwirth, Angelika, Sinai, Nicolai and Marx, Michael (eds.). *The Qur'ān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu*. Leiden: Brill, 2010. Rippin, Andrew (ed.).

The Qur'an: Formative Interpretation. Aldershot: Variorum, 1999. Saeed, Abdullah. *The Qur'an: An Introduction*. London: Routledge, 2009.

Saleh, Walid. *The Formation of the Classical Tafsīr Tradition: The Qur'ān Commentary of al- Tha'labī (d. 427/1035)*. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

Wadud, Amina. *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective*, [2nd ed.]. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Name of Lecturer: Dr Walter Young