

Fall, 2014

Introduction to Shi'i Islam

HIST 3910-004

MID E 3880-003

University of Utah

Room # OSH 113

M, W: 8:05-9:25 a.m.

Instructor: Dr. S. M. Safiullah (Safi)

Office: CTIHB # 310

Office Hours: Mondays: 9:30-10:30 a.m. or by appointment

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Course Description:

This course will examine the religious, social, and political contexts of Shi'i Islam, the second largest Islamic sect, from its early formation to its role today. The Shi'i population has been considered a minority community in the Muslim world, and in today's modern era, Shi'i Muslims are playing an important role in both Muslim and world communities. Students will study the origin, development, formation, and role of the *Imamate* within Shi'i Islam. This course will explore the role of clergies, leadership succession, ritual and performance, theology and jurisprudence, religion, and politics. Students will understand the Shi'i sectarian branches, specifically the Twelver Shi'ism, as it is the most influential Shi'i legal school of thought. Finally, this course will discuss how all of these factors play a significant social and political role in forming a powerful Shi'i community in Iran, Iraq, Lebanon and the Indian subcontinent, where present Shi'i populations are most densely located.

Texts:

There are three required textbooks for this class:

- Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam*, 1985.
 - Juan Ricardo Cole, *Sacred Space and Holy War: the Politics, Culture and History of Shi'ite Islam*, 2002.
 - Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam will Shape the Future*, 2006.
- All three textbooks are available at the University Bookstore. Students are required to read the assigned chapters only.

Other supplementary study materials will be available on Canvas

Exams:

There will be two exams. Each exam will include identification and essay questions. A study guide will be provided one week prior to each exam. The study guide will contain essays and identification questions. All exams are closed book. Students must purchase blue books and bring them to the exam.

Film:

Students are expected to stream a film outside of class. The film is called *Shi'ism: Waiting for the Hidden Imam* – (DV-Disc BP 191 S5247, 2005, 53 min. color, (Stream online), available at Marriott Library Call # <http://stream.lib.utah.edu/index.php?c=details&id=1003>

Students are required to write a critique on the film. The critique should be 3-4 pages.

Book Review:

Students are required to write one book review on Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Shia Revival*. The book review should be 5-6 pages in length, typed and double-spaced in a standard-sized font, and include citations. Citations must follow either the *Chicago Manual of Style*, or the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Details will be provided in the class on Canvas.

Attending Lectures by Visiting Scholars:

Students are required to attend at least one of the two lectures on Shi'ism organized by the Middle East Center of the University of Utah. Each student must turn in two-page of summary of one of the lecture to the Instructor.

Visiting Al-Rasool Islamic Center:

We will be visiting the Al-Rasool Islamic Center (AIC). This is an association of Shi'i Muslims living in the greater Salt Lake area. AIC serves a multi-ethnic population consisting of Iraqis, Iranians, Afghans, India, and from other ethnic origins.

Attendance and Class Participation:

Attendance is mandatory. Knowledge gained from class lectures will be essential to perform well on the exams. Please do not miss class; it will be difficult to catch up on missed lectures. A substantial number of grade points will be based on attendance. Students who miss more than three classes without prior permission from the instructor will lose these points. If a student falls behind, it is his/her responsibility to see the instructor. Necessary arrangements can be made to help students with their assignments. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (801) 979-0691 (c) or (801) 487-0691 (h) or by e-mail: s.safiullah@utah.edu.

Writing Assignments:

If you need help with your writing, please contact the Writing Center at the Marriott Library. The service at the Writing Center is FREE but appointments must be made ahead of time. Please visit the Writing Center's webpage at <http://writingcenter.utah.edu/undergradss.php>

Canvas:

Course materials will be available on Canvas. You are expected to check Canvas regularly and are expected to know the information from the materials. Additionally, you are expected to stay aware of any changes made to the syllabus via Canvas. If you have problems access this resource, please seek help through the university.

Grading:

Mid-Term Exam	20% of grade
Attend one of the two lectures on Shi'i Islam/Ismailis	10% of grade
Film critique	10% of grade
Visiting Al-Rasool Islamic Center	10% of grade
Book Review	20% of grade
Class Participation and Attendance	10% of grade
Final Exam	20% of grade

Due Dates:

Lecture summary on Shi'i Islam	September 22
Mid-Term Exam	October 8
Film critique	October 29
Visiting Al-Rasool Islamic Center	November (TBD)
Book Review	Nov. 26
Final Exam	December 15

Course Outline and Readings:

Part I: The History and Doctrines of Shi'ism

- Week 1, August 25, Introduction, Momen, ch. 1 "An Outline of the Life of Muhammad" pp.1-10.
- Week 2, September 1, (Labor Day, no class)
September 3, "Shia" *Encyclopedia of Islam* (Second Edition); Tabatabai, "The Origin and Growth of Shi'ism." pp. 39-73 in *Shi'ite Islam*, (Chapter I00).
- Week 3, September 8, Momen, Ch 2, "The Question of the Succession of Muhammad." pp. 11-22; "Imama" and "Ithna Ashariyya" *Encyclopedia of Islam* (second Edition.
- Week 4, September 15, Momen, Ch. 3, "The Lives of the Imams and Early Divisions among the Shi'is," pp. 23-60.

Attend one of the two following lectures:

The Ismailis in history: Myths and Realities

Professor Farhad Daftary, Inst. Of Ismaili Studies, London
Thursday, September 18th, 2014, at 4:30 PM, CTIHB 101

Shi'i Islam & Its Manifestations in Iran

Professor Farhad Daftary , Friday, September 19, 6:30pm, CTIHB, Eccles Auditorium

- Week 5, September 22, Arjomand, "Imam Absconditus and the Beginnings of a Theology of Occultation: Imami Shi'ism Circa 280-90 A.H. / 900 A.D." pp. 1-12, and Momen, Ch.4-5, "The Early History of Shi'i Islam and Shi'i Islam in the Medieval Period AD 1000-1500," pp. 86-104.
- Week 6, September 29, Momen, Ch. 7-9, "The imamate, The 12th Imam, Occultation, Doctrines and Ritual Practices," pp. 147-183, and Norton, A. R., "Ritual, Blood, and Shiite Identity," pp. 140-155.

Part II: Early Modern Arab Shi'ite and Iran

Week 7, October 6, Cole, Chs. 3, “Rival Empires of Trade and Shi’ism in Eastern Arabia” PP, 31-57

October 8, ***Mid-term Exam at 8:05 AM***

Week 8, Fall Break, October 13-19

Week 9, October 20, Cole, Ch. 4, “Jurisprudence: The Akhbari-Usuli Struggle,” pp. 58-77

Week 10, October 27. Momen, Ch.6 “Shi’i Islam in Modern Times AD 1500-1900,” pp. 105-146. Cole, “Introduction” and Ch. 1, “the Shi’ites as an Ottoman Minority,” pp. 1-30,

Part III: India and the British Empire

Week 11, November 3, Cole, Chs. 5-6, “Indian Money and the Shi’ite Shrine Cities; and Mafia, Mob and Shi’ism in Iraq,” pp.78-122.

Week 12, November 10, Cole, Chs, 7-8, “The Shi’ite Discovery of the West; and Women and the Making of Shi’ism,” pp. 123-160.

Part IV: Theocracy and Shi’ite in the Twentieth Century

Week 13, November 17, Cole, Chs. 9-10, “Sacred Space and Holy war: the Issue of Jihad,” and Shi’ites as National Minorities,” pp. 161-188 and Pinto, A. “Pilgrimage, Commodities, and religious Objectification: The Making of Transitional Shiism between Iran and Syria,” pp. 109-125

Week 14, November 24, Discussion on Nassr’s *Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future*

Week 15, December 1, Cole Ch. 11, “The Modern Theocracy,” pp. 189-211

Week 16, December 8, Hamid Dabashi, “The End of Ideology,” *Social Research*, Vol. 67, No. 2, Iran: Since the Revolution (SUMMER 2000), pp. 475-518, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40971481>

Week 17, December 15, Monday, ***Final Exam at 8:05 AM***

Note: *The University of Utah requires that the following paragraph be added to this syllabus.*

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. Please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to discuss necessary accommodations.