

Religious Studies / Winter 2020

THE LIFE & LETTERS OF PAUL



RELIGIOUS
STUDIES
351

MONDAY
WEDNESDAY
1 - 2:15 PM

-Registration now open-

This course will focus on a study of the New Testament writings by and about Paul, including the "undisputed" Pauline letters (Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon), the letters whose authorship is more questionable, and the narratives about Paul in Acts of the Apostles.

Prerequisites:

Completion of 24 credit hours or a 200 level RLST course



ISLAM

Modernity and Practices



Short answer options

1. Name five (5) differences between Sunni and Shi'a Islam? Please answer in full sentences.
2. "Veiling oppresses women." Answering in complete sentences, explain three (3) things that this statement does not take into account, and why they are important to consider.
3. What is Shari'a law? Explain what sources it draws from, and how it is implemented.

Globalization and Colonialism

- Ottoman Empire defeated in WWI, led to formation of Turkey, Britain, France, and Russia established “protectorates” in former Ottoman territories
- Safavid Empire, divided up between Russia and Britain
- Mughal Empire: dismantled by Britain

Globalization and Colonialism

- Colonization brought in new legal systems
- Family law in many Muslim countries became more rigid as it was seen as an important part of Muslim identity
- Colonization also dismantled Islamic education
- Many Muslim countries responded by focusing on Qur'an and Hadith study at the expense of other subjects

Globalization and Colonialism

- Nationalist movements abolished remnants of caliphate in Turkey, doing away with last symbol of international Islamic sovereignty
- Now many independent Muslim nation states
- Tribal Monarchy in Saudi Arabia
- Constitutional theocratic republic of Iran
- Secular nation state of Turkey

Islam in Canada

- Correction* over 1 million Muslim people live in Canada
- Over half in Ontario (most in the Greater Toronto Area)
- Apr. 10,000 in Saskatchewan

Practices

Five Pillars of Islam (Sunni. Shi'a include these and other practices)

1. Declaration of faith (*shahadah*, “witness”)
2. Formal prayers (*salat*)
3. Alms giving (*zakat*)
4. Fasting (*sawm*)
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*)

Articles of Faith

1. Uniqueness and oneness of Allah (God in Arabic)
2. Trust in Allah's angels
3. Trust in Allah's prophets
4. Trust in Allah's scriptures
5. Trust in the final judgement

Shari'a

- Islam characterized by “orthopraxy” (right behaviour/practice)
- Shari'a designates Islamic law
- Shari'a an ideal and ethical imperative
- Shari'a given by divine revelation
- *Fiqh*: human effort to understand and apply shari'a

Shari'a

■ Sources

1. Qur'an
2. Sunna: customary practices of Muhammad (found in Hadith)
3. Consensus (Ijma'): established legal decisions
4. Analogical Reasoning (*Qiyas*)

Shari'a

- Muslim world shows great diversity in legal traditions
- Historically, shari'a was flexible in practice, interpreted for the greatest good of the community
- Contemporarily, shari'a interpreted by non-Muslims as national statutory law, inflexible, and enforced by coercive power of the state

Veiling

- Based on an interpretation of the Qur'an
- Came into practice after contact with Byzantine (Greek) and Persian practices of veiling, especially by the upper classes
- Has been interpreted as a symbol of patriarchy (male dominance) in Islam
- Has been used to rationalize colonial interference in Islamic countries

Veiling

- Contemporarily presented as the oppression of women
- This presentation ignores the voices of women
- Also ignores the modern history of veiling
- Also ignores colonial and racist rationales against veiling

Veiling

- Important!
- Not all Muslim women wear veils
- Those that do wear different veils depending on their geographical and social locations
- Women who wear veils do so for a lot of different reasons
- DO NOT assume women have no agency

Veiling: Egypt, for example

- Veiling as oppressive to women a distinctly colonial idea
- Lord Cromer (1908) argued the veil was oppressive to Egyptian women
- Did so to support implementing of British social and economic systems

Veiling: Egypt, for example

- Lord Cromer was also strongly against women voting in Britain
- Pursued policies in Egypt that limited women's access to education, discouraged training of female doctors
- Critique of veil a veiled critique of Islam
- Cromer proposed exchanging Islamic male-domination for British male-domination

Why wear a veil?

- Religious reasons
- An outward sign of devotion and morality
- Women often tasked with preserving cultural traditions
- Identifying religion in a diaspora (Canada, for example)

Why wear a veil?

- Other reasons
- Protects women from male gaze in public
- More women have jobs and education
- Veiling protects women from sexual harassment
- Challenge male power by blocking access to female bodies

EVERYTHING
COVERED
BUT HER EYES,
WHAT A CRUEL
MALE-
DOMINATED
CULTURE!



NOTHING
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EVANS



Veiling about more than just religion

