

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاصْبِرُوا لِيْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْوَعْدَ الْوَعْدَ

So remember Me, and I will remember you; and be grateful to Me; and do not deny/cover.

*Qur'an*, 2:152

Tradition, like religion, is at once truth and presence. It concerns the subject which knows and the object which is known. It comes from the Source from which everything originates and to which everything returns. It thus embraces all things like the “Breath of the Compassionate” which, according to the Sufis, is the very root of existence itself...is elucidated.

– Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred*, p.68.

What I am, therefore, is in key part what I inherit, a specific past that is present to some degree in my present. I find myself part of a history and that is generally to say, whether I like it or not, whether I recognize it or not, one of the bearers of a tradition.

– Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p.221

For Fez had once been familiar to me, well known and yet full of inexhaustible secrets. In it I had experienced another world and another age, a world of the Middle Ages such as perhaps now no longer existed, and austere and yet enticing world, otherworldly poor but inwardly rich. It was a city that had had to yield to foreign rule and that had accepted in silence the arrival of a new order dominated by the power of machines, yet inwardly it remained true to itself; but at the time I first knew it, men who had spent their youth in an un-altered traditional world were still the heads of families. For many of them the spirit which had once created the mosque at Córdoba and Alhambra at Granada was near her and more real than all the innovations that European rule had brought with it. Since then, however a new generation had arisen, one which from its earliest childhood must have been blinded by the glare of European might one which in large measure had attended French schools and thus henceforth bore within it the sting of an almost insuperable contradiction.

Titus Burkhardt, *Fez: The City of Islam*

## Nostalgic Islam

(Vestiges of Muslim Memory & Heritage)

REL 176 (Fall 2018) MWF 12:30-1:20 pm (Sloan 100)

### WHAT IS IT ABOUT? (Previously Course Description)

What can we learn about Islam and Muslims by observing closely significant contents of collective Muslim memory and heritage? What shared memories are “deeply present” and have persisted and endured across space (various Muslim populations on the globe) and time (i.e., history), and why? What have Muslims persistently remembered and commemorated? What do they consider critical to their religious heritage and worth preserving and transmitting to next generations, and why? What eras, places and worlds Muslims long for, and why? Our probing of these questions will force us to taking stock of the annals of Muslim memory and heritage, and in turn offers us a panoramic view of the “Islamic Tradition”. (“Tradition” itself is a critical term in our study.) We will also observe those vestiges that are honored as heritage, are felt lost, are mourned, and for whom Muslims long (i.e., nostalgia). While mostly about the *contents* of Muslim memory and heritage, our journey inevitably involves humanistic inquiry into Muslim view of ‘memory’, ‘history’, ‘heritage’ and ‘nostalgia’. All studies (aka classes) with me involve conscientious reading of texts, and entail speaking from within the text, speaking with it, and speaking to/about it as well.

(NOTE: In view of the view that learning is an evolutionary process, course plan, readings, intellectual practices may shift and adjust as necessary.)

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Email: [rizamir@davidson.edu](mailto:rizamir@ davidson.edu) (Saturdays I am gone; Sundays I slowly re-emerge)

Meeting Hours: Thurs & Fri 2:00–3:30 (Schedule appointments <https://bit.ly/2vGoLYD>)

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

### INSTRUCTOR'S:

By the end of this course, it makes sense that the participants will have:

1. Gained substantial exposure to key figures, spaces and moments in time that are prized highly within the collective Muslim memory;
2. Comprehended ways Muslim past and collective memory informs their present;
3. Cultivated ability to “walk with authors,” that is, to remain in engaged and sustained conversation with an author and her texts through 1) hearing the texts, then 2) making sense of them, and 3) finally responding to and through them to other authors/onlookers from the various questions and points that arise;
4. Demonstrated thoughtful comprehension of both the subtle overlaps and divergences between history and memory;
5. Probed and engaged a culture other than one's own;
6. Paid more attention to her/his own communal memory— ethnic, religious, national or otherwise— with recognition of the way memory, imagination, and nostalgia operate and inform the present.

**NOTE:** The most significant goal of this class is to make learning *relevant, useful, enjoyable* and *meaningful* for all involved. Making the class more relevant to you personally is something that will require your engagement and deep interest. Feel free to talk to the instructor about ways in which you (or/and the instructor) could contribute in achieving these goals, personally and as a class.

### INSTRUCTEES', PARTICIPANTS', CONTRIBUTORS', COLLABORATORS' (i.e., YOURS)?

For a note on this, see “A Note on Learning Outcomes (Yours?)” on Veils & Webs (rizwanzamir.net > Scroll Down, Bottom Left, “Notes to Consider” Section).

### INTELLECTUAL PRACTICES (Previously Course Assignments)

Various “Intellectual Practices” are in place as “building blocks” to help build synthesis and deep comprehension. They include: 1) Reviews to ensure that we have learned the basics; 2) “Mapping Your Memory” geared towards parallel application of our study on memory and nostalgia onto your COMMUNAL and personal lives; and 3) “Memory Meets History” where the insights from our study on your chosen Muslim memory will be brought into conversation with what historians say about it.

Active Presence (include Google Doc)	12%
Mapping & Sharing “your” Memory, Heritage & Nostalgia (The Notebook)	14%
Memory <b>Meets</b> History (4-5 pages)	14%
Midterm Review	25%
Final Review	35%

**Note. For General Guidelines on Intellectual Practices, See Veils & Webs ([rizwanzamir.net](http://rizwanzamir.net) > Scroll over Dear Strangers Drop-Down Menu > Click “Intellectual Practices”)**

**Disabilities.** A student who requires accommodation for a documented disability of any type should see the instructor immediately to discuss modifications to course requirements. “Davidson College values the diversity of its community and is an equal access institution that admits otherwise qualified applicants without regard to disability. The college seeks to accommodate requests for accommodations related to disability that are determined to be reasonable and do not compromise the integrity of a program or curriculum. To make such a request or to begin a conversation about a possible request, please contact Beth Bleil, Director of Academic Access and Disability Resources, in the Center for Teaching and Learning by visiting her office in the E.H. Little Library, by emailing her at [bebleil@davidson.edu](mailto:bebleil@davidson.edu) or by calling 704-894-2129. It is best to submit accommodation requests within the drop/add period; however, requests can be made at any time in the semester. Please keep in mind that accommodations are not retroactive.”

**Honor and Conscience.** The College expects students to fully abide by the Honor Code. The instructor wonders about conscience and convergence/divergence between the two.

**Additional Resources & Support.** There are numerous resources available to help you through the course. Please see the section entitled “Resources” under the “Dear Strangers” tab from Veils & Webs (rizwanzamir.net).

## TEXT-GUIDES

(Available at the Bookstore and on Reserve in the Library)

1. *In the Light of a Blessed Tree. Illuminations of Islamic Belief, Practice, and History*, by Timothy J. Gianotti (Author) <https://amzn.to/2tMzDCA>
2. *Windows on the House of Islam: Muslim Sources on Spirituality and Religious Life*, by John Renard (Editor) <https://amzn.to/2IyRsu9>
3. *Introduction to Traditional Islam: Foundations, Art and Spirituality (Perennial Philosophy)*, by Jean-Louis Michon (Author) <https://amzn.to/2yVvaDu>
4. *Fez: City of Islam (Islamic Texts Society)*, by Titus Burckhardt (Author), William Stoddart (Translator) <https://amzn.to/2tPWUnj>
5. *Longing for the Lost Caliphate: A Transregional History* by Mona Hassan (Author) <https://amzn.to/2Kii8W1>
6. *Remembering God: Reflections on Islam* by Charles Le Gai Eaton (Author) <https://amzn.to/2tDSZum>

### Text-Guides for Basic Background in Islam

*Note. Prior knowledge of Islam and Muslim civilization is not expected or assumed. For your own comfort, you may pick ONE of the introductory books listed on Veils & Webs.*

{Veils & Webs (rizwanzamir.net) > Dear Strangers > Resources}

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# THE MAP

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## STAGE I: CONTOURS OF THE ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS UNIVERSE

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Week 1 (Aug 20–24): Introduction to the Course/Memory–Heritage–Tradition–Nostalgia

- **Please Review the Syllabus and Veils & Webs (rizwanzamir.net → “Dear Strangers” tab)**
- **WEDNESDAY:** John Renard, “Preface” *Windows on the House of Islam*
- **FRIDAY:** Watch SRZ Video Lecture “Reliving Karbala: Memory, Remembrance, & Commemoration” found here <https://bit.ly/2wiz1Wu> (Begins at 20:00, watch until the 47:30)

**SLIDES:** “Nostalgia Inventory”

Week 2 (Aug 27–31): Islam as a Religion I

- *In the Light of a Blessed Tree*, pp.33–78
- Primary Text: *Windows on the House of Islam*, pp.2–28 & 55–59

Week 3 (Sep 3–7): Islam as a Religion II

- *In the Light of a Blessed Tree*, pp.79–115
- Primary Text: *Windows on the House of Islam*, 59–85

Week 4 (Sep 10–14): Islam as a Religion III

- *In the Light of a Blessed Tree*, pp. 117–132
- Primary Text: *Windows on the House of Islam*, pp.144–159 & 169–189, 208–212

Week 5 (Sep 17–21): The Archetypes: Prophets, Imams, Saints & Heroes

- John Renard, “The Religious Hero” (p.93–119) in *Islam and the Heroic Image*

- *Windows on the House of Islam*, pp.92-95, 103-107, 159-168,
- **WATCH:** *Ten Days - A Documentary On Azadari* <https://bit.ly/2yV8YcK>
- **Voluntary Visit:** To *Al-Zahra Islamic Center*, Charlotte [Contact: Aman Madan ([ammadan@davidson.edu](mailto:ammadan@davidson.edu)) of South Asian Students Association]

Week 6 (Sep 24-28): Religious and Spiritual Life Commemorated Today

- Gisela Webb, "Tradition and Innovation in Contemporary American Islamic Spirituality: The Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship" (pdf)
- *Windows on the House of Islam*, pp.85-92, 95-102, 107-119, 124-130, 141-144, 189-194 & 212-223 & 290-296
- **WATCH:** *The Traditional World of Islam Part VI (THE INNER LIFE)* <https://bit.ly/2MM8fwN>

Week 7 (Oct 1-5): SACRED SPACES/SACRED TIME/SACRED ART

- *Introduction to Traditional Islam*, 27-122
- **WATCH:** *The Traditional World of Islam Part IV (THE PATTERNS OF BEAUTY)* <https://bit.ly/2MM1prf>
- **Friday** (Reviewing our Study Thus Far): *Post a question on Google Doc with your name.*

**FALL BREAK**

**FRIDAY, October 5 (4:30 P.M.) - WEDNESDAY, October 10 (8:30 A.M.)**

Week 8 (Oct 10-12): MID-SEMESTER REVIEW

- **Wednesday**, No Class – Prepare for the Exam
- **FRIDAY:** MID-SEMESTER REVIEW

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## STAGE II. NOSTALGIC ISLAM & ISLAMIC HERITAGE IN THE MODERN WORLD

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### Week 9 (Oct 15-19): Modernity and Islamic Heritage

- Sir Hamilton Gibb, "The Heritage of Islam in the Modern World" (all three parts)
- Marshall Hodgson, "Epilogue: The Islamic Heritage and the Modern Conscience" in *Venture of Islam*, v.3, pp.411-442.
- **WATCH:** *The Traditional World of Islam* Part I (UNITY) <https://bit.ly/2wf54qD>

### Week 10 (Oct 22-26): Remembering God and Being a Muslim in the Post 9/11 West

- Charles Gai Eaton, *Remembering God: Reflections on Islam* (Part II – selections)
- **WATCH:** *The Traditional World of Islam* Part V (KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD) <https://bit.ly/2BbiWYr>

### FRIDAY (Oct 26): Annotated Bibliography for Memory Meets History Due

### Week 11 (Oct 29- Nov 2): Heritage & Nostalgia of the *Traditional* World of Islam

- Fez: *The City of Islam*, pp. 3-29, 49-59, 64-86, 91-105, 107-134 & 151-170
- **WATCH:** *The Traditional World of Islam* Part II (NOMAD & CITY) <https://bit.ly/2w8WadR>

### Week 12 (Nov 5-9): Lost Yet Not Found (Caliphates, Golden Ages: Medina, Andalus &...)

- *Longing for the Lost Caliphate*, pp.1-19, 142-217 & 253-260

### Week 13 (Nov 12-16): Heritage & Nostalgia – Further Instances

*[You will pick from the options listed below]*

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## STAGE III. SYNTHESIS & CONCLUSION

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Week 14 (Nov 19): PREPARE YOUR PRESENTATIONS/NO MEETING

### THANKSGIVING BREAK

TUESDAY, Nov. 21 (4:30 P.M.)–MONDAY, Nov. 26 (8:30 A.M.)

Week 15 (Nov 26–30): SHARING

1. “YOUR MEMORY” (NOTES FROM THE NOTEBOOK) &
2. YOUR FINDINGS ON “MEMORY MEETS HISTORY”

Week 16 (Dec 3–5): Maybe used to conclude the class

Wednesday, December 5 Fall Classes End

December 7–13 Fall 2018 Examination Period

**QUESTION: Final Review on the Optional Day or during the Exam Period?**

### SOME OPTIONS FOR WEEK 13:

- J Lumbard, “The Decline of Knowledge and Rise of Ideology in the Modern Islamic World”
- Kishwar Rizvi, “The Transnational Mosque” (pdf)
- “From Jhawain-tola to Takmil-ut-Tibb, Lucknow” in *Islam and Healing*, pp.292–333
- *The Canon of Medicine*, 1–18 & 22–33.
- Fadhlallah Haeri, “Son of Karbala” (selections)
- Maulana Thanwi, “The Raison d’être of Madrasah” (pdf)
- Charles Gai Eaton, “The Only Heritage We Have” in *King of the Castle*