

MIDTERM Review

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- The review is an exercise in *weaving* what you have learned and *all the texts* that have been studied thus far. The strength of your essay will rely heavily on your ability and dedicated hard work to carefully **weave, think through and present relevant material**.
- SHOW NOT TELL: An absolute must, the essay needs to illustrate and demonstrate your points "from within the text and textbooks" through concrete examples. (Occasionally class discussion can enter as well.)
- Your essays/commentaries should combine evidence from the classical texts and the insights of scholars we read (from Annemarie Schimmel to Anna Gade);
- Writing itself should be clear and fluid in terms of structure and coherence.
- **Illustrate, concretize, give examples...** Illustrate, concretize, give examples... Illustrate, concretize, give examples...

WRITE AN ESSAY ON *ONE* OF THE FOLLOWING:**ESSAY #1**

Drawing on ALL relevant readings, write a commentary on the following statement: "**...Islamic systems do not separate "real" and "wondrous" expressions of the natural world into different dimensions...**" (Gade, 161)

There are numerous other interrelated statements throughout this chapter and others, and for that matter readings we have done throughout the semester. Recall, for example, chapter one of *Deciphering the Signs of God* by Annemarie Schimmel that we read our first week. Or these statements:

1. And, starting with the Qur'an's many injunctions to reflect on the natural world, the empirical and ethical are not divided into environmental study on the one hand and environmental experience and praxis on the other. (Gade, 161)
2. Ethics bound to traditions of Islamic science and art on Quranic models also express humanistic environmentalism insofar as they convey aesthetic and moral symbols along with transformational empirical practice. (Gade, 197)
3. ...Quranic metaphors are concrete as well as representational and ideational.
4. The reading of the Quranic "environment" that comes from these bee verses is thus imaginal, physical, as well as moralized, and as early commentators noticed, it is also scientific. (Gade, 179)
5. Muslim studies on botany deals mostly with such questions as the classification of plants, their physiology, genesis and modes of growth, the description of their parts, their relation to geographical and climatic conditions and their medical as well as 'occult' properties. Also Muslim authors insisted upon studying the plant world with the aim of drawings spiritual and moral lessons from it as well as of contemplating its forms as part of the *vestigia Dei*. It is noteworthy to remember the importance of plants in the Islamic paradise, the participation of plants in the resurrection and... in the sacred art of Islam (*Islamic Science*, p.59)

OR

ESSAY #2

Two fairly important clauses appear in the first paragraph of Gade's Chapter 6. the FIRST reads as follows "When environmentalism is integral to religious piety"...and the SECOND: "when Muslim commitments of environmentalism are primarily for the sake of religious goals and not the reverse".

These two interrelated clauses constitute one of the most significant thesis of Prof. Gade's book, and of our study this term. Through weaving and interpretation of texts and themes we have studied this semester, write a commentary explaining this thesis. How are we to understand this thesis? How is environmentalism integral to religious piety in Islam? Where is the evidence? Do we see that in the classical texts we read?

Regarding the second clause, what really changes if the relationship is reversed? Why not have religions serve the environmental goals? Why does our author insist on it? Are there other authors we studied who seem to be saying the same thing?

SPEAKING FROM WITHOUT now: Finally, what do you make of this assertion?

OR

ESSAY#3 - A CLASS LECTURE

- *Recall* your state of familiarity with and knowledge about Islam, Islamic humanities and nature and ecology in Islam in August. Keep that person in mind.
- *Review* carefully (some notetaking as well) next the roadMAP, readings from week to week (and session to session), and class meeting notes. *Distill* three to five demonstrable points that clearly emerge from this exercise.
- *Develop* and *write* now a 5-page lecture you will deliver to your first day self that distills and captures the essence of what you have learned this semester, or orient your younger student self on the big picture of this course, and three to five points they will learn this term. *Do not forget to demonstrate your points.*

Formatting GUIDELINES:

- Strictly FIVE double-spaced pages long, font should be Times New Roman and 1-inch space on all sides;
- No more than five short quotations can be cited (one per page); everything else will be in your own words. If you are paraphrasing a quote you must cite the text and page number;
- You may use headings to differentiate sections or for highlighting themes;
- It's an open book review;
- Sign the honor code;
- The review will be due by **December 7 (11:59pm)** through Moodle. [Moodle link for submission has been created].