

Society and Culture in West Asia

Compulsory Course

for

M.A. (International Relations- West Asian Studies)

Course No: MA- IRWAS -102

Semester I

Centre for West Asian Studies

Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

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Course Description

This course provides an overview of the socio-Cultural History of West Asia. It has been designed to increase students' knowledge and awareness about the WANA region with regards to its cultural, social, political and religious institutions. The history of the region would be explained to understand the contemporary WANA region. This course further enlightens the students about the various ethnic groups in WANA region and how Islam brought various changes in the life of the people. Finally, it will put focus on the various thinkers' ideas and contributions to the people of the WANA.

Unit I. Introduction to the Religion, Culture and Society in West Asia

- Historical Narrative of the Region
- Social and Cultural Setting
- Various approaches to the Religion
- Relationship between religion and Culture
- Cross-Cultural interpretation and the treatment of common problems as well as themes within religious traditions

Unit II. Socio-Cultural Groups in West Asia

- Ethnic Groups in West Asia like the Indo European, the Turkik People and the Semites
- Major Languages of West Asian Countries like Arabic, Hebrew, Persian , Turkish, etc.

- Non- Muslim Religious Communities like Jews, Christenings and Hindus etc.
- Migration pattern and Demographic study of Population

Unit III. Impact of Islam on Socio-Cultural History of West Asia

- Impact of Islam on Arab Social Structure
- Social Security, Slavery, Women's right
- Islamic marital jurisprudence
- Language, Custom and Ethnicity

Unit IV. Socio-Cultural Impact of Modern Arab Thinkers

- Explanation of Islamic Fundamentalism and Sectarian Violence
- Religious and social thinkers across the WANA region like Taha Hussain, Naguib Magfooz etc.
- Indian Religious thinkers and authors like Shah Waliullah and Ali Mian Nadvi etc.

Reading List

1. Patai. Raphael, (1969), Society, Culture and Change in the Middle East. (Philadelphia University of Pennsylvania Press: USA.
2. Gilsean. Michael, (2005), Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East, New York University Press.
3. Juan R,(1993). Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East: Social and Cultural Origins of Egypt's 'Urabi, Cairo: American University Press.
4. Haim. Gerber,(1997) The Social Origins of the Modern Middle East. Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc, USA.
5. Turner, B.S, (1984), Capitalism and Class in the Middle East: The origins of Social Change and Economic Development, Humanities Press,
6. F. Halliday, (1983)Arab Resources: The Transformation of a Society, George Town University,USA.
7. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, (1982) New Arab Social Order : A Study of Social Impact of Oil Wealth, Boulder. USA

Method of Instruction:

Lectures and tutorial will be held on a weekly basis. Questions, discussion and debate during classes will be strongly encouraged. Students are expected to keep informed of the current events in the West Asian region.

Method of Assessment:

A mid-term exam would consist of essay questions based upon the topics covered up to that point. It will be of 25 marks and student must answer two questions out of 4 of 12.5 marks each. The final exam conducted according to a schedule at the end of the semester will be of 75 marks. In the final exam, students must answer 5 out of 10 questions.