

Islamic Philosophy: An Introduction / Level 1

This is an introductory level course on Islamic Philosophy. It includes 5 lectures delivered by me and a special lecture delivered by Dr Asad Q. Ahmed on philosophy in the late pre-modern South Asia.

The lectures cover history of Islamic philosophy, kalam, falsafa, hikma and some philosophical questions debated by Muslim philosophers in order to appreciate the depth of the tradition.

After this course, we will do a deep study on each of the lectures. For instance, in the upcoming courses, we will study falsafa and Ibn Sina in depth.

As with this course, scholars will join us in every course.

LECTURES

Lecture 0: Introduction

Lecture 1: The History of Islamic Philosophy

Lecture 2: Kalām

Lecture 3: Falsafa

Lecture 4: Hikma OR The Later Traditions

Lecture 5: Themes and Problems in Islamic Philosophy

Special Lecture: *What was Philosophy in Late Pre-Modern South Asia?* - Dr Asad Q. Ahmed

Course Outline

Lecture 0: Introduction

- Course overview
- Structure, expectations, and learning objectives
- Reading materials and recommended resources

Lecture 1: The History of Islamic Philosophy

- Origins and intellectual background
- Development and major phases
- The maturation of the tradition
- Reassessing and refuting the "decline" thesis

Lecture 2: Kalām

- Origins and historical development
- Major schools and figures
- Central theological and philosophical debates
- Intellectual legacy and influence

Lecture 3: Falsafa

- Origins and historical development
- Major schools and philosophers
- Core metaphysical, logical, and epistemological questions
- Intellectual legacy and influence

Lecture 4: Ḥikma OR The Later Tradition

- The synthesis of Kalām and Falsafa
- The emergence of the later philosophical tradition
- Major thinkers and developments
- Legacy and significance

Lecture 5: Themes and Problems in Islamic Philosophy

- Metaphysics
- Epistemology
- Logic
- Selected debates and discussion points

Special Lecture

What Was Philosophy in Late Pre-Modern South Asia?

- Guest topic based on the work of Asad Q. Ahmed
- The philosophical curriculum (*Dars-i Nizāmī*)
- The continuity of the Islamic philosophical tradition in South Asia

Reading List

1. The History of Islamic Philosophy

- P. Adamson, *Philosophy in the Islamic World* (**primary read**)
P. Adamson, *The Heirs of Avicenna*, vol. 1: Metaphysics and Theology
F. Griffel, *The Formation of Post-Classical Philosophy* (Introduction, Ch. 1, 2, 3)
Asad Q. Ahmed, *Palimpsest of Themselves* (Introduction)
K. Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the 17th Century*

2. Kalām

- R. Frank, *The Science of Kalām*
A. Shihadeh, *Philosophical Theology in Islam: Late Asharism in 13-14th centuries*
Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*

Oxford Handbook to Islamic Theology

- R. el-Omari, *The Mutazilite Movement (i): The Origins of the Mutazila*
D. Bennett, *The Mutazilite Movement (ii): The Early Mutazila*
S. Schmidtke, *The Mutazilite Movement (iii): The Scholastic Phase*
H. Ramli, *The Predecessors of Asharism: Ibn Kullab, al-Muhasibi, and al-Qalanisi*

The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology

- O. Leaman & S. Rizvi, *The developed Kalām tradition*
J. Theile, *Between Cordoba and Nisabur: The Emergence of and Consolidation of Asharism*

3. Falsafa

The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy

- Adamson & Taylor, *Greek into Arabic: Neoplatonism in Translation*
P. Adamson, *Al-Kindi and the reception of Greek Philosophy*
D. Reisman, *Al-Farabi and the Philosophical Curriculum*
R. Wisnowsky, *Avicenna and the Avicennan Tradition*

The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology

- H. Ziai, *Islamic Philosophy (falsafa)*

Oxford Handbook of Islamic Theology

P. Adamson, *Philosophical Theology*

P. Adamson (ed.), *Interpreting Avicenna: Critical Essays*

P. Adamson, *Ibn Sina: A Very Short Introduction*

4. Hikma

The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy

J. Walbridge, *Suhrawardi and Illuminationism*

Mysticism and philosophy: *Ibn Arabi and Mulla Sadra*

The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Philosophy

A. Shihadeh, *Al-Rāzī's (d. 1210) Commentary on Avicenna's Pointers*

A. Dhanani, *Al-Mawāqif fī 'ilm al-kalām by 'Aḍūd al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 1355), and Its Commentaries*

The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology

O. Leaman & S. Rizvi, *The developed Kalām tradition*

J. Theile, *Between Cordoba and Nisabur: The Emergence of and Consolidation of Asharism*

T. Mayer, *Theology and Sufism*

A. Shihadeh, *Philosophical Theology in Islam: Late Asharism in 13-14th centuries*

5. [Special Lecture] What was Philosophy in Late Pre-Modern Muslim South Asia?

Islamic Intellectual History in the Mughal Era

Asad Q. Ahmed, *What was Philosophy in Late Pre-Modern South Asia?*

Islamic Philosophy Course Schedule

Lecture and Discussion Sessions

(Timings for each and every session: 6 pm PST)

Date	Day	Lecture No.	Lecture / Discussion Title
3 August	Monday	Lecture 0	Introduction to the course and book club
8 August	Saturday	Discussion 0	Discussion 0
15 August	Saturday	Lecture 1	History of Islamic Philosophy
16 August	Sunday	Discussion 1	Discussion 1
22 August	Saturday	Lecture 2	Kalām
23 August	Sunday	Discussion 2	Discussion 2
29 August	Saturday	Lecture 3	Falsafa
30 August	Sunday	Discussion 3	Discussion 3
5 September	Saturday	Lecture 4	Hikma / The Later Traditions
6 September	Sunday	Discussion 4	Discussion 4
7 September	Saturday	Lecture 5	Themes and Problems in Islamic Philosophy
8 September	Sunday	Discussion 5	Discussion 5
TBD	TBD	Special Lecture	What was Philosophy in Late Pre-Modern South Asia? – Dr Asad Q. Ahmed
TBD	TBD	Discussion 6	Conclusion and Final Remarks