

**Module Title:** Ilm al-Tafsir (Exegeses)

**Module Code:** ILMTAF

**Course Duration:** 17 Weeks

**Teaching Method:** 2 units/week

**Credits:** 15

### Overview:

This module is split in to two parts. Part one will examine the history and development of Tafsir in Muslim thought; outlining and critically discussing the nature and developments in Tafsir during the Prophetic and post-Prophetic Periods, early differences between different Muslim schools and their approaches to the Quran, the variety of approaches and important works in classical Tafsir, and orientalist approaches to this scholarship. Part two of the module will take a more thematic approach to examining key concepts and approaches in Tafsir. The focus here will be to understand and critically examine a range of approaches- cutting across classical, modern and emerging trends- making explicit the methodological issues and implications involved in each, and any, reading of the Quran.

### Syllabus:

To study intensively:

- Origins, historical development and classical texts on *'ilm al-tafsir*
  - o Tafsir at the time of the Prophet (p.b.u.h)
  - o Tafsir at the time of the Companions and the followers
  - o Infallible Shi'ii Imams, their companions and Tafsir
  - o Tafsir in Shi'ii and Sunni minority sects; *Zaydiyya, Khawarij, Ismailiate, Zahiriyah, Akhbariyah*
  - o Orientalists and tafsir,(German school of Qur'anic studies, Theodor Nöldeke, and his followers; Pretzel, schwally, Bergstrasser; France School of Qor'anic studies etc...)
- Principles discussed in *'ilm al-tafsir* and methods, methodologies, and typologies discussed in *'ilm al-tafsir*:
  - o Literary aspects of tafsir, the old and modern, Textualism and Contextualism,
  - o Tavitil and mystical approach to the Holy Qur'an
  - o Rational and Philosophical Approach to the Holy Qor'an
  - o Narrative approach to the Holy Qor'an
  - o Social Approach to the Holy Qor'an.
  - o Fiqhi and Legal approach to the Qor'an
  - o Aesthetical Approach to the Holy Qur'an(Qur'an and the story, Music of the Qur'anic verses etc...)
  - o Orientalist's methodology of studying Holy Qor'an
- Contemporary theories and emerging trends in the interpretation of the Qur'an

### Learning outcomes:

On completion of this module, the student will:

- Know principles, typology, methods and methodologies discussed in *'ilm al-tafsir*.
- Discuss critically the origin, historical development, and major classical texts on *'ilm al-tafsir*.

- Identify major themes in the Qur'an and to engage in textual, linguistic, grammatical and critical analysis and interpretation of the text of the Qur'an.
- Have awareness of Modernist and emergent approaches to *tafsir*, being able to compare these with conventional *tafsir* theories in the interpretation of the text of the Qur'an.
- Critically evaluate arguments/positions of some of the classical and contemporary Muslim scholars of *tafsir*. In light of orientalist scholarship and contemporary Muslim concerns

### Assessment Weighting:

- 100% Assignment

### Learning Materials:

[W. Montgomery Watt](#) (Author), [Richard Bell](#) (Author), **Introduction to the Qur'an (The New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys), 1995.**

« Al Quran » in Encyclopédie de l'Islam , 2 éd, Tome V p 405 )Paris 1986).

Daniel A. Madigan, "Reflections on Some Current Directions in Qur'anic Studies," **The Muslim World** 85 (1995), pp. 345-362. A good summary of current scholarship, including debates over the theories of John Wansborough.

Jane Dammen McAuliffe, general editor, **Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an** (Leiden : Brill, 2001-). A major reference work organized by topic into articles both large and small.

Hanna E. Kassis, **A Concordance of the Qur'an.** (Berkeley, 1982). By transliterated Arabic roots, keyed to the translation of A. J. Arberry.

Abdul, Musa O.A. *The Qur'an : Shaykh Tabarsi's commentary.* Lahore : Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1977. UNC Davis Library BP130.4.T343 A63 1977. A prominent Shi'i commentary.

Ali, Syed Anwer. Qur'an: **The Fundamental Law of Human Life.** vols. 1-10. "A commentary [in consideration of] philosophical thought, scientific research, political, economical, and social developments." (Karachi, 1982-1994).

**An enlightening commentary into the light of the holy Qur'an,** by a group of Muslim scholars; translated by Abbas Sadr-`ameli; edited by Somaiyah Berrigan. Isfahan: Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali Library, 1994-. A recent Shi'i commentary from Iran. BP130.4 .E544 1994

Beeston, A.F.L. **Baidawi's Commentary on Surah 12 of the Qur'an: Text, Accompanied by an interpretive rendering and notes.** (Oxford, 1963). The Sura of Yusuf.

Bell, Richard. **A Commentary on the Qur'an,** ed. C. Edmund Bosworth and M.E.J. Richardson (Manchester : University of Manchester, 1991). A critical reinterpretation that rearranges the surahs in accordance with Bell's understanding of their historical order.

Behbudi, Muhammad Baqir. **The Quran: a new interpretation,** trans. Colin Turner (Richmond, England: Curzon, 1997). BP109 1997

Khu'i, Abu al-Qasim ibn 'Ali Akbar, 1899-. *Prolegomena to the Qur'an*. New York : Oxford University Press, 1998. Duke Divinity --- 297.12261 K45, B356, 1998

Kinberg, Naphtali. *A lexicon of al-Farra's terminology in his Qur'an commentary: with full definitions, English summaries, and extensive citations*. Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1996. UNC Davis BP130.4 .K46 1996

Qutb, Sayyid. **In the shade of the Qur'an**, translated by M.A. Salahi, A.A. Shamis (London : MWH, 1979). Translation of **Fi zilal al-Qur'an**, the best-selling commentary by a major ideologue of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.

Tabari, Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. Jarir al-. *The commentary on the Qur'an; being an abridged translation of Jami' al-bayan 'an ta'wil ay al-Qur'an*. Introduction and notes by J. Cooper; general editors, W.F. Madelung, A. Jones. London ; New York : Oxford University Press, 1987-. UNC Davis BP130.4 .T2713 1987.

Ma'rifah, M. H. (2005). *Talkhis al-Tamhid* (Vol. 1 & 2). Qum: Mu'assisah al-Nashr al-Islamiy.

Saeed, A. (2006). *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach*. UK: Routledge.

Esack, F. (2005). *The Qur'an: A User's Guide*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications.

Abu Zayd, N. H. (1998). *Al-Itijah al-'aqli fi al-Tafsir: Dirasah fi Qazayah al-Majaz 'inda al-Mu'tazilah*. Alexandria: Al-Markaz al-Taqaifi al-'arabi.

Arkoun, M. (1987). *Rethinking Islam today*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University.

Rahman, F. (1982). *Islam & modernity: transformation of an intellectual tradition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Rahman, F. (1986, May). Interpreting the Qur'an. *Inquiry*, pp. 45-49.

Rahman, F. (1998). Muslims and Modernity. In C. Kurzman, *Liberal Islam a source book* (pp. 304-318). New York: Oxford University Press.

Rahman, F. (2002). *Islam* (2nd ed.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

### **Commentaries in Arabic**

Alusi, Mahmud ibn 'Abd Allah, 1802 or 3-1853 or 4. *Ruh al-ma'ani fi tafsir al-Qur'an al-'azim wa-al-sab' al-mathani*. Beirut : Dar al-Fikr, 1983. Divinity --- 297.1227 A471, R933, 1983. An important Sufi commentary from Ottoman Baghdad.

'Askari, al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, d. 874. *Tafsir al-Imam Abi Muhammad al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-'Askari*. Bayrut: Mu'assasat al-Tarikh al-'Arabi; Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 2001. Duke Divinity -- 297.1226 A834, T124, 2001. Attributed to one of the Shi'i imams.

Bint al-Shati'. *al-Tafsir al-bayani lil-Qur'an al-karim*. Misr, Dar al-Ma'arif, 1977-1982. Divinity --- 297.122 B614, T124, 1977. By a leading Egyptian woman scholar of Islamic studies.

Fayd al-Kashani, Muhammad ibn Murtada', 1598 or 9-1680 or 81. *Tafsir al-Safi*. Bayrut, Lubnan : Mu'assasat al-A'lami lil-Matbu'at, 1979- . Divinity --- 297.1227 F282, T124, 1979. By a major Shi'i intellectual of Safavid Iran.

Firuzabadi, Muhammad ibn Ya‘qub, 1329-1414 or 15. *Tanwir al-miqbas min Tafsir Ibn ‘Abbas*. Multan : Faruqi Kutub Khanu, [1975 or 1976]. Divinity --- Quarto 297.1227 A135, F527, 1975

Ibn al-‘Arabi, 1165-1240. *Tafsir al-Qur’an al-karim*. Bayrut : Dar al-Andalus, 1978. Divinity --- 297.1227 I13, T124, 1978. Attributed to the great Andalusian Sufi, though probably by his commentator Kashani.

Ibn Kathir, Isma‘il ibn ‘Umar, ca. 1301-1373. *Tafsir ibn Kathir*. [196-] Divinity --- 297.122 I13T

"Jalalayn": *al-Qur’an al-karim : bi-al-rasm al-‘Uthmani. Wa-bi-hamishihi tafsir al-Jalalayn lil-Imamayn al-jalilayn Jalal al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Mahalli [wa-]Jalal al-Din ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr al-Suyuti. Mudhayyalan bi-Kitab Lubab al-nuqul fi asbab al-nuzul / lil-Suyuti*, ed.

Razi, Fakhr al-Din Muhammad ibn ‘Umar, 1149 or 50-1210. *al-Tafsir al-kabir, aw, Mafatih al-ghayb*. Bayrut, Lubnan : Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1990. Divinity --- Quarto 297.1227 R278, M187, 1990. A major philosophical commentary.

Wali Allah al-Dihlawi, 1702 or 3-1762 or 3. *al-Fauz ul-Kabir fi usul al-tafsir*. Delhi, [1963]. Library Service Center --- 297 W176F

Quranic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation, [John Wansbrough](#) (Author), [Andrew Rippin](#) (Translator, Foreword)