

Islam and Its Publics

As a part of the “Religion and Its Publics” Project funded by the Luce Foundation, this page offers a selective primer in materials that can speak to the concepts of religion and the public sphere, within *and* regarding Islam.

This list is intended for perusal by a diverse audience; meaning that while academics and scholars of Islam will find some introductory texts to be fairly basic and/or not the most recent outputs of their field, other readers can draw benefit from the introductory texts before moving on to more complex and specific ones.

There is no “view from nowhere” when attempting to report on such a vast and unending conversation. It is precisely that; a reporting of an ongoing conversation, but a reporting that has underlying commitments of its own. One basic commitment is to the proposition that any conversation which totally bifurcates the scholarly and the public/non-academic spheres, will limp, one-legged and anemic, even within its own sphere of inquiry. On the other hand, we respect equally the admission that a wholly muddled equation of scholarship with religious inspiration and/or living, may not allow for depth in either.

As such, we are not endorsing or vilifying any of the number of perspectives below. This is a mapping out of various dynamic conversations on the subject of Islam and Its Publics.

Un-Othering Islam: Critically Discursive Works

Starting genealogically would not be the best route. Should one start with literary histories of pre-Islamic Arabia, or with modernist Muslim reformers in India? Should one start with theology, or open up questions about foisting a Christian notion of “theology” upon Islam? For every thread unraveled, a thousand would be tangled.

Let us start, instead, by giving you some examples of modern works, works of our time, that try to move beyond the clear binaries of academic/faithful, secular/religious, West/East, liberated/oppressed (and in some cases, corresponding criticisms of such works). Then, we will move into works that are more univocally academic, performative, and religiously expressive.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.

A classic of post-colonial discourses. Most readers will be familiar with Said’s pushback against the notions of Islam and, more broadly, “the East” as objects of Western imperial gazing. This move opened up the space for non-Western and non-Christian intellectual perspectives to begin conversing on their own terms, within the academy and beyond.

Ahmad, Aijaz. *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*. London: Verso, 1992.

A less familiar work; the Marxist literary theorist Aijaz Ahmad had offered a critique of Said's *Orientalism*, arguing that the binaries of "East" and "West" are still operatively reproduced within a work like Said's.

Parry, Benita. (A Book Review of Aijaz Ahmad's *In Theory*) *History Workshop*, no. 36 (1993): 232-42.

A critique of a critique: Parry disassembles Ahmad's approach as being greatly inattentive to the central concerns and critical distinctions within Said's work.

Al-Sharmani, Mulki. 2014. "Islamic feminism: Transnational and National Reflections." *Approaching Religion*, Vol. 4, no.2, pp. 83-94.

A very useful and succinct summary of the various approaches to feminism from within Islam; the diversity and comprehensiveness of this survey, both challenge the notion that there is only one "true/genuine" form of Islamic feminism today.

Asad, Talal. 1993. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Asad uncovers how "religion" as a concept came to be stable and operational as a result of multiple historical and cultural trajectories that are deeply tied to Christianity and in engagement with Islam.

———. 2003. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press.

Asad shows us that the "Secular" and all those categories that come under it, are not neutral, unproblematic and uncontested terms without any histories. Rather, the category of the "secular" has multiple histories and many contingencies and power structures that lend it stability.

———. 2009. *Is Critique Secular: Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech*. Berkeley, Calif: Townsend Center for the Humanities, University of California.

Asad's more publicly accessible articulation of the same ideas presented in *Formations*, i.e., that the right to freedom of speech presupposes the right to be heard and to exclude certain groups from being heard.

Nasr, Seyyed Hossein (Chief Editor). *The Study Qur'an: A New Translation and Commentary*. New York, NY: HarperOne, an imprint of Collins Publishers, 2015.

In its own words, this book is a "Muslim project"; a collaboration of a team of ethnically and geographically diverse Muslim academics, to provide an Islamic complement to *The HarperCollins Study Bible*. By studying and presenting classical Islamic commentaries on the

Qur'an, this work provides readers with not simply a literalistic translation, but a scholarly inroad into the way Muslims have read the Qur'an over many centuries.

Koshul, Basit Bilal. "Studying the Western "Other" and Understanding the Islamic "Self": A Qur'anically Reasoned Perspective." Eds. Koshul, B. B., & Kepnes, S. (2007). *Scripture, Reason, and the Contemporary Islam-West Encounter: Studying the "Other", Understanding the "Self"*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

As the title of his essay suggests, Koshul offers a Qur'anically argued account of non-Islamic faiths and communities as capable of being offered hospitality and understanding within Islam, while maintaining key theological and societal differences.

Ipgrave, M. *Building a Better Bridge: Muslims, Christians, and The Common Good: A Record Of The Fourth Building Bridges Seminar Held In Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, May 15-18, 2005*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008.

A gathering of politicians, scholars, activists and writers from across Islam and Christianity (and Islamic Studies and Christian Studies) to sharpen and deepen the idea of "bridges" between the two faiths. Poverty, economic injustices and the environment, emerged as key concerns.

Qāḍī, Wadād and Victor Billeh. *Islam and Education: Myths and Truths*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2007.

Dispelling the idea that learning in Islamic communities was limited either to a strictly authoritarian memorization system or a lack of sophistication and rigor, this volume offers an essential picture of the diversity of lived forms of learning within and across Islam.

Qāḍī, Wadād. "Biographical Dictionaries as the Scholars' Alternative History of the Muslim Community". Endress, Gerhard and Abdou Filali-Ansary. *Organizing Knowledge: Encyclopaedic Activities in the Pre-Eighteenth Century Islamic World*. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Something called a "biographical dictionary", academic as it sounds, seems like the last place to look when finding Islamic accounts of public life. Yet, in this beautiful article, Qāḍī uncovers how a sub-group of lexicographers, within the more mainstream guild of Islamic historians, shaped an alternative, critical and perhaps even sub-altern notion of how to view, and practice, Islamic faith through history.

Introducing Islam: Select Narrative Histories

Unfortunately, "narrative" is berated today as a derogatory word; for many, it means, at best, creative and imaginative fiction and at worst, a downright fabrication. However, in this section, we are using narrative in the more original sense of *narration*; an account of things and events that, simply by virtue of trying to contain something as vast as Islamic history into one container, has to make editorial decisions about which aspects to detail and which to belabor a bit less.

Islamic history is a vast and differentiated reality, and all accounts of it will be selective in their own ways.

Ṭabarī. *The History of Al-Ṭabarī: Ta'rīkh Al-Rusul Wa'l Mulūk*. Albany: State University of New York, 1985-1999.

If both Muslims and scholars of Islam are asked to give “the one history” of Islam written by a Muslim, the answer is likely to be that of the 9th century (CE) historian al-Ṭabarī. This painstakingly translated multi-volume edition, compiled by a number of scholars over the years, gives anyone access to the rich and comprehensive vision of Ṭabarī’s Islamic history, which begins as far back as Adam and Eve and ends with the political/caliphal events of his time.

Endress, Gerhard. *An Introduction to Islam*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988.

Primer in the essential events, facts and timelines of Islamic history. Endress wisely avoids an overly normative bent to give the reader as much historical mapping as possible, which is the main purpose of this work.

Hodgson, Marshall G. S. *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization (Volumes I-III)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.

The best intellectual introduction to the normative pulse of Islam for a non-Muslim with no prior knowledge/inclination; sketches the civilizational moods of Islam as it coursed through history. Ample historical detail is provided to support every argument/sketch; this book is meant to be read not as the “final narrative” about Islamic history but a richest embodiment of a fearlessly situated method; Hodgson teaches you how to normatively yet generously approach Islamic faith, practice and politics, from an openly non-Islamic and humanist perspective.

Rosenthal, Franz. *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam*. Leiden: Brill, 1970.

As with other religious traditions, Islam develops sub-orientations towards knowledge and God, ranging from the philosophical to the legal. This work sketches out the epistemological leanings of these varying religious, ethical and intellectual streams.

Bulliet, Richard W. *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

The fact that the term “Islam-Christian civilization” sounds unnatural to anyone picking up this book today, is a commendation to both its necessity and creativity. However, Bulliet’s account is neither ungrounded nor a modernist “reading too much” into medieval times. Instead, he bases his narrative on legitimate historical precedents within Islam and Christianity.

***The New Cambridge History of Islam, Vol. 1-6*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.**

An ambitious and comprehensive academic history of the Islamic world, covering terrain from the early centuries to modernity, and written by a number of authoritative scholars in the field.

Robinson, Francis. *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

By offering points of visual access into key moments in Islamic history, this work allows a student of Islam to remain anchored and interested in broad civilizational moods/currents and their intellectual products, without getting overwhelmed by the multiplicity of details.

Lapidus, Ira M. *A History of Islamic Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Arguably the most useful resource for anyone looking to access a “bird’s eye view” of Islamic community and history (highly selective and limited though such a demand will be, as noted at the outset), with a grounding in essential events and details. The tripartite structure of early Islamic societal consolidation/formation, followed by expansion/dissemination and then reaction/adjustment to modernity, remains a useful way of beginning to talk about Islamic history to those unfamiliar with it.

Speaking Islamically: Ways of Approaching “The Public”

After recognizing the insights offered by the previous two sections, i.e., that no inquirer can approach the subject of Islam today without grappling with the ways that pre-existing power structures shape their critical questions, and that there can be no exclusive, all-encompassing view of what Islam is or has been from any one individual, it becomes possible to ask what views of public life and community one can discover within Islamic texts and contexts. One may need to keep open the possibility that there is no sharp binary between “public” and “private”, and that it may be unreasonable to foist modern categories like “secular” and “religious”, onto pre-modern Islamic texts and resources.

- Some Readings On “Umma” and “Shariah”

Reinhart, A. Kevin. 1983. "Islamic Law as Islamic Ethics". *The Journal of Religious Ethics*. 11, no. 2: 186-203.

If every news anchor, public speaker and politician in America were made to read this seminal article, they would no longer continue to use the term “shariah law” with such unproblematic and unreflective ease. Reinhart’s concise and beautiful presentation teaches us anyone who wishes to study Islamic communities something essential and underappreciated, even decades after its publication: “shariah” is one term for the Divine entry into human ethical life, and there is no “rulebook” for it; rather, Islamic communities have creatively and judiciously negotiated the scope of legal endeavors within human life, over the course of many centuries.

Hallaq, Wael B. *The Origins and Evolution of Islamic Law*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Hallaq's richly grounded and well-supported account of the Islamic legal tradition, while primarily a scholarly description, can be read as a complication of the prevalent public notion that somehow Islamic legal scholarship must in "its essence" be wedded to the desire for its own statecraft and political dominance. As Hallaq shows, the relationship between legal scholars and political actors over the centuries has been, to say the least, paradoxical, illuminating and complicated.

Vogel, Frank E., P. J. Bearman, Wolfhart Heinrichs, and Bernard G. Weiss. *The Law Applied: Contextualizing the Islamic Shari'a : a Volume in Honor of Frank E. Vogel*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2008.

A reader may ask: how is Islamic law "actually applied?" This volume offers multiple, variously located answers to that question, showing how the practical forefronts of Islamic legal reasoning, both in classical periods and in modernity, were deeply tied to, and in engagement with, its broader social structures.

Denny, Frederick Mathewson. *Islam and the Muslim Community*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987.

A basic primer into some of the key events and terminologies one needs to know before delving into the question of what community means in/for Islam.

Donner, Fred McGraw. *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam*. Cambridge, Mass: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010.

An original, and well-argued, account of the origins of a Muslim community; Donner advances the thesis that in the socially operational category of "believer" in the very early Islamic period, there may have been a more inclusive capacity than is normally assumed, and this may have pre-included certain Christian and Jewish groups in its fold.

Dakake, Maria Massi. *The Charismatic Community: Shi'ite Identity in Early Islam*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007.

Dakake's masterful study explores the early Shi'ite formation and consolidation of a community, exposing how this consolidation is not simply a marginal narrative within Islam, but tied inextricably to some of the most basic events and spiritual distinctions within Islamic history.

Siddiqui, Mona. *The Good Muslim: Reflections on Classical Islamic Law and Theology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

A powerful exploration of classical Islamic texts, both legal and theological, on a range of subjects from divorce and alcohol to slaughter and friendship. The beauty of Siddiqui's study lies in its ability to unveil the dynamics by which legal and theological reasoning on such issues

would proceed; instead of being univocal, deterministic and unyielding to change, such reasoning would often have a rich sense of fallibilism, polyvocal environments, and societal needs/changes.

- *Beyond Legalism: Some More Communal Minds and Voices*

Cornell, Vincent J. *Voices of Islam*. Westport, Conn: Praeger Publishers, 2007.

The subtitle of this series, “Voices of Art, Beauty and Medicine” conveys the breadth of its scope and its commitment to a wide and deep range of Islamic religious life, thought and praxis. The Series Editor, Prof. Vincent Cornell, aptly notes that while it is a truism to say that Islam is one of the most misunderstood religions in the world, it is also one of the most studied religions (vii), and yet, the full internal richness and diversity of its self-expressions is not fully appreciated. This series makes a helpful and corrective contribution in that regard.

Heck, Paul L. 2006. “Mysticism as Morality: The Case of Sufism”. *Journal of Religious Ethics*. 34, no. 2: 253-286.

Heck’s timely article dispelled the comfortable, post-9/11 notion that there were two types of Islam, “peaceful” and “violent”, and that Sufism would fall into the former category while more law-based aspects of Islam would tend towards the latter. Heck reminds us that Islamic mysticism and Islamic law are inextricably wedded, in ways that cannot be separated neatly as analytic or political heuristics.

Kurzman, Charles. *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

If Heck’s article provides “liberal” views of Islam with good reason for pause and introspection, then this series serves as a well-reasoned counterpoint; the wide selection of essays together lean towards the point that liberalism, in a contemporary, political sense, and Islam, are not incompatible.

Rahman, Fazlur. *Islam & Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*. 1984.

———. *Islam*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.

———. *Major Themes of the Qur’ān*. Minneapolis, Minn: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1994.

Rahman’s works, while all providing well-researched content and well-reasoned argument, are especially interesting here not for their claims but for their method. In contrast to contemporary academic methodologies in religious studies, which nuance and qualify every claim, Rahman does not shy away from comparing Kant to medieval Islamic thought, or from making normative claims about what Islam is/should be. As such, he provides a modern model of engagement with the Islamic tradition, which is contrary (and prior to) to most of the contemporary scholarly community.

Izutsu, Toshihiko. *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān*. Montreal: McGill University, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University Press, 1966.

A linguistic approach to the Qur'an which sketches out predominant theological and ethical concepts in a well-structured and cohesive manner.

Izutsu, Toshihiko. *Sufism and Taoism: A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

Although contemporary suspicions about comparative projects center around fears regarding insufficiently deep research, this comparative work is one of the most illuminative and non-reductive introductions to Sufism, particularly to the work of Ibn al-Arabi. Non-experts and scholars of Islam alike have found this text to be generative for Sufi Studies.

Sells, Michael Anthony, and Carl W. Ernst. *Early Islamic Mysticism: Sufi, Qur'an, Miraj, Poetic and Theological Writings*. New York: Paulist Press, 1996.

This volume makes accessible some of the formative texts and practices of the Islamic mystical tradition, i.e., Sufism, thereby providing insight into the communal formation of a sub-tendency within the broader Islamic tradition.

Ernst, Carl W. *The Shambhala Guide to Sufism*. Boston, Mass: Shambhala, 1997.

A great introduction to the internal richness and holism of the Sufi tradition, ranging from bodily praxis and art to text/scripture and creedal affirmation.

Renard, John. *Historical Dictionary of Sufism*. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2005.

Renard provides a comprehensive overview of the major figures, texts, and regions of the vast and historically enduring Sufi tradition.

Gutas, Dimitri. *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early 'Abbāsīd Society (2nd-4th/8th-10th Centuries)*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Gutas has provided the most well-knit account of what is known as the Arab "translation movement"; of selective, canonical Greek texts into Arabic. Gutas details how political, cultural and intellectual spheres intertwined to produce one of the most formative periods in human intellectual history.

El-Rouayheb, Khaled, and Sabine Schmidtke. *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Philosophy*. 2017.

An introduction to Islamic philosophy centered on themes, methods and issues in the tradition, rather than being region or figure-centered. This volume also provides a comprehensive survey of Islamic philosophy that takes the reader through Aristotle, to modern Islamic philosophers.

Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Islamic Philosophy from Its Origin to the Present: Philosophy in the Land of Prophecy*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006.

A good introduction to the Islamic philosophical tradition from one of the most important voices in contemporary Islamic Studies; Prof. Nasr is both a scholar and a faithful Muslim and provides a dual perspective on the tradition.

Mahdi, Muhsin. *Alfarabi and the Foundation of Islamic Political Philosophy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

A well-researched comprehensive introduction into the work of the founder of Islamic political philosophy, Al Farabi. This work gives an insight into complexity and internal divergences of the Islamic political traditions.

Böwering, Gerhard. *Islamic Political Thought: An Introduction*. 2015.

A riveting introduction to Islamic political thought as embedded in traditions and practices, both Islamic and pre-Islamic. This work turns our attention towards political thought as continually shifting, both appropriating from pre-existing social structures and shaping them.

Meisami, Julie Scott. *The Sea of Precious Virtues = Bahr Al-Favā'id : a Medieval Islamic Mirror for Princes*. Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1991.

A well-rendered English translation of a Persian medieval Islamic manual for princely instruction; a useful text to gauge the depth and extent of the Islamic political genres, ranging from governance to self-cultivation.

On Islamic "Tradition" and "Practice" in Modernity

Mahmood, Saba. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005.

Saba Mahmood's ethnographic vignettes of women's piety movements in contemporary Egypt teach us, not unlike Asad, that specific "Western" notions of women's liberation and agency are not universal but deeply contingent, and in masking this contingency, we risk losing these women's self-understanding and self-formation and thereby replicating the colonial gaze.

Lockman, Zachary. *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

If Mahmood problematizes the all-too-prevalent discourse about "liberating" Muslim women from the shackles of Islam, then Lockmann, in a similar vein, soberly unmasks the hyped category of "Islamic terrorism", placing it within its political and historical contexts.

Afsaruddin, Asma. *Contemporary Issues in Islam*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015.

True to the title of her work, Asfaruddin unravels the deep and complex histories behind some of the most misunderstood and oft-used Islamic terms, including “shariah” and “jihad”. This work provides sorely needed scholarly sobriety and historical grounding in what is otherwise an ill-informed overusage of “buzzwords”.

Being Muslim: Some Works of Faith, Art and Activism

Theoretically, anything that has been produced by the Islamic tradition could fall under such a category. This list is not exhaustive by any means, and merely gives a small glimpse into what contemporary academics often call the “lived lives” of the faithful.

The Qur’ān. Translated by Alan Jones. 2007.

The pinnacle of Islamic theological, ethical, artistic (whether visual/written/oral) perfection, no words suffice to describe the place of the Qur’an in the lives of Muslims, and its status as a proof text for Islamic scholars. This translation by Alan Jones renders the Arabic into crisp, modern English, in contrast to earlier, more ornate English translations like Pickthall’s (there are a proliferating number and type of commentaries on the Qur’an. It is simply not possible to pick one out for the purposes of this brief list).

**Recitation of Surah Muzammil (a chapter of the Qur’an) by a child; on YouTube:
<https://youtu.be/k4HrUFibzyI>**

Appreciating the import and beauty of the Qur’an within Muslim life requires an appreciation of its recitation. Here, a gifted young boy provides a recitation of Surah Muzammil, rendered powerfully, syllable by syllable (Chapter 73 of the Qur’an)

**Nawawī, ‘Izz al-Dīn Ibrāhīm and Denys Johnson-Davies. *An-Nawawī’s Forty Hadith*.
Lahore: Ahab Publications, 1979.**

Although the sayings of Muhammad do not occupy the same stature as the Qur’an (which Muslims believe to be the unadulterated word of God), these sayings (hadith, pl. ahadith) play a significant role in shaping practical, everyday ethics and practices of self-formation. This selection of forty ahadith by the 13th century jurist an-Nawawī provides a screenshot of prophetic sayings and their relevance in Muslim life.

**“Qasida Burda Sharif with translation- Mehmood Ul Hassan Ashrafi” uploaded to
YouTube.com on July 30, 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IG4EHKErVbw>**

This is a rendition of the “Qasida Burda” or “Ode of the Mantle”; a popular devotional poem and tune in the love of the Prophet Muhammad (upon him be peace). Although the ode originally came to the Sufi Imam al-Busiri (d. 1294) in a dream, through which Muhammad healed him and granted him a mantle, it is extremely popular throughout the Islamic world till today. It has been translated into many languages, including Turkish, Berber, Urdu and Persian.

Mohan, T. N., Angela Burchett, Shabnam Shukhdev, Bob Losure, Timothy George, Amina Wadud, Ibrahim Kalin, and Timothy George. *Islam and its five pillars*. Digital Video Collection. 2005.

An accessible video introduction to the praxis of Islam; the “five pillars” of witnessing God’s Oneness, performing daily prayers, fasting in the month of Ramadan, giving of one’s possessions to the poor, and performing a pilgrimage to Mecca (if one has the means). It is worth mentioning, contrary to some Western notions, that no centralized authority “kicks out” an individual from an Islamic community if they do not meet the expectations of these pillars perfectly (see Hallaq and Weiss, above).

Mehdi, Anisa, John B. Bredar, Keith David, Taghi Amirani, Yasir Khan, Fidelma O’Leary, Ismail Mahbob, and Khalil Mandhlazi. *Inside Mecca*. [Washington D.C.]: National Geographic Television & Film, 2003.

A poignant videographic account of the diversity and multi-national reach of modern Islam, as told through the journey of a pilgrimage to Mecca.

Loeffler, Reinhold. *Islam in Practice: Religious Beliefs in a Persian Village*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1988.

A rich, ethnographic inroad to the different types of Muslim lives in one Persian, predominantly Shi’a village. It may be assumed that the “village-folk” living in Muslim-majority countries are more homogeneous than urban, metropolitan areas. This narrative challenges that notion, unveiling the polar internal differentiations within just one village.

Chebel, Malek, and Laziz Hamani. *Symbols of Islam*. Paris: Assouline, 1997.

For those who are not familiar with Islam or have never lived in a Muslim community, this collection of various Islamic symbols, which draws upon both architecture and doctrine, is useful.

Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, and Reynold Alleyne Nicholson. *The Mathnawī of Jalālu'ddīn Rūmī*. London: Printed by Messrs. E.J. Brill, Leiden, for the Trustees of the "E. J.W. Gibb memorial" and published by Messrs. Luzac & Co, 1925.

Rumi’s *Mathawi*, a didactic-narrative work composed in rhymed couplets, takes up 6 volumes in this English translation and is one of the enduring classics of Islamic civilization, nurturing the hearts and imagination of “laypeople” and scholars alike. It is said that the Persian poet Jami (d. 1492) dubbed the *Mathnawi* to be “the Qur’an in Persian.” Although Muslims do not take any other work to be equivalent to the Qur’an, such a comment captures the impact of Rumi’s poetry in the Persianate Islamic world and beyond.

Frembgen, Jürgen Wasim. *The Friends of God: Sufi Saints in Islam: Popular Poster Art from Pakistan*. Oxford: Oxford University, 2006.

An accessible, illustrated volume of some of the images that permeate Muslim lives today, including posters and shrines. Contrary to misperceptions about Islam being a religion against art, this volume shows how the daily lives of Muslims in a country like Pakistan are inundated with color and complexity.

Bullock, Katherine. *Muslim Women Activists in North America: Speaking for Ourselves*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005.

A collection of autobiographical essays by Muslim activists in North America; provides useful insight into the problems that are confronted by Muslims living in North America and beyond.

Wiktorowicz, Quintan. *The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and State Power in Jordan*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001.

An essential read for anyone wondering how Islamic activism could define, expand and achieve its goals within the limits of a modern nation-state.

“UpFront- Muslim Americans and US liberal values”- uploaded by Al Jazeera English to YouTube.com on December 15, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kP3uL6NQLRY>

This conversational debate between Linda Sarsour, who is perhaps the most influential North American Muslim activist today, and Yasir Qadhi, a Muslim public intellectual, is very useful because it highlights the tensions that can exist between both of these vocations. Sarsour’s more general, community-based concerns interact with Qadhi’s more specific, intellectual ones. A third counterpoint is provided by Mehdi Hassan, a British Muslim journalist who moderated the conversation.

“Mehdi Hasan | Islam Is A Peaceful Religion | Oxford Union” uploaded by Oxford Union to YouTube.com on July 3, 2013.

At the time of its release, this video exploded over social media, as evidenced by the greater than 2 million views that it has received. In the halls of Oxford, the journalist Mehdi Hassan provided an articulate and rhetorically powerful dismantling of the unjust and overly simplistic question: “Is Islam peaceful?”

“Art of the Islamic World” under “Arts and Humanities” at khanacademy.org, 2017.

An accessible, five-part online overview of the artistic achievements and tendencies of the Islamic world, from the Kaaba in Mecca to the Taj Mahal in India.

Fateh Ali Khan, Nusrat. “Tum Ek Gorakh Dhanda Ho” (You are One Tricky Business) with English subtitles. Uploaded to YouTube.com on August 15, 2011.

Lest a reader think that architecture and classical poetry are the only prevailing art forms in Islam, this musical rendition of a poem by the great Pakistani maestro Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan,

shows how neither music, nor a complex and critical relationship with God, are alien to Islamic modes of artistic expression.

“BBC reporter crying after hearing the adhan”, uploaded to YouTube.com on February 20, 2013.

It is fitting to put, as the final item on this list, a (likely Muslim uploader’s) view of a BBC reporter’s reaction to the Muslim call for prayer. The title of the upload suggests emphasis on the capacity of the azaan/adhaan (which is the Islamic prayer call) to invoke reactions even in non-Muslims. The scene itself is useful for those unfamiliar with Islam, since the echoing of many calls to prayer, from various small, local mosques, and through the narrow streets, is quite a common experience for the residents of urban Muslim areas.