

# Courses & Curricula

## Islam in Asia

Faculty of Asian Studies  
Southeast Asia Centre  
Asian History Centre, A.N.U.

### *Islam in Asia/SWA 2010*

A new advanced-year unit is to be offered in 1988 under the aegis of these two Centres.

It covers the rise of Islam, the development of its characteristic doctrines & institutions in West Asia and subsequently its expansion and socio-cultural role in South and Southeast Asia from medieval times until the present day.

It is designed to be relevant to the degree structures of students whose course combinations include units in History, Asian History, Religious Studies and the Social Sciences.

*Islam in Asia* is a course relevant to many of the issues in the modern world, for which it provides a historical perspective. It is taught by a team of specialists in Islam, as a religion and in its regional manifestations in South and Southeast Asia.

Course Convenor:  
A.H. Johns

## A new Master's degree in South Australia

1988 saw the first intake of students at the South Australian College of Advanced Education into its Master of Education degree program. The course at present allows for two areas of specialization, one of which is Religion Education. The program has been devised to meet the needs of persons in leadership positions in Religion Education programs either in Catholic, Independent or State schools or at an adult level. 14 students have commenced studies.

The course is interesting, not only because it is a first for SACAE, but also because of its distinctive and experimental design.

The structure of the course provides advanced coursework and supervised thesis/project work over four part-time years. Year 1: Constructions of Education, and Issues in Religion Education. Year 2:

Advanced Studies in Religion and Education. Year 3: Issues and Methods in Educational Research, and Preparation for Thesis/Project. Year 4: Thesis/Project.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the program is its negotiated contract approach. This approach is followed with all students, both those who attend internal classes and the students who will be studying by correspondence (the first intake into the external mode of the program will be in 1989). Through this approach all students, in effect, design their own curriculum in consultation with a staff supervisor. Choices of particular topics have to be made within reasonably specific parameters. For example, in the second year of the program (Advanced Studies) students negotiate topics for specific investigation from 3 of the following 4 broad areas of study:

Phenomena of Religion (myth, ritual etc.); Critical Studies (philosophy, sociology etc.); Religious Traditions (Judaism, Islam etc.); Christianity (Theology, Biblical Studies etc.)

All studies are required to be related to Religion Education. Thus a student electing, for example, to study the *Haj* in Islam might also go on to a critical review of how the *Haj* is presented in some curriculum materials.

Another feature of the award is that it has been designed explicitly and intentionally for in-service, part-time students. It is a 4-year, part-time program with no provision for full-time study. It is in-service also in the sense that there is a very strong encouragement (perhaps insistence is closer to the mark) that students submit their own practices, programs and materials in Religion Education to critical scrutiny in the light of their scholarly studies.

The course of study is also structured to ensure that all students undertake studies in religious traditions other than their own. They are also required to study both of the major forms that Religion Education takes; R.E. as "faith development" and R.E. as "religion/religious studies".

The "research into one's own practice" which characterises so much of the award is carried over into the final thesis/project year. Students can, if they choose, present a fairly traditional thesis. But they are

encouraged to submit a critical evaluation of some project in which they are actually involved, such as the preparation and trialling of curriculum materials or the introduction of a significant curriculum innovation.

While the program has a strong emphasis on one-to-one teaching and learning, it also has a corporate character. Where students are working in the same situation or on the same topic they are free to work collaboratively and even, at times, co-author their work. Regular seminars and teleconferences (for external students) are held through which students can share their findings and have their work subjected to critical scrutiny by both the staff and their fellow students.

We anticipate a number of teething problems, especially in 1989 when external students are enrolled. To try to anticipate and remedy as many of these as possible, we are asking the internal students in 1988 to be 'guinea pigs' by having them undertake some of the most problematic aspects of the course as if they were external students (e.g. by replacing some seminars with teleconferences).

The eleven faculty members teaching in Religion Studies at three SACAE campuses make up the teaching team. The overall Coordinator is Dr. Normal Habel at Underdale Campus.

— Basil Moore  
South Australia College  
of Advanced Education

## Women and Religion Courses in Australia

Alana Bayley  
AASR Women's Caucus, South Australia

At the A.A.S.R. Conference in August 1987, in Melbourne, a decision was made by the Women's Caucus to compile information relating to courses on Women and Religion in tertiary institutions, church education institutes, adult education centres, theological colleges and centres for spirituality.

This is the first edition of these courses. Material has been summarized and for brevity, lists of recommended readings omitted. Further information will follow in future REVIEWS. A.A.S.R. members are asked to continue sending material so a record can be kept of Women and Religion courses.

Information for publication can be sent to the AASR Women's Caucus, c/- Alana Bayley, 36 Penno Parade South, Blackwood, S.A. 5051

### New South Wales

The University of Sydney  
Centre for Continuing Education

*She is to Keep Silent: An Introduction to  
Feminist Religious Thought*

Week 1: a) Course Housekeeping and Overview. b) Introductions of teachers and students. c) Overview of the course: putting the course into context historically, internationally, locally in terms of both feminism and religion.

Week 2: Mary Daly: Overview of Daly's critique of the Judaeo-Christian tradition and introduction to some of her religious symbols.

Week 3: Rosemary Radford Ruether: Analysis of dualism in relation to feminist and other liberation theologies.

Week 4: Phyllis Trible: Retelling Bible stories in the light of a feminist understanding.

Week 5: Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza: A search for a feminist way of reading the Bible.

Week 6: Starhawk and Carol Christ: Women's spirituality and Goddess religion.

Week 7: Australian feminists: An exploration of some Australian writing that expresses a feminist religious consciousness.

Week 8: Where to from here?

Co-ordinators:  
Erin White and Marie Tulip

University of Sydney  
School of Divinity

*M.Th Course: Religious Symbolism and the  
Feminine Aspects of God*

Lectures 1-2: Outline of course. The contemporary recognition that theology and religion work through the language of symbols. The two levels of religious language.

3-4: Reading and discussion of Tillich's essay "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols" and responses to it.

5-6: Acted symbolism. Cult and liturgy. Illustrations from Ps 24, 68, 84, 66, II Sam 6, Ps 132.

7-8: Recurring biblical symbols, their background and function. a) Nature. Tree, garden, desert; dragon, lion, bird. b) Human. Creation, providence, love, redemption, revelation.

9-10: Papers by students on the value and dangers of religious symbolism.

11-12: Reading and discussion of Mary Daly, *The Church and Second Sex*, and *Beyond God the Father*.

13-14: Reading and discussion of Rosemary Ruether, *The New Woman/New Earth*, and *Womanguides*.

15-16: Reading and discussion of Theodore Roszak, "The Hard and the Soft: The Force of Feminism in Modern Times" (in Roszak, *Masculine/Feminine*).

17-18: Reading and discussion of Sally Kennedy, *Faith and Feminism*.

19-20: Reading and discussion of Barbara Thiering, *Created Second? and Deliver Us from Eve* (ed).

21-22: Reading and Discussion of Margaret Franklin, *The Force of the Feminine*.

23-24: The theological significance of the feminist movement. The revolution in God language and God concepts.

25-26: Papers by students.

Co-ordinator:  
Barbara Thiering

## United Theological College North Parramatta

### *Ministry with Women*

Attention will be focussed on such issues as the role of women in society and the Church, women's identity and self-esteem, consciousness raising for women and men, life stages of women, and on particular pastoral situations (e.g. abortion, miscarriage, rape). The course will involve experiential learning, reflection and discussion. Guest lecturers will be invited to share insights and experiences on particular issues.

Co-ordinator:  
Colleen O'Reilly Stewart  
Lecturer in Pastoral Theology  
U.T.C. Centre for Ministry,  
16 Masons Drive, North Parramatta,  
N.S.W. 2151

### *An Introduction to Feminist Theology*

#### Objectives:

To introduce students to the scope of feminist scholarship with regard to the Bible and the history of Christianity. To increase students' appreciation of the complexity of hermeneutical questions, one of which is gender. To help students become aware of the ways in which Christianity functions as an ideology.

#### Content:

This course explores the critiques and constructs of the principal feminist theologians working today. Mary Daly provides a sociology of knowledge that exposes the patriarchal intent of many Christian symbols. Rosemary Radford Ruether analyses the dualism of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Phyllis Trible's careful exegesis of certain Biblical stories exposes the sexist bias in many accepted interpretations and translations. Elizabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza's search for a feminist way of reading the Bible leads to a theological reconstruction of early Christian origins. The conflicts between these authors will be discussed as well as some of the conflicts between feminist theology and other theologies. The course will focus attention on (i) the relative weight that each scholar gives to text and experience and (ii) the tension between a hermeneutics of suspicion and a hermeneutics of proclamation. The course will also consider briefly some relevant Australian writing.

Co-ordinator:  
Erin White



**Union Theological Institute  
Hunters Hill, N.S.W. 2110**

*Issues in Church History: Women in  
Australian Literature*

**Proposed Order of Topics:**

**Week 1:**

Introductions of Course Participants.

**Topic:** What is "patriarchy"? What is "feminism"?

**Weeks 2-10:**

This course is based on feminist works from overseas (section A) and Australian works (section B). Material from both sections will be considered each week. Our aim will be to relate the overseas feminist thought to the Australian context. All works are to be related to the students' own experience.

**Section A:** This part of the course is concerned with the responses and challenges of contemporary feminist scholars to patriarchal religion. The following topics will be presented and discussed:

- Introduction to work of Feminist Scholars of Religion.
- Analysis of Dualism in Judaeo-Christian Tradition — Rosemary Radford Ruether.
- Demystifying Religious Symbols — Mary Daly.
- A History of Women-church, Then and Now — Rosemary Radford Ruether.
- A Hermeneutics of Suspicion — Elizabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza.
- A Hermeneutics of Remembrance — Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza.
- A Feminist Eye for Biblical Detail — Phyllis Trible.
- A Current Map of Feminism and Religion — Sara Maitland.
- Feminist Liturgy or a Hermeneutics of Celebration.

**Section B:** This part of the course seeks to discover in what ways (i) patriarchal and (ii) feminist consciousness are expressed in Australian Christianity. An overview of Australian works on religion

that could be described as feminist will be presented. Further presentations will be made by course participants.

*Co-ordinator:  
Erin White*

**Sydney College of Divinity**

*The Symbolism of Evil in Australia*

Proposed course for the M.Th. in the Sydney College of Divinity; this course includes the theme of sexism, analysed in the framework of Paul Ricoeur's *The Symbolism of Evil*.

**Objectives:**

To critique some Australian expressions of evil in the light of Paul Ricoeur's classic work, *The Symbolism of Evil* (1960). To develop in students an awareness of metaphorical theology and its implications for Australian culture. To awaken students' sensitivities to expressions of evil that are characteristically Australian. To encourage students to consider implications for ministry thereby promoting a renewal of religious experience.

*Coordinator:  
Erin White*

## Queensland

**Institute of Faith Education  
Brisbane  
(Institute for Adult Education — Catholic  
Archdiocese)**

*Women in Scripture*

**Aim of the Course:**

To reclaim the stories of women which have become hidden within the text of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Canon of the New Testament; and to reappropriate these stories creatively as the source of

new visions and new dreams in our on-going journey towards and commitment to the biblical view of God's new creation.

#### Course Outline:

Introduction/Some Theoretical Considerations/The ForeMothers of Israel: Ancestral Narratives; Gen. 2 & 3, 16, 17, 18, 21, 27, 29, 30, 38, Ex 1 & 2, Ex 15, Num 12

Woman as Agent/Woman as Victim; Judg. 5:1, Sam 1 & 2/ Judg. 11: 29-40; 19: 1-30; 2 Sam 13: 1-22

Stories of Women/Language of God; Esther, Judith/Genesis 1:27

Women Around Jesus; Matt. 8: 14-15; 9: 18-26; 15: 21-28; 26: 6-13; 27: 54-55; 61; 28: 1-10 & parts Luke 1 & 2; 8: 1-3; 10: 38-42; 13:10-17; 15: 8-10; John 2: 1-11; 4; 11; 20: 1-18

#### Women in the Pauline Mission:

Woman as Agent/Woman as Victim; Rom 16: 1-16; Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 11: 2-16; 14: 34-36; 1 Tim. 2: 8-15; Household Codes: Col. 3: 18-25; Eph 5: 21-33; 1 Pt. 3

*Co-ordinator:*

*Elaine Wainwright  
Pius XII Seminary*

## South Australia

### South Australian College of Advanced Education

#### *Women, Religion and Feminist Thought*

The history and development of ideas in 20th century feminism and their impact on legal and social change. Feminist critiques of religion, and the variety of responses from within and without Judaism and Christianity. Gender and religious symbolism. Problems of universalism in feminist ideology and the position of Asian, Islamic, black and poor women in relation to their religio/cultural context both in their own cultures/subcultures

and as citizens of Western cultures.  
Feminism as religion — the debate.

*Co-ordinator:  
Penny McKibbin*

### Catholic Adult Education Service Archdiocese of Adelaide

#### *Issues Concerning Women and the Church*

A look at today's women's voices and issues in society, especially in the institutions of family and Church. Our method will be to discern our own issues and to use appropriate theory and reflect together on the stance of Jesus towards women and their stance towards him, according to gospel stories.

#### *Women's Perspective on Theology*

An opportunity to explore the theology emerging as women theologians and scripture scholars ask new questions of the scriptures and our tradition. This is an advanced course requiring set reading so some previous study in New Testament is advisable.

*Coordinators:*

*Sr. Patricia Fox RSM  
Sr. Christine Burke IBVM*

#### *Women, Prayer and a Retreat by the Sea*

The course is designed to help women who may feel tentative about coming to a course on prayer but are interested in how prayer and their life today can be better understood and integrated, through the combination of an introductory retreat experience, preparation and follow-up sessions.

*Coordinators:*

*Sr. Kate Conley RSM  
Pauline Small*

*Overall coordinator:  
Sr. Janette Gray RSM*

## Parkin Wesley Uniting Church Theological College

### *Women and Men as People of God*

An experimental course first taught in 1987 with 20 students (10 men, 10 women), most of them candidates for the ministry.

The aims of the course are to consider biblical, theological and ethical concepts particularly from the perspective of women's experience; to recognize the ways in which culture and the structures of society have excluded women, and the church's role in this process; to examine personal attitudes to the changing roles of women and men.

Course content includes study of feminist theology, role identification, dualism, mutuality in women/men relationships, inclusive language and implications for the church today. It is hoped that this course will become a permanent part of the college curriculum.

Teaching team includes Heather Crosby, Rita Wilmshurst, Sue King and Deirdre Palmer.

*Co-ordinator:*  
*Barbara Horne*

### Womandala Centre 20 Second Street Bowden SA 5007

Womandala is a womanspirit study and exploration centre linked to a Gallery of womanspirit resources, providing a women's spirituality networking service and a Womanspace available for groups and one-to-ones as well as a program of courses, celebrations and consultation opportunities.

Developing from courses facilitated by Thea Rainbow in 1983, and then Thea Rainbow and Shiela Eime in 1984, the centre was named Womandala in 1985. The new name is a play upon the word 'Mandala' and the centre is now the project of a collective of women, supported

financially by the Womanspirit Network in S.A. The aim of Womandala is to affirm the wholeness of women.

Courses currently being offered include:

- Women and Meditation
- Meeting Ancient Goddesses and Naming Our Own Experience and Power
- Talking About Birth
- Writing and Sharing Our Stories
- Winter Goddessing

Resources in *Gaia's Gallery* include posters and notecards of Goddesses and ancient images of women.

Women may obtain regular information, including *The Rippling Web* Newsletter by becoming a subscriber or sponsor.

*Co-ordinators include:*  
*Thea Rainbow*  
*Shiela Eime*

### Bethany Women's Centre for Creative Spirituality 225 Cross Road Cumberland Park, S.A. 5041

Bethany tries to outline the spiritual life in psychological and feminist frames and offers a variety of weekly classes and weekend workshops to all women seeking wholeness. Insights from the great world religious traditions are integrated into the Bethany programs, as these illuminate understanding.

Comprehensive six-month modules are offered in:

The Sufi Eneagram  
Buddhist Meditation

Weekend workshops are offered in areas such as:

Clowning as Ministry  
Dance as Worship  
Poetry as Written Expression of Divinity

The work of current women Feminist Theologians is studied as background for emerging forms of personal and collective feminist spirituality. All these programs are seen as pathways to the Divine.

An individual consultancy service for women is also available.

*Co-ordinator and  
Personal Growth Consultant:  
Margaret Cain O.P.*

## Victoria

### La Trobe University

#### *Women and Religion*

**Introduction to Course:** The interaction of religion and culture; religion as a reinforcing factor in a male dominated society. Feminist approaches to religion: de-patriarchalising the literature and traditions.

**Woman in the Judaeo-Christian tradition.**

**Lecture and Seminar Topics:**

- Woman in the early Old Testament period: the age of the patriarchs, the exodus, conquest and settlement to the establishment of the monarchy: emphasis on the positive aspects of the feminine.
- The influence of Canaanite religion as seen in the historical works and the prophetic literature of the monarchical period: emphasis on the negative aspects of the feminine.
- Genesis 2-3 and the mythological background. Woman as a source of sin.
- The laws of Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy as they relate to women: Leviticus 12; 21:10-21; Numbers 5:11-31; 27: 1-11; 36:1-12; 30: 1-6; Deuteronomy 5:21; 22:13-30; 24:1-4; 25:5-10.
- Genesis 1 and the resurgence of the heroine in the post-exilic period.

- God as male and female in Old Testament thought and the feminine image of divine wisdom.
- The images of woman in wisdom literature: their negative and positive values for the male.
- The status of women in Rabbinic literature.
- The role of women in worship in early Judaism.
- Women and the regulations concerning sexual relations in Rabbinic literature and their continuation in Israel today. Attention should be paid to the laws governing marriage, adultery and divorce.
- The attitude of major Jewish groups to women in the time of Jesus. Jesus: his attitude to and his teachings which bear upon women.
- The status of women in the Graeco/Roman world and the early Christian missionary movement.
- The concept of equality of the sexes, its modification and the notion of celibacy according to the Apostle Paul.
- The Domestic Code as reflected in Col. 3:18-4:1; Ephes. 5:22-6:9; 1 Peter 2:13-3:7; Titus 2:1-10; 1 Timothy 2:1f.; 2:8f.; 3:1f.; 3:8; 5:17f; 6:1f. What do these passages have to say concerning social relations within the domestic sphere? What are their implications for women?
- Women according to the church fathers.
- Eve revisited or, reflections, additions and re-interpretations of Eve in Judaism and Christianity.

*Co-ordinator:  
Anne Gardner  
La Trobe University*





## Western Australia

Mirrilingki Spirituality Centre  
Turkey Creek  
Wyndham, W.A. 6740

"Mirrilingki,  
a place,  
where all peoples,  
of all races  
and all colours

Can come together and reflect in peace,  
harmony, reverence and joy."

Sections from a letter from Sr. Clare  
Ahern:

"I run many courses for tribal  
Aboriginal women from the East  
Kimberley. It is hard to give them titles  
because when the women arrive in, they  
start articulating needs and issues which I  
then address or create a situation where  
they look at the issue.

The main purpose of the courses is to  
affirm and strengthen the women in their  
roles as stable and powerful leaders. This  
is done by helping them keep in touch  
with what gives them meaning in life; by  
re-inforcing their strong connection with  
Aboriginal Law and encouraging them to  
bring this Law to enrich Christianity, since  
they are also Christians; by helping them  
realise that they can improve their quality  
of life; by alerting them to their rights as  
women; by building up coping skills to  
handle some of the chaos that has come  
into Aboriginal society; by shaping them  
into a strong group and assisting them to  
establish group power and by inspiring  
them to work at changing the hurtful and  
unjust situations they have endured for so  
long.

The courses usually are of three days in  
length and are very intense because the  
groups are eager to discuss and learn as  
much as possible. The group size averages  
about fourteen members.

Our aim is to give the groups a time to  
build up physical as well as mental re-  
sources so we endeavour to create an en-  
vironment of good food, good sleeping  
conditions, friendly, relaxed faces, a  
homely conference centre and a bush set-  
ting of birds, flowers and natural beauty.

We operate in the dry, cooler season,  
from Easter to the beginning of  
November. During the courses, visitors  
are not allowed at the Centre so that the  
group feels the Centre is completely theirs  
for the duration of the course and the co-  
ordinators can give total, relaxed and  
unpressurised service to the group."

The Mirrilingki Centre also offers  
courses in continuing education, catechet-  
ical training, scripture, traditional  
Aboriginal spirituality, social issues and  
other themes.

Resource members come from the local  
community or other sources as needed.

*Co-ordinators:*  
*Sr. Clare Ahern*  
*Sr. Theresa Morellini*

### Western Australian College of Advanced Education Claremont Campus

#### *Women in Religious Traditions*

This unit considers contemporary is-  
sues regarding the place of women in reli-  
gious traditions. An initial exploration of  
roles as expressed through initiation ritu-  
als will provide a critical framework for  
the discussion of modern problems. The  
concept of initiation will be enriched by a  
concentrated study of traditional  
Aboriginal initiation practices.

On completion of this unit students  
should be able to:

- appreciate the richness and complexity  
of traditional Aboriginal initiation ritu-  
als, and any relevance they have to the

notion of Christian Initiation as an on-going process;

- discuss the implications, for women, of initiation rituals as practised in a variety of world religions;
- compare implicit roles of women as exemplified in the scriptures of the major religious traditions;
- respond critically to the current debate on women's roles in religious ministry.

#### Unit content:

Examination of initiation practices in traditional Aboriginal society.

Comparison of varying initiation practices in religious cultures, e.g. Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity and a study of their implications for women's role in that society.

Reflection on the images of women expressed in the Scriptures of the major religions, e.g. Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism.

Critical discussion of contemporary issues regarding the religious roles of women.

*Co-ordinator:  
Cynthia Dixon*

## New Zealand

### Victoria University of Wellington

#### *Women in Religion*

This course studies the experience of women in Christianity. The first part of the course is historical, concentrating on the early and medieval church. In the last

part of the course, modern feminist theology is studied.

*Dr. Elizabeth Iscei*

### University of Canterbury, Christchurch

#### *Comparative Study of a Selected Topic*

The topic will be Women in Religion, studied with reference to Islam and Hinduism in 1987 and with reference to Islam and Buddhism in 1988. An attempt will be made to understand the role and status of women according to selected texts and to gain some idea of the actual role and status of women in the context of Islamic, Hindu and/or Buddhist societies.

*Lecturers:  
Bill Shepard, Jim Wilson (1987)  
Paul Harrison (1988)*

### Massey University Palmerston North

#### *Women and Religion*

This course is about women, human and divine, in various religious traditions, (Australian, Aboriginal, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian and Islamic). We examine beliefs about and attitudes to women, and how their lives are affected; we look at patterns of inclusion and exclusion; and we consider women's own views of their place in religion and the conflict between feminism and tradition.

*Co-ordinator:  
Renée Turner*