

Islamic Theology: A Summary of The Islamic Perspective on Human Beings with Special Reference to The Qur'an

Author

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Abstract

In the last unit of the course, the different anthropological aspects that have been dealt with during the semester (see below) will be summarized and discussed with the students, taking into account some relevant Qur'anic passages. In addition, the question will be addressed whether and to what extent the human being is also a spiritual being and to what extent spirituality can contribute to the promotion of a good coexistence in a religiously, ideologically, and culturally plural society.

1. human being as a person (concept of person/human dignity)
2. human being as individual and social being / as a relational being
3. human beings and gender
4. human being as a spiritual being?

Timescale

One lecture (approximately 90 minutes)

Key Terms

Qur'an, Human Being as Individual and Social Being, Gender, Spirituality.

Key competences / Learning outcomes

- Students will be able to identify Islamic anthropological aspects from the Qur'an and interpret them with regard to today's context as well as reflect on their significance in their future teaching profession.
- Students can recognize and reflect on the importance of spirituality in connection with being human and personal (ethical and moral) development.
- Students reflect and discuss the meaning of spirituality and its possible contribution to peaceful coexistence in plural societies.



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References

- Hayatullah, H. (2014). Conception of Society and Its Characteristics from an Islamic Perspective. *International Journal of Islamic Thought*, 6(1), 12–25. <https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.06.2014.002>
- Pickthall, M. W. (Hrsg.). (2006). *The meaning of the Holy Qur'ān* (Reprint).

Teaching Steps

Teaching Steps			
Phase/ Time	Approach	Method	Social Form/ Tasks for Students
Introduction 10min	<p>In the first part, the students are asked which core aspects of anthropology have been covered in the seminar</p> <p>After that, a list of the results is made in "shared notes" in the videoconference room, and the aspect "man as a spiritual being" is added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - human being as a person (concept of person/human dignity) - human being as individual and social being / as a relational being - human being and gender - human being as a spiritual being? 	Collecting students' answers in "Shared Notes" on BigBlueButton	Plenary
Development 20min	<p>Students will be divided into smaller groups (1-3 persons) on the digital learning platform Moodle respectively BigBlueButton. They will research specific Quranic verses in their respective groups that are related to the anthropological aspects discussed. This task serves as a repetition and reassurance of the results they have already presented in their papers during the course.</p> <p>In their research, they can refer to their presentation materials. They can look up the translation of the Quran and can also use the Internet as an assistance tool.</p>	<p>Search for Quranic passages linked to the anthropological aspects.</p> <p>Focus on Quranic verses in groups and creation of a list</p>	Group work



20min	<p>The students in different groups come together in the videoconference main room.</p> <p>They present and compare their results in plenary. The results are compiled in "shared notes".</p> <p>Based on the results, a PowerPoint presentation is created (see Appendix 1)</p> <p>The lecturer leads an open discussion about what they take away from this exercise about the Qur'anic perspective on human beings for themselves and for their profession as future teachers.</p>	<p>Comparing the results of the groups.</p> <p>Preparing a short presentation of the relevant Qur'anic verses on the topic discussed.</p> <p>Appendix 1 (Islamic perspectives on human beings: PPT)</p>	Plenary
10min	<p>In the second part, the students meet in two groups in separate videoconference rooms on Moodle. Beforehand, they read the attached text (see Appendix 2) as homework. They discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is a human being a spiritual being? - Is spirituality an ontological component of the human being? - Can spirituality contribute to human self-development? If yes, how far? <p>What contribution can the spiritual dimension of the human being make to good coexistence in a religiously and ideologically plural society?</p>	<p>Discussion of the questions in small groups</p> <p>Appendix 2 (Conception of Society and Its Characteristics from an Islamic Perspective: Article)</p>	Partner work
Consolidation 20min	<p>Students come together in the videoconference main room and present their results in plenary and reflect on other open questions. The lecturer leads the open discussion.</p> <p>Finally, the students are asked to write a short reflection (one A4 page) on the issues discussed in the last session and on their experiences in the interreligious exchange on the international study day.</p> <p>Among other things, they should describe their experiences and reflect on their relevance and significance in their everyday profession as future teachers.</p>	<p>Presentation and discussion of the results in plenary</p>	Plenary



Appendices

Appendices 1: Islamic Perspectives on Human Being Slide

Appendices 2: Hayatullah Laluddin, (2014) Conception of society and its characteristics from an Islamic perspective. International Journal of Islamic Thought (IJIT), 6 . pp. 12-25. ISSN 2232-1314
<http://journalarticle.ukm.my/8212/>



Glossary

Important terms for students

Spirituality

Spirituality is a broad term that is defined and practiced in different ways in various religious and ideological movements. The term spirituality comes from the Latin term "spiritualis" and originally meant "spirituality, the inner spiritual being" (Brockhaus, Spiritualität, online). Spirituality generally describes an 'inner' orientation and 'outer' way of life borne of reverent "faith" (Brockhaus, Spirituality, online).

In Islam and other monotheistic religions, spirituality is expressed in turning toward God. This connection is strengthened by meditation such as worship, which is also intended to contribute to the purification of the self from bad qualities and to personal development (see sufism).

Encounter learning:

Encounter learning refers to the didactically guided and accompanied topic- centred exchange between participants who are as similar in status as possible in a framework that is limited in terms of content, time and space (safe space), which provides for multi-perspective reflection processes taking into account a conflict hermeneutics that lead to the initiation of content-related and process- related competences. The project "Sharing Worldviews: Encounter Learning for common Values in Diversity" is based on a 4-phase concept of Encounter Learning: preparation, presentation, exchange and reflection.

Worldviews:

The concept of **Worldviews** has various culturally determined meanings. In our project we use it as "**Worldviews**" (individual or collective perspective on the world):

World interpretation (dt.: Weltdeutung) Refers to the fundamental anthropological existential that man brings his fellow man, his environment and himself into an explanatory and interpretive context, regardless of whether this context has religious, spiritual or secular connotations.

World view (dt.: Weltbild) Coherent overall conception of the whole of reality, of the development of life and the structure of the universe, of a certain image of man and history etc. from a certain theoretically underpinned (e.g. scientific or mythological etc.) perspective.

Worldviews (dt.: Weltansichten/ Weltansichten/ Perspektiven auf die Welt) Individual or collective perspective on the world. Worldviews as perspectives can also be shaped by influences (events, media, etc.).

Worldview (dt.: Weltanschauung) Refers to a coherent overall conception of the whole of reality, which shapes one's perception of reality and in turn shapes that perception. Beyond 'worldviews', they are embedded in a specific framework of thought and action and thus also include evaluative statements and corresponding options for action. Worldviews unite their adherents into a secular community (e.g. humanism, atheism, materialism). Such an understanding of worldview is shaped in Europe by the Enlightenment, which sought to free itself from traditional communities (such as religions) and grant the individual more independence from them.

