



Academic Summit

on

Islamic Studies in India: Revisiting and Reorienting

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 **India Islamic Cultural Centre, New Delhi**



**Center for
Critical Studies**


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Concept Note


Islamic Studies is a pivotal discipline within the field of social studies, characterized by distinct epistemological and theoretical foundations. The discipline holds exceptional significance due to its nature, thereby warranting paramount importance as a subject of scholarly inquiry. Within academia, this discipline encompasses the comprehensive study of Islam and Muslims, both in historical and contemporary contexts. It extends to the analysis of Muslim/Islamic civilizations, culture, texts, history, jurisprudence, socio-cultural trends, political dynamics, and policy frameworks, among other key facets. Owing to the evolution in its methodological and conceptual variances throughout its development, Islamic Studies has consistently occupied an important role in the dissemination of scholarly knowledge.



India, as a location in South Asia, has long been celebrated for its profound contributions to Islamic Studies scholarly. Throughout history, India has stood as a beacon of intellectual prowess, particularly evident in its rich tradition of Quranic studies, Tafsir, and Hadith literature. However, contemporary research within Indian Islamic Studies is confronting numerous challenges, resulting in a dearth of innovative contributions beyond analytical and comparative research endeavors. It is widely acknowledged that the interdisciplinary approach to Islamic Studies has pushed the boundaries, creating new interventions and opportunities within the discipline. Moreover, at a theoretical level, recent transformations have seen the conceptual development of Islamic Studies as an analytical tool to read society and social dynamics.



Yet, the trajectory of research trends and topics in Indian Islamic Studies has evolved in a different direction. In terms of methodological contributions, the research and scholarly output from Indian academia has often emphasized the gathering and compilation of existing facts and conducting comparative studies between scholars and ideologies, rather than introducing different methodological inquiries, especially in the anthropological and sociological study of Islam. To put it more precisely, the central universities in India that specialize in Islamic Studies often approach the subject in a somewhat less central way. The syllabi and research methods employed in these academic institutions often fall short of introducing diverse perspectives and frameworks.




Through this Summit, the Center for Critical Studies endeavors to address the current focus on more traditional research trends and methodologies by undertaking a transformative approach and re-orienting Islamic Studies to different perspectives. By briefly studying the prevailing research projects and theses in all research centers of Islamic Studies in central universities, this project, 'Re-Orient,' attempts to address the above-mentioned lacuna. Additionally, by looking forward to the long trajectory of Islamic Studies in India, this project aims to map the lack of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches. This Summit has been scheduled to familiarize participants with a wide array of methodologies essential for conducting research in Islamic Studies.



In the spirit of humble inquiry and collective thinking, this Summit invites students, faculty, and enthusiasts of Islamic Studies to participate in a meaningful discussion and deliberation about the future of the discipline in India. We warmly welcome everyone to join us in this collaborative effort to explore new perspectives and directions for Islamic Studies in India.

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Sub-Themes and Sessions


The summit will be structured into more than three comprehensive sessions, each focusing on a distinct aspect of the discipline.

Session 1

"Foundations and Evolution of the Discipline" will explore the genesis of Islamic Studies as an academic field and its historical and theoretical frameworks, including influences from Orientalism and Post-Orientalism.

Session 2

"Contextualizing Islamic Studies in India" will examine the trajectory and transformation of Islamic Studies within Indian universities. This session will critically analyze PhD theses from prominent Indian universities and examine



research on women and Islam, pluralism, Islamic intellectual traditions, and socio-political aspects. Additionally, this session will address common research pitfalls and methodologies used in Indian universities.

Session 3

"Reorienting Islamic Studies" will review recent developments in Western and global Islamic Studies, including perspectives from the USA, UK, Turkey, Malaysia, Qatar, and others. This session will also explore innovative methodologies and interdisciplinary approaches in the sociological, anthropological, and civilizational studies of Islam.

This Summit invites scholars to present their ideas and insights on these themes, contributing to critical analysis and reorientation of Islamic Studies in India.



About CCS

The **Center for Critical Studies (CCS)** is fundamentally committed to the critical examination and engagement with the dominant discourse and epistemological foundations of contemporary knowledge. CCS strives towards framing and developing Islamic paradigms and narratives across diverse academic disciplines, firmly grounded in the principles and wisdom emanating from Islamic Thought. Furthermore, CCS places special emphasis on nurturing the intellectual growth and epistemological guidance of emerging Muslim scholars and thinkers.

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