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Outline of "Islam, Reason and Freedom" lecture by Mustafa Akyol

It is no secret today that Islam has authoritarian interpretations that reject the principles of human freedom. This includes imposing religion through state power, punishing people for "apostasy" or "blasphemy," or degrading women or minorities. This lecture will delve into the formative centuries of Islam to map out the roots of the problem, while also showing the sources for progress. It will explain where the Qur'an and the Muslim tradition stands on reason, freedom and natural law.

HIGHLIGHTS:

1. Why the Qur’an’s “No compulsion in religion” verse is edited by some translators today?
2. How nascent Islam, as an oppressed faith in pagan Mecca, asked for religious freedom?
3. Which verses of the Qur’an were later considered as “abrogated”?
4. How “statization” affected the historical course of Islam?
5. Where do laws of apostasy, blasphemy, supremacy, and religious policing come from?
6. Is there a Natural Law tradition in Islam?
7. What Muslims can learn today from their early rationalist theologians and philosophers?

SUGGESTED READING

* Mustafa Akyol, *Reopening Muslim Minds: A Return to Reason, Freedom, and Tolerance,* 2021*.* (Available at the Acton University Book Store)
* Mustafa Akyol, “[Liberty was Islam’s first call](https://oll.libertyfund.org/page/liberty-matters-mustafa-akyol-liberty-was-islams-first-call-october-2021),” *Online Library of Liberty* (Available as free PDF)
* Mustafa Akyol, “[Why, as a Muslim, I Defend Liberty](https://www.libertarianism.org/books/why-muslim-i-defend-liberty),” *Libertarianism.org* (Available as free PDF)
* Mustafa Akyol, “[Revisiting the Sharia](https://university.acton.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Revisiting%20the%20Sharia%2C%20Prospect%20Magazine.pdf),” *Prospect Magazine* (Available as free PDF)
* Mustafa Akyol, “[Where Islam and Reason Meet](https://university.acton.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Where%20Islam%20and%20Reason%20Meet%20-%20WSJ.pdf),” *Wall Street Journal* (Available as free PDF)

You can have access to all recent writings and lectures of Mustafa Akyol at his [Cato Institute](https://www.cato.org/people/mustafa-akyol) page, and follow him on Twitter at @akyolinEnglish.