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UGC NET Paper 2

Arab Culture and Islamic Studies (049)
Complete revision notes — all 10 units

10 units | Tables & formulas | Key revision points

01 Pre-Islamic Arabia and the Prophet
02 Sources of Islam
03 The Caliphates
04 Islamic Law and Jurisprudence
05 Islamic Philosophy and Theology
06 Sufism
07 Arab Contributions to Science
08 Arabic Language and Literature
09 Islam in India
10 The Modern Arab World

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How to use these notes

- Read one unit at a time, then test yourself with its key revision points.
- Make your own short notes on topics you find difficult.
- Units follow the main areas of the official syllabus — the exact unit list can change between sessions.
- Always check the latest syllabus and notices on the official UGC NET portal: **ugcnet.nta.ac.in**.

UNIT 01

Pre-Islamic Arabia and the Prophet

Arabia before Islam and the life of Prophet Muhammad.

- Pre-Islamic Arabia (*Jahiliyya*): tribal society; Mecca as a trade centre; Ka'ba.
- Prophet Muhammad born in Mecca (c. 570 CE); first revelation c. 610 CE.
- **Hijra** — migration to Medina, 622 CE (start of the Islamic calendar).
- Constitution of Medina; conquest of Mecca (630 CE).

★ Key revision points

- Hijra: 622 CE.
- Islamic calendar starts from the Hijra.
- First revelation c. 610 CE.
- Conquest of Mecca: 630 CE.

UNIT 02

Sources of Islam

Quran, Hadith and their compilation.

- Quran: 114 surahs; compiled into a standard text under Caliph Uthman.
- Hadith collections: Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim are the most authoritative in Sunni Islam.
- Five pillars: shahada, salat, zakat, sawm, hajj.

★ Key revision points

- Quran: 114 surahs.
- Standard text under Uthman.
- Five pillars of Islam.
- Bukhari and Muslim = most trusted Hadith collections (Sunni).

UNIT 03

The Caliphates

Rashidun, Umayyad, Abbasid and other caliphates.

Caliphate	Period	Capital / note
Rashidun	632–661	Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali
Umayyad	661–750	Damascus
Abbasid	750–1258	Baghdad; Bayt al-Hikma (House of Wisdom); ended with Mongol sack
Fatimid	909–1171	Cairo; al-Azhar
Umayyads of al-Andalus	756–1031	Córdoba

★ Key revision points

- Four Rashidun caliphs.
- Umayyads ruled from Damascus.
- Bayt al-Hikma = Abbasid Baghdad.
- Baghdad fell to the Mongols in 1258.

UNIT 04

Islamic Law and Jurisprudence

Sources of law and schools of jurisprudence.

- Sources (Sunni): Quran, Sunna, ijma (consensus), qiyas (analogy).
- Sunni schools: **Hanafi** (Abu Hanifa), **Maliki**, **Shafi'i**, **Hanbali**; Shia: Ja'fari.
- Hanafi school is the most widely followed in South Asia.

★ Key revision points

- Four sources of Sunni law.
- Four Sunni schools.
- Hanafi dominant in South Asia.
- Ja'fari = main Shia school.

UNIT 05

Islamic Philosophy and Theology

Kalam and the major Muslim philosophers.

Thinker	Known for
al-Kindi	'Philosopher of the Arabs'
al-Farabi	'Second Teacher' after Aristotle
Ibn Sina (Avicenna)	*Canon of Medicine*
al-Ghazali	*The Incoherence of the Philosophers*
Ibn Rushd (Averroes)	Commentaries on Aristotle; reply to al-Ghazali
Ibn Khaldun	*Muqaddimah*; asabiyya

★ Key revision points

- Second Teacher = al-Farabi.
- *Canon of Medicine* = Ibn Sina.
- *Muqaddimah* = Ibn Khaldun.
- Ibn Rushd answered al-Ghazali.

UNIT 06

Sufism

Mystical tradition, concepts and orders.

- Concepts: tawhid, fana (annihilation), baqa, maqam and hal.
- Early Sufis: Rabia al-Adawiyya (divine love), al-Junayd, Mansur al-Hallaj.
- Orders in India: **Chishti** (Moinuddin Chishti, Ajmer; Nizamuddin Auliya), Suhrawardi, Qadiri, Naqshbandi.

★ Key revision points

- Chishti order in India: Moinuddin Chishti, Ajmer.
- Divine love = Rabia.
- Fana = annihilation of self.
- Naqshbandi is a major order.

UNIT 07

Arab Contributions to Science

Mathematics, astronomy, medicine and other sciences.

- **al-Khwarizmi** — algebra; the word 'algorithm' comes from his name.
- **Ibn al-Haytham** — optics (*Book of Optics*).
- al-Razi — medicine; al-Biruni — *Kitab al-Hind* (on India).
- Translation movement transmitted Greek and Indian learning.

★ **Key revision points**

- Algebra and 'algorithm' = al-Khwarizmi.
- Optics = Ibn al-Haytham.
- *Kitab al-Hind* = al-Biruni.
- Translation movement at Baghdad.

UNIT 08

Arabic Language and Literature

Classical and modern Arabic literature.

- Pre-Islamic poetry: the *Mu'allaqat* (suspended odes).
- *Alf Layla wa Layla* (*One Thousand and One Nights*).
- Modern Arabic literature: *Nahda* (renaissance); Naguib Mahfouz — Nobel Prize (1988).

★ Key revision points

- *Mu'allaqat* = pre-Islamic odes.
- Nahda = Arabic renaissance.
- Naguib Mahfouz: Nobel 1988.
- *One Thousand and One Nights* = classical collection.

UNIT 09

Islam in India

Arrival of Islam, Indo-Islamic culture and reform movements.

- Muhammad bin Qasim conquered Sindh (712 CE).
- Indo-Islamic culture: architecture, Urdu, Sufi–Bhakti interaction.
- Reform and education: Darul Uloom Deoband (1866); Sir Syed Ahmad Khan — Aligarh (MAO College, 1875).

★ Key revision points

- Sindh conquered in 712 CE.
- Deoband: 1866.
- Aligarh college: 1875.
- Sir Syed = Aligarh movement.

UNIT 10

The Modern Arab World

Modern states, organisations and contemporary issues.

- Arab League (1945); Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (1969).
- Oil economies; OPEC (1960).
- Arab Spring (2010–11).

★ Key revision points

- Arab League: 1945.
- OIC: 1969.
- OPEC: 1960.
- Arab Spring began 2010.

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