Arabic Reading List 2020

History and Culture
For a brief introduction to the history of the Islamic world, see Adam Silverstein’s *Islamic History: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press). A very readable overview of the modern history of the Arab world is provided by Eugen Rogan in *The Arabs: A History* (Penguin). Since Arabic literature is an important part of the degree, you will also profit from perusing Roger Allen’s *An Introduction to Arabic Literature* (Cambridge University Press). If you are interested in religious issues, a good place to start is Michael Cook’s *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press). A more comprehensive treatment of major developments in Islamic religious history can be found in Jonathan Berkey’s *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600–1800* (Cambridge University Press). Peter Adamson, one of the leading scholars of Arabic philosophy, has produced a very engaging series of podcasts on the history of philosophy which are unusual in devoting an entire series to medieval Islamic intellectual history ([https://historyofphilosophy.net/islamic-world](https://historyofphilosophy.net/islamic-world)). Some of the episodes are conversations with other scholars, normally of the highest calibre.

Language
The Oxford Arabic course presupposes no prior knowledge of the language, but if you want to take a first look at the script and grammar, consider acquiring *A New Arabic Grammar of the Written Language* by J. A. Haywood and H. M. Nahmad. This is not really new anymore (pdf versions are freely circulating around the internet), and the presentation may strike you as dry and quaint, but the book does set out the basic structure of the language very clearly and should be a useful reference work at Oxford (where you will be studying a different textbook).

Further reading suggestions
Anyone interested in particular in Islamic law or women and Islam should find these instructive: