

History 600  
Seminar: Islam and Politics  
Spring, 2006  
Tuesday, 3:30-5:30  
2653 Humanities

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What accounts for the increasing salience of Islam in the politics, culture, and social relations of the Middle East? This seminar is intended to introduce you to – and to get you participating in – several recent scholarly debates on the question of Islam and politics in the modern era. Rather than focus in depth on specific cases – though you will learn more about some than about others – we will discuss the most influential recent scholarship on major problems in the field. We will begin with a critique of attempts to explain Islamist politics in a global context. We will move on to discuss the historical development of Islamist reform movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Islamic revolution in Iran, the relationship of Islamist political movements to nationalism, and recent attempts to understand the resurgence of Islamist politics and identities. The final part of the course will be devoted to a discussion of debates on the relationship of Islamist politics to gender, and on how Islamist politics can play out in small communities. The course will also consider two influential critiques of Islamist politics.

Requirements:

1: A high level of weekly participation. Each week you are responsible for all readings. The week before each session I will hand out or send you by email a list of questions for discussion. Several people will then volunteer to open the discussion of each question with a short presentation. The point is to ferret out the underlying argument in the book or argument and to put it into the larger context of the seminar. That a book is on the reading list does not imply that I approve of it! Also, successful participation will depend on your willingness to chase down reviews, articles, and books that are not in the syllabus. Some of you may find that you learn more by trying to study something than by actually studying it.

2: A 5000-7000 word paper. In all cases I expect you to try out your paper topics on me before you put weeks of effort into them. This is in order to save you time and intellectual investment if the topic is unworkable, and to get me involved in your projects at their conception. Also, I might be able to make a useful suggestion or two. Your

discussions with me should be collaborative ventures, and I hope only to make myself useful to you and your work.

Note on the weekly reading: In this seminar, if you try to read every word and memorize every fact you will run out of time. You will also miss the point of the argument. You will need to hone your reading skills to fillet the central argument out of the body of the book. Skillful reading requires paying careful attention to the structure and argumentation of a book, the nature of the supporting evidence, and the meanings of key terms and phrases.

Those with little or no background in pre-modern Middle Eastern history should read, as soon as possible, Ira Lapidus' A history of Islamic societies, or Albert Hourani's A history of the Arab peoples (in spite of the title, and a somewhat anachronistic construal of ethnicity in the pre-modern period, much more than Arab history is covered). R. Stephen Humphreys' Islamic history: a framework for inquiry (Princeton, 1988) is a very useful guide to both the major reference works and the basic historiographical problems for the period. The essential research tool is the Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd. Ed.

As you go through these readings ask yourselves, and be prepared to discuss, the following questions:

- Why did this author write this book?
- Into what larger argument is the author trying to insert himself/herself?
- What kinds of evidence does the author examine?
- What are the key concepts the author brings to his/her approach?
  - Are concepts enlisted to try to make sense of the evidence?
  - Are concepts intended to help the author ask a question or frame a research problem?
- How was the argument received?

Books, required (other readings will be available on learn@uw)

Abdo, Geneive, No God But God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam (Oxford, 2000)

Arjomand, Said Amir, the Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran (Oxford, 1989)

Eickelman, Dale F, and James Piscatori, Muslim Politics (Princeton, 1996)

Roy, Olivier, The Failure of Political Islam (London, 1994)

Tibi, Bassam, The Challenge of Fundamentalism : Political Islam and the New World Disorder (Berkeley, 1998)

Voll, John Olbert, Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World, 2nd. ed  
(Syracuse, 1994)

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Islamist politics in comparative perspective

Reading:

Eickelman, Dale F, and James Piscatori, Muslim Politics  
(Princeton, 1996).

Week 3: The "Clash of Civilizations" debate

Huntington, Samuel P., "The Clash of Civilizations," Foreign Affairs (Summer, 1993). (learn@uw)

Huntington, interview, "Clash of Civilizations Revisited"  
(learn@uw)

Given that these readings this week are short, you should use your library skills and mastery of JSTOR to read some of the immense body of literature that the Huntington argument has inspired. I will add some of the more influential critiques to learn@uw; in the meantime you might want to take a look at these:

Miller, Judith, "Is Islam a Threat?" Foreign Affairs (Spring, 1993).

Gellner, Ernest, "Civil Society in Historical Context," International Social Science Journal 129 (August, 1991).

Lewis, Bernard, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," The Atlantic Monthly, vol. 266 (September, 1990).

Said, Edward. "The Clash of Definitions." In Reflections on Exile and Other Essays, 568-90 (Cambridge, 2000).

Week 4: Islamic reformism

Reading: Voll, John, Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World,  
2nd ed. (Syracuse, 1994), pp. 3-151

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Week 5: The Islamic revolution in Iran and the establishment of an Islamic republic:

Readings:

Required: Arjomand, Said Amir, the Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran (Oxford, 1989).

Recommended:

Mottahedeh, Roy P., The Mantle of the Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran (New York, 1986).

Week 6: Local impacts and social aspects of Islamist movements:

Readings:

Required:

Abdo, Genieve, No God But God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam (Oxford, 2000)

Recommended:

Jaber, Hala, Hezbollah : Born With a Vengeance (New York, 1997).

Week 7: Islam and Civil Society:

Readings: (learn@uw)

Norton, Augustus Richard, "Introduction," in A. R. Norton, ed, Civil Society in the Middle East, vol 1 (Leiden, 1995).

Ibrahim, Saad Eddin, "Civil Society and the Prospects of Democratization in the Arab World," in A. R. Norton, ed, Civil Society in the Middle East, vol 1 (Leiden, 1995).

Week 8: Are Islamist politics inherently authoritarian?

Reading:

Tibi, Bassam, The Challenge of Fundamentalism : Political Islam and the New World Disorder (Berkeley, 1998)

Week 9: Critique of the intellectual underpinnings of Islamist politics

Reading: Roy, Olivier, The Failure of Political Islam, Carol Volk, trans. (Cambridge, MA, 1994).

Week 10: Islamist Politics and Gender. I will change the readings for the week but if you are interested in the question you might start here.

Haddad, Yvonne, Islam, Gender, and Social Change

Fernea, Elizabeth, In Search of Islamic Feminism: One Woman's Global Journey (New York, 1997).

Badran, Margot, Feminists, Islam and Nation : Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt (Princeton, 1996).

Final two weeks: Discussion of papers and research

Additional Readings, partial list

Abu Amr, Ziad, Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Ghaza (Bloomington, 1994)

Afkhami, Mahnaz and Erika Friedl eds, In the Eye of the Storm: Women in Post-Revolutionary Islam (Syracuse, 1994)

Ahmad, Leila, Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate (New Haven, 1992)

Ajami, Fouad , The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice since 1967 (Cambridge, 1992)

Ajami, Fouad , The Vanished Imam: Musa al-Sadr and the Shi`a of Lebanon (Ithaca, 1986)

al-`Azmi, Sadiq, "Islamic Fundamentalism Reconsidered: A Critical Outline of Problems, Ideas, Approaches," in South Asian Bulletin 13, no. 2 (1993)

Auda, Gehad, "The Normalization of the Islamic Movement in Egypt," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, Accounting for Fundamentalisms (Chicago, 1994).

Ayubi, Nazih, Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World (London, 1991)

Brand, Laurie, "'In the Beginning was the State' ...The Quest for Civil Society in Jordan," in A.R. Norton ed., Civil Society in the Middle East (Leiden, 1995)

Burke, Edmund, and Ira Lapidus, Islam, Politics, and Social Movements (London, 1988)

Davis, Eric, "Ideology, Social Class, and Islamic Radicalism in Modern Egypt," in Said Amir Arjomand ed, From Nationalism to Revolutionary Islam (Albany, 1984).

Dessouki, A.A. Hillal, ed., Islamic Resurgence in the Arab World (New York, 1982)

Edwards, David, "Summoning Muslims: Print, Politics, and Religious Ideology in Afghanistan," Journal of Asian Studies 52, no. 3 (August), 609-28)

Eickelman, Dale F., "Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies," American Ethnologist 19, no 4 (November, 1992), 1-19.

Eickelman, Dale, F., "Social Theory in the Study of Muslim Societies," in Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatory eds., Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination (Berkeley, 1990).

Enayat, Hamid, Modern Islamic Political Thought (Austin, 1982).

Esfandiari, Heleh, Reconstructed Lives : Women and Iran's Islamic Revolution (Baltimore, 1997).

Esposito, John, Islam and Politics, 2<sup>nd</sup>. ed. (New York, 1987).

Esposito, John, The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality (New York and Oxford, 1992).

Fernea, Elizabeth Warnock, In Search of Islamic Feminism: One Woman's Global Journey (New York, 1997)

Fischer, Michael M.J. and Mehdi Abedi, Debating Muslims: Cultural Dialogues in Postmodernity and Tradition (Madison, 1990).

Fuller, Graham E., and Ian O. Lesser, A Sense of Seige: The Geopolitics of Islam and the West (Boulder, 1995).

Gaffney, Patrick D., The Prophet's Pulpit: Islamic Preaching in Contemporary Egypt (Berkeley, 1994).

Galison, Peter, "History, Philosophy, and the Central Metaphor," Science in Context 2, no. 1 (1988), 197-212.

Goldberg, Ellis, "Smashing Idols and the State: the Protestant Ethic and Egyptian-Sunni Radicalism," in Juan Cole ed., Comparing Muslim Societies: Knowledge and the State in a World Civilization (Ann Arbor, 1992).

Haddad, Yvonne "Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of Islamic Revival." In John L. Esposito ed., Voices of Resurgent Islam (Oxford, 1983).

Haddad, Yvonne, John Olbert Voll, and John L. Esposito, The Contemporary Islamic Revival: A Critical Survey and Bibliography (New York and Westport, 1991).

Hunter, Shireen T., ed., The Politics of Islamic Revivalism: Diversity and Unity (Bloomington, 1988)

Huntington, Samuel, "The Clash of Civilizations?" Foreign Affairs 72, no 3 (summer): 22-49.

Hussain, Asaf, Political Perspectives on the Muslim World (New York, 1984)

Khomeini, Ayatollah Ruhollah, Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini (Berkeley, 1981)

Lambek, Michael, "Certain Knowledge, Contestable Authority: Power and Practice in the Islamic Periphery," American Ethnologist 17, no. 1 (February), 23-40

Landau, Jacob, The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization(Oxford, 1990).

Laslett, Peter, "The Family as a Knot of Individual Interests," in Robert McC. Netting and Richard Wilk, Households: Comparative Studies of the Domestic Group (Berkeley, 1984)

Lawrence, Bruce, Defenders of God: the Fundamentalist Revolt against the Modern Age ((New York, 1984)

- Lubeck, Paul, "Structural Determinants of Urban Protest in Nigeria," in William R. Roff ed., Islam and the Political Economy of Meaning (Berkeley, 1987)
- Mardin, Serif, "Religion and Politics in Modern Turkey," in James P. Piscatori ed., Islam and the Political Process (Cambridge, 1983).
- Norton, Richard Augustus, "The Future of Civil Society in the Middle East," Middle East Journal 47, no. 2 (spring), 205-16.
- Norton, Richard Augustus, Amal and the Shi`a: Struggle for the Soul of Lebanon (Austin, 1987)
- Norton, Richard Augustus, ed., Civil Society in the Middle East 2 vols. (Leiden, 1995).
- Parsons, Talcot, "Power and the Social System," in Steven Lukes ed., Power (Oxford, 1986)
- Piscatori, James, "The Shia of Lebanon and Hizbullah, the Party of God," in Christine Jennett and Randal G. Stewart, Politics of the Future: The Role of Social Movements (Melbourne, 1989), 292-320.
- Piscatori, James, ed., Islam in a World of Nation States (Cambridge, 1986).
- Rahman, Fazlur, Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition (Chicago, 1982)
- Roy, Olivier, The Failure of Political Islam, Carol Volk, trans. (Cambridge, MA, 1994).
- Simone, T Abdou Maliqalam, In Whose Image? Political Islam and Urban Practices in Sudan (Chicago, 1994).
- Singerman, Diane, Avenues of Participation: Family, Politics, and Networks in Urban Quarters of Cairo (Princeton, 1994).
- Springborg, Robert, Family, Power, and Politics in Egypt: Sayed Bey Marei - his Clan, Clients, and Cohorts (Philadelphia, 1982).
- Turabi, Hasan, "The Islamic State, in John L. Esposito ed., Voices of Resurgent Islam (Oxford, 1983)
- Vatikiotis, P.J., Islam and the State (London, 1987)