

Islam in Middle East Politics

CAS IR 509/PO 573

CAS 432

Fall Semester, 2004-2005

TR 11:00 - 12:20 p.m.

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Introduction:

There is little question that the major opposition forces in the contemporary Middle East are populist Islamist movements. In this seminar we shall attempt to understand the roots, the motives and the significance of these movements.

Proceeding from an introduction to Islam-- the religion of about one billion people worldwide--a number of key questions will give shape to the seminar. Informed observers, and even informed scholars, are prone to take as given a number of generalities about Islam and politics, although at least some of the "givens" do not stand up to scrutiny. These generalities, in turn, reflect a political ideology that bears reflection and study, especially since the wide social base of the Islamists precludes either ignoring or successfully isolating them. There is no mistaking the fact that many of the leaders of the Islamic movements are preparing to posit themselves as the new rulers. Thus, there is not only relevance in examining the Islamists' critique of the present governments, but also in investigating the theory of government that would under gird Islamist rule.

Recent writings in elite western journals have emphasized that the Islamist movements are anti-democratic, abusive of human rights, and anti-western. Examining a case like Algeria, where the Islamist were on the verge of winning power through reasonably fair elections when their victory was thwarted by a coup, these observers tend to grimly agree that the coup was warranted. The horrors of Islamist rule would have been worse, allegedly. There are, however, profoundly important experiments in political inclusion that are now underway in Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, and Mauritania as well. In each case, Islamists have, at least tacitly, conceded the legitimacy of the present regime and they have participated in parliamentary elections. Each case shall be explored to tease out meanings and to draw conclusions that may be relevant elsewhere.

Although the revolution in Iran has captured the imagination of many Muslims, Islamist movements in locales like Egypt, Algeria, and Lebanon have their own histories and their own burdens, and it shall be as important to discern the differences as to underline the similarities.

Of course, the events of September 2001 have underlined that extremist Muslim groups are prepared to pursue their aim through violence. Therefore, especially in the latter phase of the course, we will spend several weeks examining the nature of groups such as al-Qaeda, as well as exploring the extent of their support in contemporary Muslim societies, especially in the Middle East.

Several films will also be offered to supplement the course lectures and assigned readings. Students will be provided a monthly calendar listing all reading assignments and special events. Each student is expected to pay one office visit to Professor Norton for the purpose of discussing their progress in the course, as well as the research paper, which is a major requirement. **Paper topics, with accompanying annotated bibliography, will be due by October 12, 2004.** Detailed instructions will be provided separately. Two quizzes and a mid-term exam will be administered to insure that each student has a good grasp of basic Knowledge appropriate for preparing a solid research paper.

Academic integrity: Please read the Boston University Academic Conduct Code. Handing in someone else's work or ideas as your own (even if you worked on it together as a group) constitutes plagiarism, as does using someone's ideas without attribution. You must give a citation when you use an author's ideas in your paper, even if you do not quote the text word-for-word. The correct procedures for quoting and referencing the work of other authors will be discussed in class. If you miss that class or if you have any questions, please ask for guidance. Any infraction **MUST** be reported to the Dean for resolution by the Academic Conduct Committee. Be informed and be careful. Since plagiarized work is the work of another, any paper determined by the Academic Conduct panel to be plagiarized will normally receive a grade of zero.

Grades and Evaluation:

Quiz I (October 5)--	10 %
Research Paper (October 12 and December 9)-- (5% for topic and bibliography and 30% for final paper)	35 %
Participation--	10 %
Quiz II (November 2)--	10 %
Mid-term exam (November 23)--	20%
Group Presentations (November 30-December 7)-- (groups formed based on paper topics; more info forthcoming)	15%

N.B., unexcused late papers will be penalized one half letter grade per weekday.

Class attendance:

Unexcused absences will be noted, and unexcused absences (above two) will reduce the course participation grade. If you have a legitimate reason to miss class, please observe the courtesy of notifying your professor. Please plan to arrive for class on time and please minimize early departures. No retakes of examinations will be offered unless there is a documented medical excuse, a family emergency, or comparable exigent circumstances.

Required Reading or Reference (most are available from BU bookstore, but you may find more reasonably priced used copies or free downloads on the web):

- Burgat, François, *Face to Face with Political Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003).

- Denny, Frederick, *Islam and the Muslim Community* (Waveland, 2002).
- Qutb, Sayyid, *Milestones* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Unity Publishing Co., 1981; or Chicago: Kazi Publishers, 2003). Download at: http://www.youngmuslims.ca/online_library/books/milestones/index_2.asp
- Rahnema, Ali, *Pioneers of the Islamic Revival* (London: Zed press, 1984).
- Rosen, Lawrence, *The Culture of Islam: Changing Aspects of Contemporary Muslim Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).
- Al-Sadr, Muhammad Baqir, *Principles of Jurisprudence: According to Shi'i Law*
- White, Jenny B., *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).
- Papers by Norton (*Hizballah*) <http://www.cfr.org/pdf/Norton2.pdf> , Muslih (*Hamas*) <http://www.cfr.org/pdf/Muslih.pdf> and Nasr (*Jama'at Islami*) <http://www.cfr.org/pdf/Nasr.pdf> from the Council on Foreign Relations, Muslim Politics project: Download from www.cfr.org and then the Muslim politics project.
- 9-11 Commission report, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/>

Recommended Listening:

On the question of reformist thinking in Islam:

<http://www.buwi.org/shows/2002/05/20020512.asp>

Web resources:

There are many fine web sites, but remember there is often no independent authentication of claims and “facts” offered on the web. You, as the scholar, are responsible for insuring that the material that you use from the web in your research papers is in fact accurate. If you are looking for research material or background information about the Middle East on the web, a very good place to start is the web site of the Gulf/2000 project, which is sponsored by Columbia. The address is: <http://gulf2000.columbia.edu>

Lecture topics and readings:

WEEK ONE: September 7 & 9 READ: Denny (all)	Introduction and overview The Prophet and the Message
WEEK TWO: September 14 & 16 READ: Denny (all)	The Spread of Islam The Shi'i-Sunni Schism
WEEK THREE: September 21 & 23 READ: Rahnema (chaps 1-3)	Din Wa Dawla and the Ottoman Heritage; the modern Muslim State and the question of reform
WEEK FOUR: September 28 & 30 No class on September 30 due to Professor's travel to Oxford. Class will be rescheduled. READ: Rahnema (chaps 5-7), Qutb (all)	Prescriptions for change—Mawdudi Hassan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb
WEEK FIVE: October 5 & 7 READ: Rahnema 4, 8 & 9; al-Sadr (all)	Iran and its Revolution <u>Quiz I (October 5)</u>
WEEK SIX: October 12 & 14 READ: Norton (CFR), Burgat (all)	Iran and its Revolution's Impact <u>Research topic and bibliography due.</u>

WEEK SEVEN: October 19 & 21 READ: Burgat, Rosen (all).	Contemporary issues in Middle East societies
WEEK EIGHT: Oct. 26 & 28 READ: White (all)	The Turkish Case (Prof. J.B. White)
WEEK NINE: November 2 & 4 READ: Crystal in CSME II (reserve); Nasr (CFR)	Islam, Civil Society and Democracy Quiz II (Nov. 2)
WEEK TEN: November 9 & 11 (Veteran's day) No class on November 11 READ: Norton, "Thwarted Democracy" (reserve)	Islam, Civil Society and Democracy (II)
WEEK ELEVEN: November 16 & 18 READ: Muslih (CFR); Roy (TBA); 9-11 Commission, chap. 2	Nationalism and Islamism Terrorism and the ideology of al-Qaeda
WEEK TWELVE: November 23 REVIEW ALL READINGS AND CLASS NOTES	Mid-term Examination
WEEK THIRTEEN: Nov. 30 & December 2	Presentations
WEEK FOURTEEN: December 7 & 9	Presentations, overflow and wrap-up Research Paper due

Selected Bibliography:

- Abdo, Geneive, *No God but God* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2000).
- _____ and Jonathan Lyons, *Answering Only to God: The Dangerous Road to Democracy in Iran* (New York: Henry Holt, 2003).
- Abrahamian, Ervand, *Iran Between Two Revolutions* (Princeton University Press, 1982).
- AbouElFadl, Khaled, "The Place of Tolerance in Islam", in *Boston Review*, March 19, 2002.
- Ahmed, Akbar S., *Postmodernism and Islam* (London: Routledge, 1992).
- Ajami, Fouad, *The Arab Predicament* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
- _____, *The Vanished Imam: Musa Sadr and the Shi'a of Lebanon* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986).
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- Amin, Samir, "Is There a Political Economy to Islamic Fundamentalism?" *Journal of African Marxists*, no. 3 (January 1983): 13-29.
- Antoun, Richard T., and Mary Elaine Hegland, eds., *Religious Resurgence: Contemporary Cases in Islam, Christianity and Judaism* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987).
- Arjomand, Said Amir, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).
- _____, ed. *The Political Dimensions of Religion* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993).
- _____, ed. *Authority and Political Culture in Islam* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988).
- Ayoob, Mohammed, ed., *The Politics of Islamic Reassertion* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981).
- Ayoub, Mahmoud M., *Islam and the Third Universal Theory: The Religious Thought of Muammar al-Qadhafi* (London: KPI, 1987).
- Ayubi, Nazih, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World* (London: Routledge, 1991). [A revised edition is forthcoming.]
- Baker, Raymond, *Sadat and After: Struggles for Egypt's Political Soul* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1990).
- Bakhash, Shaul, *The Reign of the Ayatollahs: Iran and the Islamic Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).
- Bannerman, Patrick, *Islam in Perspective* (London: Routledge, 1988).
- Banuazizi, Ali, and Myron Weiner, eds., *The State Religion and Ethnic Politics* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986).
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- Beedham, Brian, "Islam and the West" (an 18 pp. supplement to) *The Economist*, August 6, 1994.
- Benningson, Alexandre and Marie Boxup, *The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983).
- Bill, James A., *The Eagle and the Lion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988).
- Binder, Leonard, *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). [Reserve]
- Brown, L. Carl, *Religion and State: The Muslim Approach to Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).
- Bulliet, Richard, *Islam: The View from the Edge* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1994).

- Burgat, Francois, and William Dowell, *The Islamic Movement in North Africa* (Austin: University of Texas, 1992). [Reserve]
- Burke, Edmund, and Ira M. Lapidus, eds. *Islam, Politics, and Social Movements* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).
- Butterworth, Charles E., "State and Authority in Arabic Political Thought," in Ghassan Salame, ed., *The Foundations of the Arab State* (London: Croom Helm, 1987): 91-111. [Reserve]
- Choueiri, Youssef M. *Islamic Fundamentalism* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990). BP60.C45 1990.
- Cole, Juan R.I., and Nikki Keddie, eds., *Shi'ism and Social Protest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).
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