

THE POLITICS OF MODERN ISLAM

NES 269/POL 353 Fall 2016 in Frist 302

Instructor: Prof. Bernard Haykel
Office: 107 Jones Hall
Tel. 609-258-2176 E-mail: haykel@princeton.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 11:00 AM – 12:00 NOON

Final Exam: Sunday, January 22, 2017 at 1:00 PM in Friend Center 101

Precept Sessions:

Prof. Bernard Haykel, Precept on Tuesday 2:30-3:20 PM, Jones Hall 100

Mr. Alex Balistreri (abalistr@princeton.edu), Precepts on Tuesday 3:30-4:20 PM, Jones Hall 100 and Thursday 2:30-3:20 PM, Jones Hall 113

Mr. Daniel Tavana (dtavana@princeton.edu), Precepts on Wednesday 1:30-2:20 PM, Jones Hall 100 and Thursday 2:30-3:20 PM, Jones Hall 100

Ms. Carolyn Barnett (carolyn.barnett@princeton.edu), Precept on Friday 10:00-10:50 AM, Location?

Description:

This course examines the political dimensions of Islam. This will involve a study of the nature of Islamic political theory, the relationship between the religious and political establishments, the characteristics of an Islamic state, the radicalization of Sunni and Shi'i thought, and the compatibility of Islam and the nation-state, democracy, and constitutionalism, among other topics. Although detailed country studies will not be made, there will be references to specific examples throughout the course. Students will be introduced to the complex phenomenon of modern political Islam or what is commonly known as Islamism. We will consider the writings of academics and Islamists on the subject and examine the main issues they perceive to be at stake. Here, a wide spectrum of opinion will be provided: Shi'i as well as Sunni ideologues and activists, think tank analysts and American and European academics.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- regular attendance;
- on schedule completion of all assigned readings;
- participation during precepting sessions, 15% of grade;
- mid-term exam, 35% of grade;
- final exam, 50% of grade

Students will be responsible for all the material covered in the lectures and the required readings. Unless otherwise noted, ALL the readings in this syllabus are required. I will make available all the required readings through the course's website on Blackboard. The course requires no prior knowledge of Islamic and Middle Eastern history and politics.

LECTURES AND READINGS

September 15: Introduction

September 20 and 22: al-Qa'ida, 9/11, and ISIS

We will consider the following:

1. Who did it?
2. Why did 9/11 happen?
3. What are the various explanations for the rise of al-Qa'ida?
4. How do al-Qa'ida and ISIS communicate with their sympathizers and recruits?
5. Do they have an audience?
6. What are the origins and content of their ideology?
7. How has Jihadism changed after 9/11?

Required Readings:

Ajami, Fouad, "The Clash," *New York Times*, Jan. 6, 2008.

Creswell, Robyn and Bernard Haykel, "Battle Lines," *The New Yorker*, June 5, 2015.

Doran, Michael Scott. "Somebody Else's Civil War: ideology, rage, and the assault on America," in *How did this happen? Terrorism and the New War*, New York: Public Affairs (2001).

Bin Ladin, Usama, "Declaration of War against the Americans and Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," in *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*, pp. 436-59.

ISIS's Declaration of the Caliphate, "This is the Promise of Allah"

September 27 and 29 and October 4: Basic Political Concepts and the Islamic State

We will consider the following:

1. What is the relationship between religion and politics (*din wa dawla*)? Are these conceptually distinct?
2. What is the significance of the *umma*? Is this identical to the Islamic state?
3. What is the nature of Prophetic authority?
4. What is the basis of the caliphate? Does the conception of this institution change over time? Do Muslim rulers have the same authority as the caliphs?
5. Are there significant differences between Sunni and Shi'i thought on the subject of an Islamic state?
6. What is Sharia?
7. What is Jihad? What are Islamic law's notions of warfare?

Required Readings:

Crone, Patricia, "Traditional Political Thought," in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, pp. 554-60.

El-Affendi, Abdelwahab, *Who Needs an Islamic State?* Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Bannerman, Patrick, *Islam in Perspective: A Guide to Islamic Society, Politics and Law*, Chapter 3.

October 6 and 11: Role of the *Ulama* (documentary film shown in class on 6 October)

We will consider the following:

1. What is the basis of the *ulama*'s authority? How does one become a member of the *ulama*? Are the *ulama* equivalent to a clergy?
2. Do the *ulama* constitute a social or economic class?
3. Are there significant differences between the Sunni and Shi'i *ulama*?
4. What is the importance of the "source of imitation" (*marji' al-taqlid*) in the Shi'i hierarchy?
5. By what logic do the *ulama* acquire the duty to govern directly? What is the importance of *velayat-i-faqih* (= *wilayat al-faqih*)?
6. What is the relationship between the *ulama* and political authority?
7. In what ways can the *ulama* be said to be politically oppositional? Have they been "revolutionary" in Iran?
8. Has the authority of traditionally-trained *ulama* been undermined in the modern period?

Required Readings:

Eickelman, Dale and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, Chapter 3.

Ajami, Fouad, "In the Pharaoh's Shadow: Religion and Authority in Egypt," in *Islam in the Political Process*, James Piscatori (ed.), pp. 12-35.

Ghamari-Tabrizi, Behrooz, "The divine, the people, and the Faqih," in *A Critical Introduction to Khomeini*, Arshin Adib-Moghadam (ed.), pp. 211-38.

Zaman, Muhammad Qasim, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, Chapter 6.

October 13 and 18: The Compatibility of Islam and Democracy I

We will consider the following:

1. What is the importance of the concepts of consensus (*ijma'*) and consultation (*shura*) for the modern debate over Islam's democratic nature? Are these ideas equivalent to notions of democratic participation?
2. Is the idea of the sovereignty of God compatible with that of the sovereignty of the people?
3. Can Islam be said to be conducive to the concept of constitutionalism, or prescribed limitations on the powers of government?
4. Are notions of human rights, as understood in the West, recognized in Islamic thought or practice?

Required Readings:

Cook, Michael, *Ancient Religions, Modern Politics*, pp. 309-36.

Wagemakers, Joas, "'The *Kafir* Religion of the West': *Takfir* of Democracy and Democrats by Radical Islamists," pp. 327-53.

Na'ini, Muhammad Husayn, "Islam and Constitutional Government," in John Donohue and Esposito, John L. (eds.), *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives*, pp. 287-291.

Nuri, Fadlullah, "Refutation of the Idea of Constitutionalism," in John Donohue and Esposito, John L. (eds.), *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives*, pp. 292-296.

al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, "Islam and Democracy," in *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*, pp. 224-45.

October 20 and 25: The Compatibility of Islam and Democracy II:

Required Readings:

Mayer, Ann Elizabeth, *Islam and Human Rights: Tradition and Politics*. Chapters 5 and 6.

Cook, Michael, "Freedom," in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, pp. 174-75.

Enayat, Hamid, *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, pp. 125-139.

Kramer, Gudrun, "Islamist Notions of Democracy," in Joel Beinin and Joe Stork (eds.), *Political Islam: Essays from Middle East Report*, Chapter 6.

Hamid, Shadi, "The Future of Democracy in the Middle East: Islamist and Illiberal," in *The Atlantic*, May 6, 2014.

October 27: MID-TERM EXAM (in class)

November 8 and 10: The Transformation of Shi'i Traditions

We will consider the following:

1. How important have such ideas as martyrdom (*shahada*), anticipation of the Hidden Imam (*intizar*), and dissimulation (*taqiyya*) been in the formulation of traditional Shi'i political theory?
2. What circumstances led to the reformulation of these ideas and others in the twentieth century?
3. How important was Khomeini to this process of reformulation? Musa al-Sadr in Lebanon?
4. Has the Shi'i hierarchy of mullahs facilitated this transformation in thinking? Have lay thinkers been important actors in this process?
5. Is Shi'ism now the natural party of opposition and protest?
6. How has Shiism been transformed politically in Iraq?
7. Were the Shi'a organized enough to constitute a coherent opposition to Saddam Hussein in Iraq? What has been the role of the Da'wa Party (Hizb al-Da'wa al-Islamiyya)? Why did the Shi'i revolt against Saddam in the Spring of 1991 fail? Are the new Shii political parties in Iraq inspired by Khomeini's ideology?

Required Readings:

Ajami, Fouad, *The Vanished Imam: Musa al-Sadr and the Shia of Lebanon*, Chapter 4.

Enayat, Hamid, *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, Chapter 5.

Nakash, Yitzhak, *Reaching for Power: The Shi'a in the Modern Arab World*, Chapters 2 and 3.

Khumayni, Ayatollah Ruhallah, "Islamic Government," in John Donohue and John Esposito (eds.), *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives*, pp. 314-322.

Shari'ati, Ali, *Red Shi'ism*, pp. 1-17.

November 15 and 17: Shi'i Oppositional Movements

We will consider the following:

1. How important has the Iranian revolution been for the inspiration of Shi'i protest movements elsewhere? Does Iran "export" revolution?
2. How significant a role does the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) play in Iranian domestic and foreign policy? Does Khomeinism explain in part this role?
3. How can one explain the growth of Shi'i political activism in Lebanon?

4. How did Hezbollah become such a dominant force in Shii politics? Is it a Lebanese political party or an arm of Iran's revolutionary movement?

Required Readings:

Ajami, Fouad, *The Vanished Imam: Musa al-Sadr and the Shia of Lebanon*, Chapters 2 and 6.

Nakash, Yitzhak. *Reaching for Power: The Shi'a in the Modern Arab World*, Chapter 5.

Bruno, Greg, Jaysree Bajoria, and Jonathan Masters. "Iran's Revolutionary Guards," *Council on Foreign Relations*.

Hezbollah's "Open Letter" and "Political Charter"

"Iran's Secret Army," *BBC Documentary* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZI_88ChjQtU)

November 22 and 29: The Transformation of Sunni Traditions

We will consider the following:

1. How has modern Sunni thought dealt with the concept of *jihad*? What does it mean to say that it is the "missing precept" or "neglected duty" (*al-farida al-gha'iba*)?
2. What is the significance of the idea of *jahiliyya* ("era of ignorance") in modern Sunnism? What is the significance of the concept of *hakimiyya* (God's sovereignty) in modern Islamist thought?
3. How did Sayyid Qutb formulate his indictment of contemporary Muslim societies? What has his influence been?
4. Have intellectuals been relatively more important than the *ulama* in articulating a Sunni radicalism?
5. What is Salafism? How and why has Sunni Islamism been influenced by the Salafis? How have the Salafis integrated the concept of *hakimiyya*?

Required Readings:

Cook, Michael, *Ancient Religions, Modern Politics*, pp. 218-34.

Shepard, William, "Sayyid Qutb," in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, pp. 488-89.

Ahmad, Irfan, "Abu al-Ala Mawdudi," in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, pp. 332-34.

Qutb, Sayyid, *Milestones*, Introduction and chapters 4, and 7.

Faraj, Muhammad ‘Abd al-Salam, “The Neglected Duty,” in *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*, pp. 321-43.

Haykel, Bernard. “On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action,” in *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement*, 2009.

December 1 and 6: Sunni Oppositional Movements

We will consider the following:

1. What accounted for the development of the Muslim Brotherhood? Was it principally a reaction to Western imperialism or to corrupt local regimes?
2. Does Hamas, the Islamic movement in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, espouse a radically different program than that of the Palestine Liberation Organization?
3. What would be the typical profile – if such exists – of the Muslim activist or radical? Is there a class dimension to Islamic activism?
4. What is the Muslim Brotherhood’s record on democracy and how would you evaluate it?

Required Readings:

Wickham, Carrie, *The Muslim Brotherhood: Evolution of an Islamist Movement*, Chapters 2, 3, 5 and 7.

“Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) of Palestine,” in *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*, pp. 356-86.

December 8 and 13: Sunni Oppositional Movements—the Global Jihadis again

We will consider the following:

1. Why did Jihad go global?
2. What role did the war(s) in Afghanistan play in this process?
3. Can the defeat of the nationally-based Islamist struggles account for global jihadism?
4. What role do leaders such as Usama Bin Ladin and Ayman al-Zawahiri play in the global jihadi movement? Will the movement fail or end with their demise?
5. What is the importance of such ideologues as Abd Allah Azzam in formulating global jihadi doctrine?
6. Does Bin Laden’s al-Qaeda represent a globalized and transnational response to Western domination or are its aims confined to the Saudi and other national contexts?
7. What does attacking the “Far Enemy” mean? Who is the “Near Enemy”?
8. What role does a superpower such as the US play in perpetuating or degrading the claims of the global jihadis?
9. How is ISIS (The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) different from al-Qaeda?

Required Readings:

Wright, Lawrence, *The Looming Tower: al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, Chapters 3, 6, 18, and 19 (pp. 336-38, 354-55, 356-61).

Haykel, Bernard, "Al-Qa'ida and Shiism," in *Fault Lines in Global Jihad*, 2011.

Bunzel, Cole. 2015. "From Paper State to Caliphate: the ideology of the Islamic State." Analysis Paper no. 19, Brookings Institution. Available from <https://www.brookings.edu/research/from-paper-state-to-caliphate-the-ideology-of-the-islamic-state/>.

Bin Ladin, Usama, *Letter to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia*, July 1995.

Zawahiri, Ayman, "Letter from al-Zawahiri to al-Zarqawi, October 11, 2005," in Laura Mansfield (tr.), *His Own Words: The Writings of Dr. Ayman Zawahiri*.

December 15: Review Session for Final Exam