

POL S 3440/MID E 3644
COMPARATIVE POLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST
FALL 2005

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COURSE OVERVIEW

The analytical lens of ‘the fundamentalist threat’ monopolizes Western discourse—especially in the media—of the phenomenon known as Political Islam. Emphasis on a ‘fundamentalist threat’ hinders political analysis and any real understanding of the diversity and relationships of Islamist movements with modernity.

Burgat and Yavuz both call attention to the role that Political Islam plays in vernacularizing modernity for the Muslim masses. A vernacular is a common language and the language of Islam provides an indigenous vocabulary through which Muslims come to understand and aspire to democracy, a distinct civil society, modern capitalism, and, even, women’s rights.

This course will explore the role of colonialism, nationalism, economics, and conflict in shaping the modern Middle East as well as examine the relationship between Islamist movements and modernity. Previously expressed in Western terms, the West has held a virtual monopoly on modernity and ‘universal’ values expressed through a Western discourse. Is modernity solely the property of the West? Is Westernization the only path to modernization? Political Islam contests these notions and suggests that the analytical lens of ‘the fundamentalist threat’ obscures the emergence of an Islamic modernity.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Three analytical paradigms dominate the study of comparative politics of the Middle East. M. Hakan Yavuz discusses these analytical paradigms as essentialism, contextualism, and constructivism. Elsewhere they may be known as cultural, structural, and constructivist approaches. This class aims to acquaint students with these methods of studying Middle East politics.

Our approach to the comparative politics of the Middle East will be topical. Rather than relying upon in-depth case studies of a few particular countries, we will examine various issues or themes of relevance to the current political systems of the Middle East. It is useful to keep our analytical paradigms in mind when we examine these themes or issues. The overall goal of this class is to acquaint you with the major themes and issues that characterize modern politics in the Middle East while giving you the analytical tools to approach these issues in a more methodical and systematic manner.

COURSE TEXTS

The following books are available at the University Bookstore:
Milton-Edwards, Beverly. *Contemporary Politics in the Middle East*

Burgat, Francois. *Face to Face with Political Islam*

Yavuz, Hakan M. *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*.

Other readings will be on electronic reserve at the Marriott Library.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Presentation	50 pts.
Midterm I (Oct. 25)	50 pts.
Midterm II (Dec. 6)	50 pts.
Video Reviews	5 pts ea. (15 pts total)
Final Paper (Dec. 15)	100 pts
Participation	20 pts.
Total:	285 pts.

PRESENTATION:

You are required to make a presentation to the class discussing an Islamist movement. These will be group presentations. I will bring in a signup sheet. You should have an Islamist group and an alternative picked out by the next class period when I will ask your group to specify the Islamist group on which your group will present (please see suggestions attached to syllabus). You will be responsible for giving each person in your group a grade. I will average group grades with the presentation grade to derive individual grades.

In your presentation examine the following questions: What are the strategies and goals of the movement? What are its views with regard to democracy, civil society, women, or economics (pick one of the preceding to discuss in context of your chosen movement). You may not pick Al-Qaeda.

VIDEO REVIEWS:

A short one-page review (double-spaced) of videos shown in class is due at the beginning of the next class.

PARTICIPATION:

Attendance is mandatory as is participation in discussions and the presentations of others. You are expected to pay attention and ask relevant question of the presenters. Completing the reading in a timely manner will improve your ability to participate.

TAKE-HOME MIDTERMS

You will be given two take-home midterm that requires you to write essays in response to questions. Responses should be typed and double-spaced. There is a 5-page maximum on your answers.

FINAL PAPER:

Using one of the analytical paradigms covered by Yavuz (essentialism, contextualism, or constructivism) write a 7-8 page paper that analyzes an issue area for a Middle Eastern country of your choice. Issue areas include:

Colonialism
Nationalism
Political Islam
Women
Political Economy
Democratization
Liberalization
Civil Society

At least two of your sources must be academic. You must use appropriate citation and documentation (I don't really care which system you use—just use one). Finally, you must turn in a bibliography which does not count towards the 7-8 page total.

Persons with Disabilities:

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. In order to establish the existence of a disability and/or request reasonable accommodation for this class, you should contact the Center for Disabled Student Services (in Olpin Union Building at 581-5020, voice or TDD). Accommodations can then be made with reasonable prior notice to the instructor.

Plagiarism Policy:

Cases of suspected plagiarism will be reported to relevant university authorities and may result in severe consequences. If you are concerned about unintended plagiarism and would like to avoid it, please consult to various sources that describe how to cite references. There are also good online resources that describe ways to avoid internet plagiarism. If you have any further questions, please see me for clarification

CLASS SCHEDULE

Aug. 25: Introduction

Aug. 30 Read Milton-Edwards pp. ix-14
Burgat pp. xiii-9

Sept 1: **VIDEO: EDWARD SAID ON ORIENTALISM**

Sept 6: **VIDEO REVIEW DUE**
Read Yavuz pp. vii-35

COLONIALISM

Sept 8: Read Milton-Edwards ch. 1, pp. 15-40
Burgat ch. 1, pp. 10-23

NATIONALISM

Sept 13: Read Milton-Edwards ch. 2, pp. 41-67

Sept 15: Read Burgat ch. 2, pp. 24-42

Rashid Khalidi, "Arab Nationalism: Historical Problems in the Literature." (R)

Sept 20: Read Yavuz ch. 2, pp 36-58

Burgat ch. 3, pp. 43-58

POLITICAL ECONOMY

Sept 22: Read Milton-Edwards ch. 3, pp. 68-91

Clement Henry, "A Clash of Globalizations: Obstacles to Development in The Middle East." (R)

Sept 27: Read Yavuz, ch. 4, pp. 81-101 and ch. 6, pp. 133-150

WAR AND PEACE

Sept 29: Read Milton-Edwards ch. 4, pp. 93-120

Oct. 4: Read Burgat ch. 9, pp. 117-121

Ervand Abrahamian, "The US media, Huntington, and September 11." (R)

Augustus Richard Norton and Farhad Kazemi, "The Limits of Shock And Awe: America in the Middle East." (R)

Oct. 6: **FALL BREAK. NO CLASS.**

Oct. 11: **VIDEO: PEACE, PROPAGANDA & THE PROMISED LAND**

DEMOCRATIZATION

Oct. 13: **VIDEO REVIEW DUE**

Read Milton-Edwards ch. 6, pp. 145-171

Oct. 18: Read Yavuz ch. 3, pp. 59-79

Oct. 20: **TAKE-HOME MIDTERM HANDED OUT**

Read Burgat ch. 10, pp. 122-139

Reserve

CIVIL SOCIETY

Oct. 25: **TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DUE**

Yavuz, ch 5, pp. 103-131

Oct. 27: Yavuz, ch 7 and 8, pp.181-205

POLITICAL ISLAM

Nov. 1: Read Milton-Edwards ch 5 pp. 121-144
Burgat ch 4, pp. 59-72

Nov. 3: Read Burgat ch 5, pp.73-80, ch 7 and 8 pp. 91-116
PRESENTATION

Nov. 8: Read Yavuz ch 9 and 10, pp. 207-264
PRESENTATION

Nov. 10: **PRESENTATIONS**

Nov. 15: **PRESENTATIONS**

WOMEN

Nov. 17: Read Milton-Edwards ch. 7, pp.173-194
Burgat ch. 11, pp. 141-150

MINORITIES

Nov. 22: Milton-Edwards ch. 8, pp. 195-218

Nov. 24: **THANKSGIVING. NO CLASS.**

THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE 21ST CENTURY: PROSPECTS FOR AN ISLAMIC MODERNITY

Nov. 29: Read Robert W. Hefner, "Multiple Modernities: Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism in a Globalizing Age." (R)

Dec. 1: **TAKE-HOME MIDTERM II HANDED OUT**
Read Burgat ch. 12 and conclusion, pp. 152-185

Dec. 6: **TAKE-HOME MIDTERM II DUE**
VIDEO: TOMORROW'S ISLAM

Dec. 8: **VIDEO REVIEW DUE**
Read Yavuz conclusion, pp. 265-273
Milton-Edwards, conclusion, pp. 219

Final Paper due in the Political Science Department (OSH 252) on Thursday, December 15 at 4:00 p.m. **NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED.**

ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS: This list is suggestive and in no way exhaustive. Islamist movements are many and varied. You are allowed to use movements that do not appear on the list.

ALGERIA

FIS
GIA

TUNISIA

Al-Nahda(Rachid Al-Ghannouchi)

SUDAN

NIF (Hasan Al-Turabi)

OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Hamas
Islamic Jihad

EGYPT

Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood
Al-Gamaa Al-Islamiyya
Islamic Jihad
Al-Wasat
Al-Takfir w-al Hijra

TURKEY

AK Party
Fethullah Gulen (Neo-Nur)
Nurcu
Kurdish Hizbollah

JORDAN

Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood
Islamic Action Front

SYRIA

Syrian Muslim Brotherhood

LEBANON

Hizbollah

MOROCCO

al-Adl w-al Ihsan

SAUDI ARABIA

MIRA

IRAQ

United Iraqi Alliance
Al-Zarqawi

KUWAIT

Islamists

YEMEN

Islah

IRAN

Hardliners
Reformists

SUGGESTED LINKS AND RESOURCES:

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>
http://www.mepc.org/public_asp/main/main.asp
<http://www.merip.org/>
<http://www.arches.uga.edu/~godlas/home.html>
<http://www.islam-democracy.org/>
<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/>
http://www.isim.nl/content/content_page.asp?n1=1&n2=0&n3=0
<http://www.fethullahgulen.org/>
<http://english.aljazeera.net/HomePage>
<http://www.dr.soroush.com/English.htm>

<http://www.ummah.org.uk/ikhwan/>

Jenny B. White: *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey*

Carrie Rosefsky Wickham: *Mobilizing Islam*

Barry Rubin: *Revolutionaries and Reformers: Contemporary Islamist Movements in the Middle East*

Geneive Abdo: *No God but God: Egypt and the Triumph of Political Islam*

Mamoun Fandy: *Saudi Arabia and the Politics of Dissent*

John Esposito: *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*

Geneive Abdo and Jonathan Lyon: *Answering Only to God: Faith and Freedom in Twenty-First Century Iran*

Janine A. Clark: *Islam, Charity, and Activism: Middle Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan*

Quintan Wiktorwicz: *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*

Francois Burgat: *The Islamic Movement in North Africa*