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Islam and Democracy in the Middle East
Spring 2011

Instructor: Dalia F. Fahmy
Location: Regina B. Heldrich Science Building (HSB), 201
Email: dalaf@rci.rutgers.edu
Time: M & TH 10:55 AM - 12:15 PM
Office Hours: Monday 12:30-2:30 Hickman Hall, Room 305, and by appointment

Course Overview:
Since 2001 moderate Islamist oriented politicians have come to power in traditional US allies like Egypt, Kuwait and Turkey. While political Islam is a diverse phenomenon, including radical militants within the mix, the majority of Islamists today speak with moderate voices. They support social and political freedoms, free market economic principles, civil and human rights, and democracy. This course examines the patterns of interaction between Islamic movements and democratization in different Muslim societies. In contemporary societies, notions of the sacred continue to be vital yet ever changing. Across the globe in places such as India, Poland, Brazil, Israel, Iran, and not least the United States, religious traditions and the norms derived from them continue to play a prominent and contentious role in their respective societies. One of the major forces of the 21st century has been the socio-political Islamic movement based upon a religious understanding of the public sphere and political reasoning. It may be that reconstruction is a better word than rediscovery or revival to understand these religious ideas, organizations, and processes in a given polity. This course will examine attempts by Islamic groups, movements, and networks to influence political processes.

I. Questions
This course aims to address the following questions: Are Islam and Democracy compatible? How is religious interest defined? How are Islamic images and institutions used? What is the historical relationship between Islam and politics? When and under what conditions is Islam publicized and politicized? Is Islam compatible with modernity? Is it possible to be modern and Muslim at the same time? How do Islamic scholars deal with the questions of “difference”, democracy, and science? The major task of this course will be to assess how religion makes an impact on politics, state and society and in turn is impacted upon and potentially transformed by society, politics and the state.

II. Objectives
The goal of this course is to provide students with an improved conceptual and theoretical understanding of the study of Islam and democracy. There will be a great emphasis on the conceptual origins as well as how they are applied/utilized/manipulated by different groups, movements, and/or states. We will also examine several leading theoretical approaches to questions such as those posed above and draw upon a range of past and present examples, events and case studies in order to evaluate the claims and explanatory power of various theories.

Given the course's theoretical orientation, it will not be possible to discuss many current events in an in-depth, comprehensive or systematic fashion. We will, however, relate the concepts discussed in the course to a range of recent events, developments and ongoing trends in the political world. Thus, students who read the world politics/international affairs section of a leading newspaper (New York Times or the Washington Post) on a regular basis are likely to get more out of the course and be better prepared for course discussions, assignments and examinations. As such, reading a major newspaper on a regular basis is strongly recommended. The New York Times and the Washington Post are available for free, on-line.

Course Requirements:
1) Participation is very important for understanding the complex themes and ideas in this course. Remember this is a forum for the free exchange of ideas, so participation is key to your learning experience.

2) Map Exam—this will occur early in the semester. This is meant to familiarize you with the region we are studying. The map exam is worth 10% of your grade. The map exam will be on, February 24, 2010.
3) Exams – There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. The final exam will cover the post-midterm material. The midterm is worth 40% of your grade, and the final is worth 40% of your grade. You must take each test to pass the course.

4) Reading Quizzes – I will give 6 short reading quizzes at the start of class throughout the course, you must pass 5 out of 6 to get the full 10%. There is no schedule for these; they will be given randomly. The purpose of these is to make sure you are keeping up with the readings.

** You must do all of the work, you cannot decide not to take an exam and loose points. Loss of points is on performance, not on lack of handing in work or missing exam.

Grading Breakdown:

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<tr>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Map Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading quizzes</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
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Performance:

Doing well in this course requires keeping up with reading assignments, attending class regularly and taking quality notes on class lectures, discussions and readings. Please note that students should take notes on more than the instructor’s lectures. The reading load is substantial, but warranted. Reading assignments should be completed BEFORE class on the date listed. Please note that it is the student’s responsibility to remain informed about any changes in the syllabus, assignments and requirements as well as to obtain handouts distributed in class. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate, I will not be providing lecture notes to students.

Make-ups will not be offered for the exams or quizzes.

If you know that you will be unable to take an exam or quiz, see the professor in advance. If you miss class the day of an exam or quiz, you will not receive credit for the assignment. Unless a dean’s excuse is provided in a timely fashion, you will receive a temporary failing grade for any missed exam or assignment until you complete the work.

Reading Requirements:

1) **Textbooks:**
   - Fatima Mernissi, *Islam and Democracy, 2nd ed.* (Perseus Books)
   - Riverbend, *Baghdad Burning* (Feminist Press)

2) All readings not in the textbook will be on the Sakai website for this class.

**Academic Integrity**

Violations of Rutgers University’s Academic Integrity code will not be tolerated. Those students whose actions appear to be in violation of the code will be referred to the appropriate dean for disciplinary action. The Rutgers University official policy on academic integrity is available online at [http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html](http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html); ignorance of any of these policies is not an excuse for violations.
Week 1
Thursday, 1/20  Welcome Introduction and course overview

Week 2
Monday, 1/24  What is Islam? & What is Democracy?
Aslan, No God but God, Chronology of key events, xxxi-xxxii, 3-106.

Thursday, 1/27 Film:  “Islam, Empire of Faith”

Week 3
Monday, 1/31  Film:  “Islam, Empire of Faith”
Conclusion and Discussion

Thursday, 2/3  Basic Concepts to the study of Islam and Democracy
Cleveland, William, A History of the Modern Middle East, 3rd ed., 1-35

Week 4
Monday, 2/7  Islam and democracy: compatible or incompatible concepts? Part I
Hypothesis 1: Islam is incompatible with democracy
Bernard Lewis, What Went Wrong?, 3-17, 151-160

Thursday 2/10  Islam and democracy: compatible or incompatible concepts? Part II
Hypothesis 2: Islam is compatible with democratic governance
Fareed Zakaria, “The Islamic Exception,” in The Future of Freedom, 119-159
Aslan, No God but God, 249-266
Tessler, Mark, “Do Islamic Orientations Influence Attitudes Towards Democracy in the Arab World?,” in R. Ingelhart, ed, Islam, Gender, Culture and Democracy, 6-22

Week 5
Monday, 2/14  Islam and democracy: compatible or incompatible concepts? Part III
Hypothesis 3: thinking about Islam and democracy in more complex ways

Thursday, 2/17  Language Lab # 1
Intro to alphabet, history of language through a map

Week 6
Monday, 2/21  Pan-Islamism & Pan-Arabism
10-12. (Sakai)
Fred H. Lawson “PensÈe 4: Out with the Old, In with the New” International Journal of Middle East Studies. Volume 41, Issue 01, 2009. (Sakai)
Mellon, James G. “Pan-Arabism, Pan-Islamism and Inter-State Relations in the Arab World.” Nationalism & Ethnic Politics; Winter2002, Vol. 8 Issue 4, p1-15 (Sakai)

Thursday, 2/24  MAP EXAM
Islam and Democracy in EGYPT I
Cleveland, A History of the Modern Middle East, xxx-xxx (Sakai)
Aslan, No God but God, 171-193.

Week 7
Monday, 2/28  Islam and Democracy in EGYPT II
Film: “A veiled revolution”
Cleveland, A History of the Modern Middle East, 119-143, 234-237, 301-344 (Sakai)
Bergesen, A.J., The Sayyid Qutb Reader, 3-13 (Sakai)

Thursday, 3/3  Islam and Democracy in EGYPT - Today
Olivier Roy, "The Impasses of Islamist Ideology,” in The Failure of Political Islam, 60-74 (Sakai)
Khalid Al-Khamsi. Taxi.

Week 8
Monday, 3/7  MIDTERM EXAM
Thursday 3/10  Language Lab # 2
3-word roots

Week 9
Monday, 3/14  SPRING BREAK
Thursday, 3/17  SPRING BREAK

Week 10
Monday, 3/21  Iran, theocracy, and a history of the Sunni/Shia divide
Cleveland, A History of the Modern Middle East,185-192, 423-450 (Sakai)

Thursday 3/24  The Islamic Revolution in IRAN
Abrahamian, Ervand, Khomeimism Essays on the Islamic Republic, 1-59 (Sakai)
Baktiari, Bahman, “Dilemmas of Reform and Democracy in the Islamic Republic of Iran,” in Hefner, Remaking Muslim Politics, 112-132

Week 11
Monday, 3/28  Islamism in TURKEY - a history
Cleveland, A History of the Modern Middle East, 175-185 (Sakai)
Lee, Robert D., Religion and Politics in the Middle East, 167-211 (Sakai)
Thursday, 3/31  Islamism in TURKEY - today

Week 12
Monday 4/4  Language Lab # 3
Lost in translation

Thursday 4/7  Iraq – a modern day democratization project (?)
al-Ruhaïmi, Abdul-Halim, “The Da’wa Islamic Party: Origins, Actors and Ideology,” in Ayatollahs, Sufis and Ideologues: State, Religion and Social Movements in Iraq, 149-161 (Sakai)
Riverbend, Baghdad Burning, 7-178
Davis, E., “Rebuilding a Non-Sectarian Iraq,” Strategic Insights, VI/6 (Dec. 2007) (Sakai)

Week 13
Monday, 4/11  Iraq – sectarianism?
Film: Bagdad High

Thursday, 4/14  Islam & Gender I
Mernissi, Fatima, The Forgotten Queens of Islam, 9-25, 71-114, 179-189 (Sakai)
Mernissi, Islam and Democracy, 149-171.
Fish, Steven, “Islam and Authoritarianism,” World Politics, 55/1 (Oct. 2002): 4-37 (Sakai)

Week 14
Monday, 4/18  Islam & Gender II
Whitaker, Brian, “Should I kill myself?,” in Unspeakable Love: Gay and Lesbian Life in the Middle East, 143-176. (Sakai)
Film: “They Call Me Muslim”

Thursday, 4/21  Film: “Inside Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think”
* Reaction paper due 4/28

Week 15
Monday, 4/25  Language Lab # 4
Media in ME

Thursday 4/28  New Directions: The role of the media

Week 16
Monday, 5/2  A look towards the Future...
Conclusion, Final Thoughts, Evaluations

FINAL EXAM:  Friday, May 6, 2010.  8:00 am – 11:00 am