

James Madison College/  
Department of Political Science  
Michigan State University  
Spring 2006  
MC 420/PLS460

Professor Mohammed Ayoob  
316 South Case Hall  
Office hrs: Wed, 1:30-3:30pm  
E-mail: ayoob@msu.edu  
Tel: 517-353-3538

TA: Matthew Kirwin  
E-mail: kirwinma@msu.edu  
Tel: 631-255-1338 (cell)

Matthew's office hrs:  
S. Case Hall: Mon, Noon to 1pm  
217 S.Kedzie, Thurs, 2 to 3pm

## **ISLAM AND WORLD POLITICS**

### Course Description:

MC420/PLS460 is devised as a survey course to introduce students to the interaction between religion and politics in the Muslim world, with special emphasis on the Middle East, and the impact of this interaction both on domestic and international order. Primary attention will be devoted to the Middle East for two reasons: one, because of its strategic importance to American policy, and, two, because historically it has formed the political, even if not the demographic, heartland of the Muslim world. Given the broad range of the course, it will straddle the disciplines of history and political science and, within the latter, the sub-disciplines of political theory, international relations and comparative politics.

The course will begin by introducing students to the notion of "politics" in Islamic discourse and by analyzing the nature of the interaction between religion and state in Islamic political theory and Muslim political practice. It will then analyze the interaction between "Islamdom" and "Christendom" both during the nearly thousand years of Muslim ascendancy and during the past three centuries of Western domination of Muslim lands. This interaction has had tremendous impact in terms of shaping Western views of Islam as well as Muslim, especially Middle Eastern, views of the West. Equally important, the period of colonial domination has greatly influenced both Islamic political theories and Muslim political practice during the modern era. The imported idea of the nation state and the secular political ideologies that accompanied it have, however, by and large failed to deliver wealth, power or dignity to Muslim countries and peoples. This has resulted in attempts by some political thinkers and political activists to resurrect an imagined past and return to the Golden Age of pure and pristine Islam that, in their view, had laid the foundations for Muslim political power, economic affluence, and cultural brilliance. However, these modern visions of the Golden Age have been to a large extent romanticized responses to the challenge of modernity from a position of material weakness. In other words, history has been re-interpreted by these scholars and activists in the light of present predicaments and aspirations for the future. In the process it has provided revivalist movements with a potent political weapon capable of challenging both domestic political orders in Muslim countries and the international order fashioned in, and by, the West.

As the last sentence suggests, such responses have not been constructed in an international vacuum. The presence of superior Western military and economic power in Muslim lands and the West's demonstrated capacity to shape as well as distort the future of Muslim countries has been a major catalyst in creating these responses. After World War II, the United States has epitomized Western power in the eyes of Muslim peoples around the world, especially in the Middle East. The United States has played a significant role in the politics and the economics of the Muslim world. The foreign policies of most Middle Eastern states have been determined by the presence and the actual or potential exercise of American power. In some cases, American policies, especially those highly supportive of Israel on the one hand and of repressive Middle Eastern regimes on the other, have greatly augmented, if not actually created, radical Islamic responses to the challenges faced by Muslim societies. This process has been accelerated by the American-led invasion of Iraq and the subsequent collapse of political order within that country that has allowed the influx of Muslim radicals into Iraq from many parts of the Muslim world. The course will attempt to look at the relationship between the United States and the Middle East to assess the impact of American policies and the nature of Middle Eastern responses, increasingly couched in Islamic vocabulary, to these policies. In the process it will attempt to grapple with the question whether a clash of civilizations between America/the West and Islam is inevitable or whether there is room simultaneously for accommodation and confrontation.

At the same time, it must be clearly recognized that political Islam is not a monolithic phenomenon and there are tremendous diversities among Muslim societies, even within the geographic area we have come to know as the Middle East (West Asia and North Africa would be a more accurate geographic description of the region). The politics of Islam within Muslim states of the Middle East is in substantial measure the product of the social and economic contexts and the nature of regimes in individual countries. As in the rest of the Third World, colonially crafted boundaries have come to determine political imaginations in the Muslim world. This applies as much to Islamist political imaginations as it does to secular ones. The course will attempt to analyze the interaction between religion and politics within selected Middle Eastern countries in order to understand the social, economic and political variables that have been, and are, critical in determining the nature of such interactions within discrete Muslim societies.

#### Course Requirements:

The course will primarily employ a lecture-discussion format interspersed with student-led panel discussions on specific topics. Students are encouraged to take part in discussions in every class meeting after a thorough reading of the day's material and careful attention to the instructor's presentation. Lectures will not regurgitate information available in the readings but complement them by filling in gaps and analyzing issues from the instructor's perspective. Attendance in class is essential because students are expected to have a thorough understanding of the readings as well as the contents of the lectures and will be examined on the basis of their familiarity with both readings and lectures.

Students will be evaluated on the basis of two exams and a research paper. The three assignments will be weighted equally. Each student will write a research paper on a facet of the interaction between Islam and politics in one of the four countries studied in detail in the course – Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, and Turkey. The exact focus of each student’s paper will be determined in consultation with the instructor. This paper must not exceed 10 pages typed double space. Research papers will be due on March 29. Students will conduct their research independently on the basis of published material. Students must complete all assignments satisfactorily in order to receive a passing grade. Plagiarism, as defined by University and College regulations, will be severely punished.

Conference on “Understanding Wahhabism: Reformist Ideology or Radical Creed?”

A major conference on the above subject, sponsored by the Muslim Studies Program and James Madison College, will be held on April 7-8. This conference will be considered an integral part of the course and class discussions led by students will follow the conference. All students are strongly urged to attend.

Required Readings:

Karen Armstrong, Islam: A Short History

L. Carl Brown, Religion and State: The Muslim Approach to Politics

Gilles Kepel, Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam (identified as Kepel, Jihad)

Rashid Khalidi, Resurrecting Empire

Gilles Kepel, The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West (identified as Kepel, War)

A number of journal articles are prescribed for the course. They will be made available on the course WebPages in Angel either in full or as links to original sources during the first week of class. Links for articles to be discussed in the first week of class are provided in the syllabus.

Recommended Readings:

General:

Bruce Feiler: Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths

Fawaz Gerges: The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global

Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, The Next Attack

For individual countries:

Egypt:

Carrie R. Wickham, Mobilizing Islam

Maye Kassem, Egyptian Politics: The Dynamics of Authoritarian Rule

Iran:

Ali M. Ansari, Iran, Islam and Democracy

Daniel Brumberg, Reinventing Khomeini

Saudi Arabia:

Madawi Al-Rasheed, A History of Saudi Arabia

Mamoun Fandy, Saudi Arabia and the Politics of Dissent

Turkey:

Jenny B. White, Islamist Mobilization in Turkey

M. Hakan Yavuz, Islamic Political Identity in Turkey

Lecture Topics and Course Assignments:

Jan 9: Course Introduction: What is Islam? What is Political Islam? Why is Political Islam Important to the United States?

**Jan 11: “Islam and Muslims in the Mind of America”, Lecture by Professor Fawaz Gerges, Sarah Lawrence College**

Readings:

Fawaz Gerges, “Islam and Muslims in the Mind of America” Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, July 2003. Available on the web at

[http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/588/1/73?maxtoshow=&HITS=10&hits=10&RESULTFORMAT=&author1=Gerges%2C+Fawaz&andorexactfulltext=and&searchid=1135980626330\\_138&FIRSTINDEX=0&sortspec=relevance&resourcetype=1&journalcode=spann](http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/588/1/73?maxtoshow=&HITS=10&hits=10&RESULTFORMAT=&author1=Gerges%2C+Fawaz&andorexactfulltext=and&searchid=1135980626330_138&FIRSTINDEX=0&sortspec=relevance&resourcetype=1&journalcode=spann)

Geneive Abdo, “Islam in America: Separate but Unequal”, Washington Quarterly, Autumn 2005. Available on the web at

[http://www.twq.com/05autumn/docs/05autumn\\_abdo.pdf](http://www.twq.com/05autumn/docs/05autumn_abdo.pdf)

**Jan 11, 7:30pm, Kellogg Center Auditorium: Public lecture by Professor Fawaz Gerges on “Why Jihad Went Global”. THIS LECTURE IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE COURSE.**

Jan 16: No class, MLK Day

Jan 18: Abraham’s Legacies: Comparing Islam, Judaism and Christianity

Readings:

Brown, Intro and chs. 1-4

Armstrong, ch. 1

Jan 23: Religion and State in Classical Islam: Theory and Practice

Readings:

Brown, chs. 5-7

Jan 25: Islamdom Triumphant: From 7<sup>th</sup> Century CE to 17<sup>th</sup> Century CE

Readings:

Armstrong, chs. 1-4

Jan 30: The Tide Turns: The Impact of Western Colonialism on Islamic Lands

Readings:

Brown, chs. 8-10

Armstrong, ch. 5

Feb 1: The Idea of the Nation State and the Disintegration of the Umma

Readings:

Brown, ch. 11

Mohammed Ayoob, "Deciphering Islam's Multiple Voices", Middle East Policy, Fall 2005

Feb 6: The Failure of Secular Ideologies and the "Return" of Islam

Readings:

Brown, chs. 12-13

Feb 8: The Twentieth Century Sunni Radicals: Mawdudi, Al-Banna, Qutb

Readings:

Brown, ch. 14

Kepel, Jihad, ch. 1

Feb 13 The Twentieth Century Shia Radicals: Shariati, Khomeini

Readings:

Brown, ch. 15

Kepel, Jihad, ch. 1

Feb 15: Islamist Movements and the Revival of the Concept of Jihad

Readings:

Kepel, Jihad, chs. 2-7

Feb 20: Islamism or Islamisms?

Readings:

International Crisis Group, "Understanding Islamism", ICG Middle East/North Africa Report, No. 37, March 2005

Mohammed Ayoob, "Political Islam: Image and Reality", World Policy Journal, Fall 2004

Feb 22: Course Review

**Feb 27: Midterm Exam**

Mar 1: Islam and Politics in Saudi Arabia

Readings:

Kepel, Jihad, ch. 3

Kepel, War, ch. 5

Eric Rouleau, "Trouble in the Kingdom", Foreign Affairs, July-August 2002

Michael Scott Doran, "The Saudi Paradox", Foreign Affairs, January-February 2004

Rachel Bronson, "Rethinking Religion: The Legacy of the U.S.-Saudi Relationship", Washington Quarterly, Autumn 2005

International Crisis Group, Saudi Arabia Backgrounder: Who are the Islamists, ICG Middle East Report No. 31, September 2004

Mar 13: Islam and Politics in Egypt

Readings:

Kepel, Jihad, chs. 4 (the part on Egypt) and 12

Hesham al-Awadi, "Mubarak and the Islamists: Why Did the Honeymoon End?", Middle East Journal, Winter 2005

Bassma Kodmani, "The Dangers of Political Exclusion: Egypt's Islamist Problem", Carnegie Papers, Middle East Series No. 63, October 2005

Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, "The Path to Moderation: Strategy and Learning in the Formation of Egypt's *Wasat* Party", Comparative Politics, January 2004

Mar 15: Islam and Politics in Iran

Readings:

Kepel, Jihad, ch. 5

Ali M. Ansari, "Continuous Regime Change from Within", Washington Quarterly, Autumn 2003 in

Mahmood Sariolghalam, "Understanding Iran: Getting Past Stereotypes and Mythology", Washington Quarterly, Autumn 2003 in

Ray Takeyh and Nikolas K. Gvosdev, "Pragmatism in the Midst of Iranian Turmoil", Washington Quarterly, Autumn 2004 in

Abbas Milani, "U. S. Foreign Policy and the Future of Democracy in Iran", Washington Quarterly, Summer 2005

Vali Nasr, "Iran's Peculiar Election: The Conservative Wave Rolls On", Journal of Democracy, October 2005

Mar 20: Islam and Politics in Turkey

Readings:

Kepel, Jihad, ch. 15

Soli Ozel, "After the Tsunami", Journal of Democracy, April 2003  
Mohammed Ayoob, "Turkey's Multiple Paradoxes", Orbis, Summer 2004  
Graham Fuller, "Turkey's Strategic Model: Myths and Realities", Washington Quarterly, Summer 2004  
Sultan Tepe, "Turkey's AKP: A Model 'Muslim Democratic' Party?", Journal of Democracy, July 2005

Mar 22: Context Matters: Islam and Politics in Muslim Countries

Readings:

Mohammed Ayoob, "Political Islam: Image and Reality", World Policy Journal, Fall 2004  
Ray Takeyh and Nikolas K. Gvosdev, "Radical Islam: The Death of an Ideology?", Middle East Policy, Winter 2004  
Vali Nasr, "The Rise of 'Muslim Democracy'", Journal of Democracy, April 2005  
Kepel, War, ch. 7 and Conclusion

### **Mar 27: Research Papers Due**

Mar 27: The United States, the Middle East, and Political Islam: The Background

Readings:

Khalidi, Intro and ch.1

March 29: The United States, the Middle East, and Political Islam: The Oil Factor

Readings:

Khalidi, ch. 3  
Shibley Telhami and Fiona Hill, "Does Saudi Arabia Still Matter?", Foreign Affairs, November-December 2002  
Putting Energy in the Spotlight: BP Statistical Review of World Energy, June 2005

Apr 3: The United States, the Middle East, and Political Islam: The Problem of Israel

Readings:

Khalidi, ch. 4  
Kepel, Jihad, ch. 14  
Kepel, War, Intro and ch. 1  
Shibley Telhami, "The Ties that Bind: Americans, Arabs, and Israelis After September 11", Foreign Affairs, March/April 2004

Apr 5: The Impact of the Afghan "Jihad" and the Gulf War (1991) on the Middle East and Political Islam

Readings:

Kepel, Jihad, chs. 6, 9 and 13

**April 7-8: Conference on “Understanding Wahhabism: Reformist Ideology or Radical Creed?”**

**Apr 10: “Salafis/Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia and Abroad”, Lecture by Professor Bernard Haykel, New York University**

Apr 12: Al-Qaeda and “The Far Enemy”: Jihad Goes Global

Readings:

Fawaz A. Gerges, “Religious Nationalists and the Near Enemy” ch. 1 from The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global, 2005.

Kepel, War, ch. 3

Apr 17: 9/11 and its Impact on American Foreign Policy: The Invasion of Afghanistan and its Aftermath

Readings:

Michael Scott Doran, “Somebody Else’s Civil War” Foreign Affairs, January-February 2002

Mohammed Ayoob, “Southwest Asia After the Taliban”, Survival, Spring 2002

Kathy Gannon, “Afghanistan Unbound”, Foreign Affairs, May-June 2004

Carol Riphenburg, “Afghanistan’s Constitution: Success or Sham?”, Middle East Policy, Spring 2005

Apr 19: The United States and the War against Iraq

Readings:

Kenneth M. Pollack, “Next Stop Baghdad?”, Foreign Affairs, March-April 2002 in Islam and World Politics

Mohammed Ayoob, “The War Against Iraq: Normative and Strategic Implications”, Middle East Policy, Summer 2003

Larry Diamond, “What Went Wrong in Iraq”, Foreign Affairs, September-October 2004  
Khalidi, ch. 2

Kepel, War, ch. 2

Apr 24: The United States, Al-Qaeda, and Political Islam in the Aftermath of Iraq

Readings:

Kepel, War, chs. 4 and 6

Khalidi, ch. 5

Shaul Mishal and Maoz Rosenthal, “Al Qaeda as a Dune Organization: Toward a Typology of Islamic Terrorist Organizations”, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, July-August 2005.

Peter Bergen and Alec Reynolds, “Blowback Revisited”, Foreign Affairs, Nov/Dec 2005

Apr 26: The Future of Political Islam

Readings:

Graham Fuller, "The Future of Political Islam", Foreign Affairs, March/April 2002

Mohammed Ayooob, "The Future of Political Islam: The Importance of External Variables", International Affairs, October 2005

**May 1: 10am-Noon: Final exam**