

Modern Islam: Religion 5000
Fall 2009
Th 10:00-12:30

Professor Auer
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Th 12:30-1:30 or by appointment

ISLAMIC IDENTITIES: COLONIALISM, NATIONALISM, AND MODERNITY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores contemporary issues in understanding Islam in the modern world from cultural, political and religious perspectives. To begin it looks at the interactions of cultures in the period of high colonialism, a time of conquest and cultural contact. The survey of this period highlights the major historical issues that have come to shape contemporary debates about Islam: secularization, religious education, missionaries, orientalism, fundamentalism, and reform. This course delves into the post-colonial era and the reshaping of Muslim societies with the birth of nation-states in the twentieth century. We examine and discuss the relationships between Islam and democracy, the transformations of Islamic religious institutions and the Muslim religious elite in India, the Iranian revolution in the establishment of modern Islamic governance, gender and diversity in Islam, and the place of Muslims minorities in American and European polities.

COURSE GOALS

- 1) Trace the development of political Islam from the 19th century and discuss that history's relevance for understanding Islam and contemporary politics.
- 2) Understand the effects of colonialism on Muslim societies and its influence on Islamic religious education and religious movements.
- 3) Describe the role of nationalism, democracy and Islam in contexts from Europe, America, South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

REQUIREMENTS

- Seminar attendance and oral participation as well as the completion of assigned readings *before* class time.
- Preparation of a series of short reports, and a research paper presentation, as indicated below. These must be prepared and distributed in time for class discussion.
- A one-page prospectus for the final paper, due in class on Thursday, November 5. The prospectus should consist of a description of your chosen topic, a statement of method, and an initial bibliography (10-15 sources).

- A final research paper of 15-20 pages, due in Professor Auer's mailbox in Moore Hall no later than Monday, December 14. **Please note: Extensions for the submission of the final paper will be granted only in extreme circumstances. Plan carefully for this deadline.**

Exercises

1. Genealogy and lineage of a term; the shifting uses of a term.

As Wilfred Cantwell Smith showed about the term "religion," its meaning has changed significantly over the centuries. See the over 70 pages of general description related to the term, beginning with Winston King's essay "Religion," in the *Encyclopedia of Religion* for an initial sense of complexity and change. We learn that a single term conceals within itself multiple significations or referents that carry us back to other words, contexts, philosophical debates, historical developments, and surprising lineages. By doing a genealogy of a critical term we are introduced, in part, to a genealogy linking individuals, places, encounters, misunderstandings and choices i.e. to the social and individual contexts of key terms. We are aware today that terms we use are dynamic and rarely stable and we are unable to control their uses and meanings. This is equally if not more true with terms used in relation to the study of Islam.

In doing this exercise you are invited to range widely over the "fields" of religion, history, anthropology, political science, literary studies, and Islamic studies as they relate to your interests. As you will see this course employs an approach to the study of religion in general and Islam in particular that is trans-disciplinary in nature. As such, you may find terms like "religion," "belief," "sacrifice," "gender," "performance," etc. of primary interest. Or you may be drawn to terms like "primitive," "civilized," "history," "The West," "The East," "terrorist," "culture," "Islam," "Asia," "America," and so forth. Chose from a wide range of terms to do your genealogy. Think of terms like "fundamentalism," "conservative," "liberal," "modernist," "reform," "conversion," and more.

Strategies for undertaking the assignment include the following: a) begin by comparing articles in the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* edited by James Hastings and the *Encyclopedia of Religion* or any other set of reference works spaced apart in time or organized along different lines: the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* published in 1771 or any other early edition; the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (c. 1930) compared with the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, etc. Also be aware of more recent, more focused encyclopedias especially the series published by Oxford University Press. For instance, see the very useful *Oxford Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, or *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*. Also, familiarize yourself with the most important reference on the study of Islam, the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* published by Brill. Search bibliographies in new term focused studies such as *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* and *Critical Terms for Literary Studies*. Check with Walter Capps' *Religious Studies: The Making of a Discipline*.

- Assignment: prepare a 3-4 page analysis of a term's use in relation to Islam considering the above. This analysis is due in class on Tuesday, September 15. Please bring copies to share with everyone in class.
2. Research paper presentation 30 minutes in length week of December 8th and 10th.

Readings:

Colonialism

September 8th and 10th

Eisenstadt, Shmuel N., and Wolfgang Schluchter. "Introduction: Paths to Early Modernities: A Comparative View." *Daedalus* 127, no. 3 (1998): 1-18. [Course Reserves]

Wittrock, Björn. "Early Modernities: Varieties and Transitions." *Daedalus* 127, no. 3 (1998): 19-40. [Course Reserves]

Menocal, María Rosa. "The Myth of Westernness in Medieval Literary Historiography." In *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy*, edited by Michael Sells and Emran Qureshi, 249-87. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003. [Waldo Library Reserve Desk]

September 15th and 17th

Davis, Natalie Zemon. *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim Between Worlds*. 1st ed. New York: Hill and Wang, 2006.

September 22nd and 24th

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.

September 29th and October 1st

Metcalf, Thomas R. *Ideologies of the Raj*, The New Cambridge History of India. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Film: *Shatranj ki Khilari*

October 6th and 8th

Zaman, Muhammad Qasim. *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*, Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.

Nationalism

October 13th and 15th

Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan: Islam and the Making of State Power, Religion and Global Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. [Waldo Library Reserve Desk]

October 20th and 22nd

Readings from Aziz, Ahmad, and Gustave E. Von Grunebaum. *Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan 1857-1968*. Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1970. [Waldo Library Reserve Desk]

October 27th and 29th

Mottahedeh, Roy P. *The Mantle of the Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran*. 1st Pantheon pbk. ed. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.

Modernity

November 3rd and 5th

Ahmed, Leila. *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.

November 10th and 12th

Arkoun, Mohammed. "Rethinking Islam Today." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 588 (2003): 18-39. [Course Reserves]

Safi, Omid. "Introduction: *The Times They Are a-Changin'* - a Muslim Quest for Justice, Gender Equality, and Pluralism." In *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, edited by Omid Safi, 1-29. Oxford: Oneworld, 2003. [Waldo Library Reserve Desk]

Abou El Fadl, Khaled. "The Ugly Modern and the Modern Ugly: Reclaiming the Beautiful in Islam." In *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, edited by Omid Safi, 33-77. Oxford: Oneworld, 2003. [Waldo Library Reserve Desk]

November 17th and 19th

Ramadan, Tariq. *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

November 24th

Film: *Persepolis*

December 1st and 3rd

Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck. "The Dynamics of Islamic Identity in North America." In *Muslims on the Americanization Path?*, edited by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and John L. Esposito, 19-46. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. [Waldo Library Reserve Desk]

Abou El Fadl, Khaled. "Striking a Balance: Islamic Legal Discourse on Muslim Minorities." In *Muslims on the Americanization Path?*, edited by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and John L. Esposito, 47-63. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. [Waldo Library Reserve Desk]

Film: *The Birth of Muslim Cool*

December 8th and 10th

Paper Presentations

Further Suggested Reading:

Kopf, David. *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance: The Dynamics of Indian Modernization, 1773-1835*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.

Umar, Muhammad Sani. *Islam and Colonialism: Intellectual Responses of Muslims of Northern Nigeria to British Colonial Rule*, Islam in Africa. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Göle, Nilüfer. *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling*, Critical Perspectives on Women and Gender. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996.

Cohn, Bernard S. *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Hammoudi, Abdellah. *A Season in Mecca: Narrative of a Pilgrimage*. Translated by Pascale Ghazelah. New York: Hill and Wang, 2006.

Voll, John Obert. *Islam, Continuity and Change in the Modern World*. 2nd ed, Contemporary Issues in the Middle East. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994.

Metcalf, Barbara. "The Madrasa at Deoband: A Model for Religious Education in Modern India." *Modern Asian Studies* 12, no. 1 (1978): 111-34.

Viswanathan, Gauri. *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*, The Social Foundations of Aesthetic Forms. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.

Ockley, Simon. *The History of the Saracens: Comprising the Lives of Mohammed and His Successors, to the Death of Abdalmelik, the Eleventh Caliph*. London: Henry G. Bohn, 1857.

(Discuss this work which was first published in 1708 under title: *The Conquest of Syria, Persia, and Egypt by the Saracens*. It was then republished many times over the centuries such as the edition cited above.)

Green, Samuel. *The Life of Mahomet: Founder of the Religion of Islam, and of the Empire of the Saracens; with notices of the History of Islamism and of Arabia*. London: T. Tegg, 1840. (See for example of Orientalist views on Islam)

Arkoun, Mohammed. *Islam: to Reform or to Subvert?* London: Saqi, 2006.

Ramadan, Tariq. *To Be a European Muslim: A Study of the Islamic Sources in the Light of the European Context*, Leicester, U.K.: Islamic Foundation, 1999.

Ramadan, Tariq. *Islam, the West and the Challenges of Modernity*. Leicester, U.K.: the Islamic Foundation, 2001.

Brown, Daniel W. *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought*, Cambridge Middle East Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Zaman, Muhammad Qasim, and Roxanne L. Euben, eds. *Princeton Readings in Islamic Thought: Texts and Contexts from Al-Banna to Bin Laden*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009. [Read introductory chapter on Islamism]