

POLS 335: MUSLIM POLITICAL THOUGHT

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Course Description:

This seminar is an exploration of the resurgent tradition of Muslim political thought. We begin with two works from the canon of political philosophy. The first is from Al Farabi, the Muslim philosopher recommended by Maimonides, whose work preserved Plato and Aristotle in a period of European neglect. The second is taken from one of the great philosophers of history and theorists of political change, Ibn Khaldun. This brief introduction will provide, I hope, a sense of the power of the traditional canon of Muslim political thought. We will then read Albert Hourani's magisterial account of the confrontation and engagement of Arab theorists with a largely European liberalism. Their readings, critiques, adaptations, challenges to, and expansions of liberalism remain powerful in the shaping of contemporary Muslim political thought. The remainder of the course will be spent in exploring a small part of the extraordinary renaissance of Islamic philosophy. We will read the controversial work of Sayyid Qutb, who has been charged with providing the intellectual roots of modern Islamic fundamentalism and whose populist writing threatened the military dictatorship of Gamel Nasser's Egypt. We will examine the work of Ayatollah Khomeini whose Islamic Revolution led to the foundation of an Islamic State in Iran. We will then turn to an exploration of women and Islam and examine both primary sources and contemporary debates in the West on veiling. We will then turn to analysis of Al Qaeda propaganda and a documentary on ISIS before finally concluding with an examination of Islam in the West in our contemporary politics.

Course Rationale and Objectives

The fundamental rationale of the course is to bring past writings and concepts to bear on present realities in order to explore the complex relationship between Islam and the West. The thinkers we will read provide conceptual tools with which we can work to understand the many aspects of Islamic politics and identity. The course aims to critically analyze concepts such as freedom, power, justice, secularism, modernity, and democracy through a view from "the other side".

The course is designed to help you:

- Understand the foundations of Muslim Political Thought
- Move beyond simple binaries to an understanding of the complex relationship between Islam and the West
- Ask and confront challenging and difficult questions about religion and politics
- Improve your ability to write in depth and speak clearly about complex theoretical concepts

Course Requirements:

As an advanced level seminar, this course requires active participation in class. You must come to class having not only done the reading, but also having actively engaged with it, explored its assumptions and implications, and questioned its premises. Regular attendance is a must. This course is a seminar, which

requires active and engaged participation. The reading each week will be roughly 80-100pgs. This material is dense and complex and requires close attention on your part.

You will be required to write two essays for this course—an open book in-class essay on the Muslim canonical tradition and a longer 8-10 page final essay that is cumulative and covers a variety of thinkers we will explore in the class. A topic for the final paper will be distributed well in advance of the due date.

All students will be required to do an in-class presentation on the text of their choice. All days marked with a P on the syllabus are designated presentation days. Early in the semester you will be allowed to choose a date for your presentation. In addition to the oral presentation, you must submit a written version of the presentation to me before class. Detailed presentation instructions are available on the Moodle site for the course.

You will be graded on three criteria: (i) content (highlighting key concepts, analyzing them effectively and raising questions for discussion) (ii) structure (do your points flow together and are they connected to a set of arguments) (iii) style (speaking clearly and engaging others).

If you are permitted extra time during an exam, you must inform me well in advance of the scheduled exam so alternative arrangements can be made for you. If you need to reschedule an exam because of an athletic or university event or because of illness, you must submit documentary evidence for my consideration in advance of the scheduled exam. If you miss an exam without prior notice you will not be allowed to make it up, except in rare cases, with detailed documentation from your doctor or DePauw Administration

Your grade for this course will be computed as follows:

Midterm Exam	30%
Final Essay	35%
Class Presentation	20%
Class Participation and Attendance	15%

Course Policies:

Academic Integrity

Violations of DePauw University's Academic Integrity Policy will be taken very seriously and punished accordingly. All violations will be reported officially and the student will fail the assignment for which they are charged with the violation. A guide to Academic Integrity that answers most of your questions and also a link to DePauw's Academic Integrity Policy can be found at:

<http://www.depauw.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-integrity/>

ADA policy

It is the policy and practice of DePauw University to provide reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification from Student Disability Services is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please contact Student Disability Services. Allow one week advance notice to ensure enough time for

reasonable accommodations to be made. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be provided on a timely basis. Accommodations are not retroactive. Students who have questions about Student Disability Services or who have, or think they may have, a disability (psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, medical, etc.) are invited to contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion in Union Building Suite 200 or by phone at 658-6267.

Office Hours and Accessibility:

My office hours are on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4-5PM. Feel free to drop by to talk about the class, discuss future interests or simply to continue a conversation. Send me an email to set up an appointment if you need to meet on a day when I do not offer office hours. I am also available to meet via Facetime or Skype (my Skype address is smita.a.rahman) and also available to talk on the phone if we cannot meet in person. I strongly prefer to have conversations in person so while I am happy to respond to texts and talk you on the phone or Facetime or Skype, please try to come by office hours first.

Course Materials:

The following books are compulsory for this class and are available for purchase in the DePauw University Bookstore. All readings marked with an asterisk (*) will be available for you to download from the Moodle page for the course.

- Al-Farabi, *Political Writings*
- Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*
- Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*
- Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones*
- Euben and Zaman, *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

AUG 24	Introduction to Muslim Political Thought
AUG 29	Al-Farabi, <i>Political Writings</i> , pp.11-37
AUG 31	NO CLASS—EID UL ADHA (observation of religious holiday)
SEPT 5	Al-Farabi, <i>Political Writings</i> , pp. 37-67
SEPT 7	Al-Farabi, <i>Political Writings</i> , pp. 76-113 (P)
SEPT 12	Ibn Khaldun, <i>The Muqaddimah</i> , pp. 11-43
SEPT 19	Ibn Khaldun, <i>The Muqaddimah</i> , pp. 45-89
SEPT 21	Ibn Khaldun, <i>The Muqaddimah</i> , pp. 91-160 (P)
SEPT 26	Albert Hourani, <i>Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age</i> , pp.67-102 (P)
SEPT 28	*Roxanne Euben: <i>Travel in Search of Practical Wisdom</i> (P)

OCT 3	Albert Hourani, <i>Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age</i> , pp.130-161 (P)
OCT 5	Albert Hourani, <i>Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age</i> , pp 324-341(P)
OCT 10	*Saba Mahmood: <i>Secularism, Hermeneutics and Empire</i> (P)
OCT 12	IN CLASS MIDTERM ESSAY
OCT 17 AND OCT 19	NO CLASS—FALL BREAK
OCT 24	Sayyid Qutb, <i>Milestones</i> , .pp. 1-43 (P)
OCT 26	Sayyid Qutb, <i>Milestones</i> , pp. 45-76 (P)
OCT 31	Sayyid Qutb, <i>Milestones</i> , pp.77-127 (P)
NOV 2	Euben and Zaman, <i>Readings in Islamist Thought</i> , pp.155-180(P)
NOV 7	Film: <i>Persepolis</i>
NOV 9	NO CLASS—AWAY FOR CONFERENCE
NOV 14	Euben and Zaman, <i>Readings in Islamist Thought</i> , pp.249-287 (P)
NOV 16	Euben and Zaman, <i>Readings in Islamist Thought</i> , pp.288-320(P) *Articles on Veiling
NOV 21	Euben and Zaman, <i>Readings in Islamist Thought</i> , pp.425-459
NOV 23	NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING
NOV 28	Film: <i>The Rise of ISIS</i>
NOV 30	*Norton, <i>The Muslim Question (excerpt 1)</i> (P)
DEC 5	*Norton, <i>The Muslim Question (excerpt 2)</i> (P)
DEC 7	Conclusion and Review

Tuesday, DECEMBER 12 Final Paper Due by Email only by 10PM***

*****All late papers will be assessed a penalty of a third of a grade for every day that they are late**