Course Description

The appearance of radical Islamic movements is not a new phenomenon. The Wahhabi movement, which was the predecessor of modern-day Saudi Arabia, appeared as early as the 18th century. Notably, however, the last few decades had witnessed a very wide expansion of the phenomenon of using Islam as a means of achieving political goals. Many of the Islamic movements active today define themselves in terms of Muslim assembles, but operate as actors in national systems. From this position, these movements are forced to define their practical stances on purely political issues, such as participation in accepted state instruments (elections, parliament, cabinet) and the formation of coalitions with groups indifferent or hostile to their traditional Muslim viewpoints, as well as dealing with the overarching question of whether Islamic movements can accept upon themselves the rules of the democratic game therefore losing the legitimacy of their appeal for returning to the fundamentals of Islam.

This course will analyze the different and varying processes that the numerous modern Islamic movements are currently undergoing, and also the formation of their unique paths of participation in the political systems of the Middle East.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, it is hoped that the student will:

a) Have developed an understanding of the historical roots of radical Islam in the context of the Greater Middle East.
b) Be able to identify and apply core theories to help understand and explain the phenomenon of radical Islam.
c) Understand and explain the role radical Islam plays in Arab politics.
d) Understand and explain the challenges to conventional theories and practices of
democracy posed by radical Islamic ideas on topics such as democratization and the political
process.

**Grading**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term Essay exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home essay I</td>
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<td>Home essay II</td>
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<td>Final Examination</td>
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May 6, 2010; 1030-1230

**Required reading**


**Paper**

- To be submitted electronically by e-mail as attachment to the course TA, Mr. Faisal
  Baluch, *fbaluch@nd.edu*, and a copy to: *abligh@nd.edu*.
- The subject line should be clearly marked: last name, first name, course subject,
  assignment # (Doe, John, Radical Islam, assignment #01).
- Must be double spaced and typed up on Word Processing software. Maximum length:
  10-12 pages (including notes and bibliography).
- The papers are due on February 23, 2010 and April 6, 2010 until midnight.
- Failure to submit the paper on time will automatically result in a deduction of half a
  letter grade for each week or part of it the paper is late.
- The student should maintain a complete copy of the paper, including all appendixes for
  the student’s records.

**Topics and Assignments**
The division by weeks is tentative only; changes may occur since all classes will not necessarily cover less or more than 75 minutes.
Each class reading material is divided between required (in bold fonts) reading and optional reading.

All required readings and most of the recommended readings are found at the reserve desk at the library.

**Week 1 – Introduction; What is Radical Islam?**

*Class business, general overview of course; Defining Islam, defining radical Islam, and discussing radical Islam's place in contemporary Islamic thought*

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**


**Section 2 – The Arab World and the Roots of Radical Islam**

**Week 2 - Defining regional political systems and Islam’s role within these systems**

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**


**Week 3 - Outlining the historical background of national and fundamental Islam, with special emphasis on the Iranian Islamic Revolution.**

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**


**Theme 3 – Radical Islam and Western based political norms.**

**Week 4: The formation of perceptions on democracy in the context of the struggle between secularization and Islamism.**

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**


**Week 5 – Pluralism and civil society in the Middle East.**

**Required reading**

Optional reading


**Week 6, part I: Notions in Islam and radical Islam regarding the principles of democracy.**

Required reading


Optional reading


**Week 6, part II: Is radical Islam placing obstacles in the path of democratization?**

Required reading


Optional reading


**Week 7, part I: Perspectives in radical Islam movements regarding the principle of representation.**

Required reading
Optional reading


Week 7, part II: Women’s rights and the status of minority groups in Arab countries, in the context of the struggle between secular and Islamist movements.

Required reading


Optional reading


Theme 4 – Islam, the Law, and Shari’a

Week 8, part I: Radical Islam and the concept of constitutionality.

Required reading


Optional reading


**Week 8 part II: Ideas of human rights from outside the Islamic world and Shari’a and their clash with radical Islam.**

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**


**Theme 5 – Test cases.**

**Week 9: Mid term break – no classes.**

**Weeks 10-11: The Egyptian case: action and counteraction: radical Islam and the central government.**

A. The Muslim Brotherhood: Political activity from the 1920’s through the 1940’s, including organizational structure, modus operandi vis-à-vis the authorities, social base, mass mobilization, and participation in the 1948 War.

**Required reading**

Leiken, Robert S.; Brooke, Steven. ,"The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood", *Foreign Affairs* 86:107-121 (no. 2, Mar/Apr 2007).


**Optional reading**


B. Radical Islam movements: Relations with the Egyptian republic, 1952 to the present.

Required reading


Optional reading


C. Islamic Terrorism in Egypt: structure and activity vis-à-vis the Mubarak regime, with attention to the possible threat the Islamic Brotherhood poses to the regime and the possible political or economic responses of the government.

Required reading


Optional reading


Week 12, part I: Radical Islam in Syria and Lebanon: pawn or local product?

Required reading

Optional reading


**Week 12, Part II: Lebanon** and fundamentalist Islam: Hezbollah following the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon- a military, political, or parliamentary organization?

Required reading


Optional reading


**Weeks 13-14:**

A. The former Mandatory Palestine: Jordan and the issue of radical Islam, with attention to the Muslim Brotherhood in the West Bank during Jordanian rule, and the process of democratization and its costs.

Required reading

Wiktorowicz, Quintan, "Islamists, the State, and Cooperation in Jordan", in: *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 21:1-18 (no.4, fall 1999).
B. the former Mandatory Palestine: Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the Muslim Brotherhood: Terrorist threat to America and the West?

Required reading


Optional reading


C. The former Mandatory Palestine: Does the Islamic movement in Israel meet the definition of fundamental Islam? The Islamic movement in parliamentary and municipal elections; the political competition with the Islamic establishment within Israel.

Required reading


Optional reading


Weeks 15-16: TBA + Final exam guidelines handed out; conclusion of class.