Islamic Fundamentalism in the Arab World

Dr. Maha El-Taji Daghash
Course Number: 702.2179
Class Time: Mondays 15:00-18:00
Class Location: TBA appointment
Email: mahataji@gmail.com
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Course Description:

This course will examine the resurgence of fundamentalist movements that advocate the return to the original sources of Islam to guide social, political and civic life in the contemporary Arab world. The nature and specific characteristics of these Islamic movements, and the causes and implications of Islamic resurgence, will be studied within their relevant regional, local, historical, political and social contexts. The interaction between these Islamic ideologies and modernity, democracy and feminism will also be surveyed. Students will be exposed to the writings and principles of some of the main contemporary Islamic fundamentalist thinkers and leaders, and to the ideology and political influence of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, and Al Qaeda. Students who complete this course will gain a better understanding of the current cultural, social and political issues facing the Arab world, specifically, and the entire world in general.

Course Requirements:

- Regular class attendance. “Class attendance is a formal requirement of both the University and the International School, and it is used as one of the factors to determine your final grade in a course. If you must miss a class for health or other legitimate reasons, please notify the instructor - do not just disappear. Since class sizes are relatively small, absences may have a particularly detrimental effect on the quality of instruction.” This is a direct quote from Dr. Hanan Alexander’s letter which is in your orientation package.
- Completion of reading assignment for each week. The reading assignments for this course are demanding. Readings will be posted on the Moodle under the relevant week and it is the student’s responsibility to track and download those readings.
- Active participation in class discussions and one short presentation to the class based on current events and/or current reading assignment -5%.
- Regular reading of one or more major international newspapers
  - Submission of three one page papers summarizing and commenting upon news that is relevant to the course -15% of final grade.
- Mid-term essay and short answers exam -30% of final grade
- Final term paper -50% of final grade
Syllabus Topics:

Studying Islam


Fundamentalist Movements and Nationalism in the Arab World


The Muslim Brotherhood


Wahabism and Al-Qaeda
• Abdel Bari Atwan (2008). The Secret History of Al Qaeda, Chapters 1, 2 & 5.
  (Chapters 1 & 4)

Islamic Movements as Social Networks
• Janine A. Clark (2004). Islam, Charity and Activism: Middle Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan and Yemen, Janine A. Clark, Indiana University Press. Chapter 1, Islamic Social Institutions, Social Movement Theory and the Middle Classes, pp. 1-4, Chapter 5, The Significance of Being Middle Class pp. 146-161.

Islamic Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective

Islam and Modernity
• Uriya Shavit, Middle East Quarterly, Fall 2007, " Should Muslims Integrate into the West?", pp. 13-21

Islam and Democracy

Women and Islamic Fundamentalism
Islamic Movements in the Palestinian Territories

- Graham Usher (1993), The Rise of Political Islam in the Occupied Territories, (Selected Readings).

The Islamic Movement inside Israel