

Social Structures of Muslim Societies

Spring 2010

Joe Elder

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MW 3:30-4:45 PM Office Hours:
Ingraham, Room 19 M,T,W,R: 2-3:15, F:11-12

Required Texts

Arberry, A. J. (trans.), The Koran Interpreted
Armstrong, Karen, Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time
Aslan, Reza, No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future
of Islam
Clark, Malcolm, Islam for Dummies
Donohue, John J., John L. Esposito (eds.), Islam in Transition:
Muslim Perspectives (2nd ed.)
Esposito, John L., Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam
Keppel, Gilles, Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam
Supplementary Materials for Social Structures of Muslim
Societies, Available from Bob's Copy Shop, purple building
on the corner of University Avenue and Randall Street

FIRST THIRD OF COURSE

Part 1 - Some Western Views of Muslim Societies

Readings

Esposito, John L., Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam,
pp. x-25

Supplementary Materials...

Said, Edward W., "Knowing the Oriental"

Jan. 20 Social Construction of Knowledge: the Orient, Islam

Part 2 - Perspectives from the Sociology of Religion

Readings

Supplementary Materials...

Durkheim, Emile, "The Elementary Forms of the Religious
Life"

Weber, Max, "Asceticism, Mysticism, and Salvation
Religion"

Turner, Bryan S., "Islamic Reform and the Sociology of
Motives"

Berger, Peter, "Secularization and the Problem of Legitimation"
Bellah, Robert, "Islamic Tradition and the Problems of Modernization"

- Jan. 25 Karl Marx, Frederick Engels: Religion as Superstructure, Emile Durkheim: The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, Max Weber: The Sociology of Religion
- Jan. 27 Max Weber and Islam, Peter Berger and Legitimation, Robert Bellah and 20th Century Islam

Part 3 - Historic Establishment of the First Muslim Societies

Readings

- Armstrong, Karen, Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time, all
Aslan, Reza, No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam, chaps. 1,2,3,4,5
Arberry, A. J. (trans.) The Koran Interpreted, Vol. I: preface, Sura 1,2,3,4,5,8,9,19; Vol. II: preface, Sura 21,23, 24,30,33,43,48,49,50,51,52,53,64,65,66.
Clark, Malcolm, Islam for Dummies, chaps. 6, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10
Supplementary Materials...
The Economist, "A Mary for All"
Denny, Frederick M., "Pre-Islamic Arabia: Beliefs, Values, Way of Life"
Lecker, Michael, "The 'Constitution of Medina'"
- Feb. 1 Pre-Muslim Arabia; The Life of the Prophet
- *Feb. 3 The Life of the Prophet (continued)
[First Take-Home Exam handed out]
- Feb. 8 Video: "The Secret Mecca," the Hajj pilgrimage
- Feb. 10 The Medina and Mecca Years, the Caliphs/Khalifs
- Feb. 15 The Qur'an, sunna, and hadith (the shari'a)
- Feb. 17 Authority in early Muslim societies: Sunnis and Shi'is, schools of jurisprudence, fatwas
- 4 -
- Feb. 22 Muslim heritages: the five pillars, calendar (special months, days, times), geography (special sites), haram and halal (forbidden and permitted), circumcision, education, marriage, funerals, humor
- *Feb. 24 No Class. *First Take-Home Exam due by 9:00 PM*

SECOND THIRD OF COURSE

Part 4 - Meetings of Muslim and Non-Muslim Societies

Readings

Aslan, Reza, No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam, chaps. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Donohue, John J. and John L. Esposito (eds.), Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives, pp. 7-113 (early responses, modern state), 331-472 (Islam and the West, Jihad)

Esposito, John L. Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam, pp. 26-160

Supplementary Materials...

Wink, Andre, "'From Spain to India,' The Early Islamic Conquests and the Formation of the Caliphate."

"Rabi'a al-Adawiya"

"Djalal al-Din Rumi"

Helminski, Kabir (ed.), The Rumi Collection

Lewis, Bernard, What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Responses.

Easwaran, Eknath A Man to Match His Mountains: Badshah Khan, Nonviolent Soldier of Islam.

Johansen, Robert C., "Radical Islam and Nonviolence: A Case Study of Religious Empowerment and Constraint Among Pashtuns"

Said, Abdul Aziz, Nathan C. Funk, and Ayse S. Kadayifci, "Islamic Approaches to Peace and Conflict Resolution."

Panahi, Mohammad Hossein (transl.), "Excerpts from Messages and Interviews of Ayatollah Khomeini The Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran"

Levitt, Matthew, Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad

Fawn, Rick, "The Iraq War: Unfolding and Unfinished"

- Mar. 1 Outward from Arabia; North Africa, Baghdad and the Abbasids
- Mar. 3 The Crusades, the Ottoman Empire, the Safavids
- Mar. 8 The Sufis, Al-Hind, South and Southeast Asia
- Mar. 10 Arabia, the Wahhabi movement, World War I, Turkey and Kemal Ataturk

- 5 -

- *Mar. 15 South Asia, Muslim League, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, India/Pakistan/Bangladesh, Southeast Asia [*Second Take-Home Exam handed out*]
- Mar. 17 Israel, the PLO, Hamas, Hizbullah
- Mar. 22 Iran's Shi'ite constitution, Iraq's wars in the 80s & 90s
- *Mar. 24 No Class. *Second Take-Home Exam due by 9:00 PM*

SPRING BREAK - March 27 - April 4

THIRD THIRD OF COURSE

Part 5 - Muslims in Contemporary Societies

Readings

Kepel, Gilles, Beyond Terror and Martyrdom, pp. 1-256.

Donohue, John J., John L. Esposito (eds.), Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives. pp.114-142

Clark, Malcolm, Islam for Dummies, chaps. 15, 21

Supplementary Materials...

Rashid, Ahmed, Taliban, chaps. 6,7, (excerpts)

Cole, Juan, "Informed Comment: Thoughts on the Middle East, History, and Religion"

Katz, Marc, "Film Guide: Banaras Muharram and the Coals of Karbala"

The Economist, cover story, "Eurabia: The Myth and Reality of Islam in Europe"

Denny, Frederick M., "Islam in the Americas"

Mamiya, Lawrence H., "Nation of Islam"

- Apr. 5 The Taliban, Al Qaeda, Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq
Apr. 7 Video: "Pilgrimage to Karbala" (86 minutes)
Apr. 12 Muslim communities in Southeast Asia and India, Video:
Banaras Muharram and the Coals of Karbala (excerpts)
AS 2.054
Apr. 14 Muslim communities in the Balkans and Europe
Apr. 19 Muslim communities in the UK, Canada, and the USA

Part 6 - Contemporary Issues in Muslim Societies

Readings

Donohue, John J., John L. Esposito (eds.), Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives, pp. 143-227 (Islamic law, women and family), 228-259 (Islam and economics), 473-512 (identity)

- 6 -

Clark, Malcolm, Islam for Dummies, chaps. 17, 18

Supplementary Materials...

Kuran, Timur, "Economic Theory," Wilson, Rodney, "Economic Institutions"

Akhavi, Shahrough, "Shari'ati, Ali"

- *Apr. 21 Continuing authority of the Qur'an; taglid, ijtihad
[Third Take-Home Exam handed out]
Apr. 26 Muslim women and women's rights
Apr. 18 Muslim economic goals and policies
May 3 Muslim Identity and pluralistic perspectives
*May 5 No class {Third Take-Home Exam due by 9:00 PM}

There is no Final Exam in this course.

How to reach Joe Elder

My office is in Room 8131 Social Science Building (my room looks out on the carillon tower). My office hours this semester are: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons from 2:00 to 3:15 and Friday mornings from 11:00 to 12:00. My campus phone (with answering machine) is (608) 262-2782. The most effective way to reach me is to see me in my office during office hours, catch me after class, leave a message on my answering machine, or leave a note in the mailbox by my office door. My email address is: elder@ssc.wisc.edu, but I'm usually hopelessly backed-up.

Social Structures of Muslim Societies: Description of the Course Joe Elder

The course is divided into Three Thirds. The First Third includes (Part 1) Some Western Views of Muslim Societies, and (Part 2) Perspectives from the Sociology of Religion. The Second Third includes (Part 3) Historical Establishment of the first Muslim Societies, and (Part 4) Meetings of Muslim and non-Muslim Societies. The Third Third includes (Part 5) Muslims in Contemporary Societies, and (Part 6) Contemporary Issues in Muslim Societies.

There will be three Take-Home Exams. The first Take-Home Exam will be handed out February 3 and be due February 24. The second Take-Home Exam will be handed out March 15 and be due March 24. The third Take-Home Exam will be handed out April 19 and be due May 5. Each Take-Home Exam will require up to 10 printed pages and will count one-third of the final grade. In your preparation of the Take-Home Exams, you are encouraged to work with each other and to consult your lecture notes, class handouts, and course readings. Regardless of what or whom you consult, the final writing of the answers is to be done strictly on your own.

Graduate students and undergraduates taking this course for honors are required to substitute one 12-15-page research papers for each Take-Home Exam, for a total of three research papers for the course. Any undergraduate may substitute one research paper for one Take-Home Exam.

A research paper may deal with any topic related to the Third of the course for which the paper is being substituted. For example, it may examine the propositions of western behavioral scientists or sociologists of religion as they apply (or do not apply) to past or present Muslim societies. It may study the ways Muslims are presented in the western (especially the U.S.) media. It may study the evolution of some particular Muslim institution (e.g., marriage, family organization, political structures, economic practices), or it may study Muslim criticisms of social institutions in non-Muslim societies. It may focus on one particular Muslim social observer or commentator (e.g., Ibn Khaldun, Ali Shari'ati), or it may identify a general movement of Muslim intellectuals or political activists (e.g., Sufis, the Republican Brothers of the Sudan, the Khudai Khidmatgar in British India, the Taliban, Hamas, Hizbullah, etc. It may look at Muslims as minority groups (e.g., in India, China, the Balkans, France, Denmark, the United States) dealing with questions of identity, ostracism, and assimilation. It may look at Muslim-majority nations (e.g., Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Algeria) that are addressing the application of Muslim principles to their social and political structures. The research paper may examine how a variety of Muslim intellectuals are addressing contemporary issues (e.g., religious pluralism, women's roles, gay rights, etc.). It may look at contemporary efforts by Muslim societies to forge collective international organizations (such as the Red Crescent, the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference). Or it may deal with Muslims and the arts, sciences, or literary creativity.

I invite you to talk with me before you write any research paper. I may be able to be helpful. Each 12-15-page research paper should be submitted to me or the mailbox by my office door (8131 Social Science Building) as a "hard copy," should be double-spaced, and should include footnotes and bibliography in any consistent format you wish. In writing your papers, I urge you to take advantage of the University's Writing Center located in room 6171 Helen C. White Hall. The Center's professionals give excellent advice on how to improve papers. Each research paper is due at the same time as the Take-Home Exam for which it is being substituted.