

**ISLAM AND THE STATE:  
Political Economy of Governance in the Middle East  
Duke University  
Economics 326 / Political Science 308 / Economics 558**

Fall 2015

Timur Kuran

*Classes:* Wednesday, 8:45 - 11:15, 228 Gray

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*Objectives*

This course offers an introduction to the political history of the Middle East from the advent of Islam fourteen centuries ago to the modern era. It has four main objectives. First of all, it will familiarize students with the institutions that have determined the pace and characteristics of political development in the region. Second, it will examine certain institutional transformations and selected cases of institutional stagnation to derive lessons about the mechanisms that govern political development in general, including democratization. As such, it will provide insights applicable to other regions of the world, in both the past and present. Third, the course will investigate how religion shaped the region's political trajectory; in particular, it will identify mechanisms through which Islam contributed to specific historical patterns. These patterns include militarily strong empires, campaigns to suppress or control religion, and, in the present, low government legitimacy, low political participation, and weak civil society. Fourth, the course will identify the social forces driving the contemporary rediscovery and reinterpretation of Islam for political ends, by both Islamists and secular political actors.

The course is organized around topics that present intellectual puzzles, including ones that have preoccupied scholars for generations. Within each topic the goal is to learn not just what happened but also, and more important, why political history unfolded as it did. In other words, the emphasis is on analysis rather than description. Our inquiries will draw comparisons with other parts of the world, especially western Europe, but also the Indian subcontinent and East Asia. They will also draw on theoretical writings in both economics and political science.

### *Class sessions*

The class will meet once a week for two back-to-back sessions separated by a 10-minute break. Regular attendance is essential to success in the course. Because there is no main textbook, only by attending class regularly will you be able to master the topics to be discussed. In any case, class presentations will go beyond the readings, and they will contain ideas unavailable through published sources. Keeping up with the readings is essential to following discussions.

Audiotaping or videotaping of the class sessions is not allowed.

### *Exams, grading*

Requirements include an in-class midterm exam (October 7), a final examination (Saturday December 12, 9-noon), and a paper due before reading period, on Friday, December 4, 4 PM. The course grade will be based on a weighted average of the tests, paper, and class performance:  $(0.20 \times \text{midterm grade}) + (0.35 \times \text{final grade}) + (0.35 \times \text{paper grade}) + (0.10 \times \text{class performance})$ . The paper grade is broken down as follows:  $0.02$  (proposal) +  $0.08$  (organizational draft) +  $0.25$  (paper) =  $0.35$ .

Taking the exams is mandatory. The time of the tests cannot be moved for anyone, except in the event of a *documented* grave emergency (e.g., death in the family, hospitalization, illness requiring immediate attention of a physician, natural disaster). Unacceptable excuses for missing a test include: malfunctioning automobile, temperamental alarm clock, non-refundable airline ticket, social event, and uncooperative weather. Special arrangements may be made for disabled students working through Disabilities Services (668-1267).

Exams will be graded for analytical sophistication, originality, accuracy, coherence, clarity, and comprehensiveness. No credit will be given for repeating a question, and penalties will be imposed for invoking facts or theories irrelevant to the question at hand. Requests for regrading will be accepted only if accompanied by a *clear* and *written* justification. Regrading will not be limited to the specific question whose scoring is being challenged. The entire exam will be regraded, and the score may go up or down.

### *Readings*

The selected readings consist of journal articles, book chapters, and books. Seven books, which we shall cover in part or in full, are available for purchase at the Textbook Store. These books are also on 2-hour or 1-day reserve at Perkins. Articles are posted on the Sakai site for the course.

Authors of the readings include not only political scientists and economists but also legal scholars, and historians. The readings have been selected partly to familiarize you with a variety of research techniques used to study the past: (1) archival data collection, (2) empirical testing, (3) textual criticism, and especially (4) institutional analysis.

Certain readings will address politically controversial and socially sensitive issues from multiple angles. Within the time constraints of the course, you will gain exposure to competing perspectives through influential writings of their leading exponents.

The required readings are starred. The rest are highly recommended. Depending on student interest, minor adjustments may be made to this reading list.

### *Paper requirement*

Instructions regarding the paper will be given as the course progresses. The expected length is 4000-5000 words. The key deadlines are as follows:

October 14, midnight: 2-page proposal due (place word file in Sakai dropbox)

November 11, midnight: 1250-1500 word sketch draft due (place word file in Sakai dropbox)

December 4, 4 PM: *Paper copy* of final paper due in my Econ or Poli Sci mailbox, along with a *word file* to Sakai dropbox.

Except in case of documented grave emergency, missing any deadline will result in a grading penalty, which will be proportionate to the length of the delay.

### *Teaching Assistants*

The teaching assistants for the course are Aslı Cansunar, Noa On, and Roman Levkin, all Ph.D. students in either Political Science or Economics. They will hold weekly office hours, mainly to assist students in finding a suitable paper topic, organizing the paper, and selecting a method of analysis. Their office hours and addresses are as follows:

Aslı Cansunar: Tuesday, 9-11 am, SSRI Conn. Café, Gross H 2<sup>nd</sup> floor ([asli.cansunar@duke.edu](mailto:asli.cansunar@duke.edu))

Noa Cnaan-On: Monday, 10-12, Edge at Bostock Library ([on\\_noa@yahoo.com](mailto:on_noa@yahoo.com))

Roman Levkin: Friday, 5-7 pm, Social Science Building 113 ([roman.levkin@duke.edu](mailto:roman.levkin@duke.edu))

## *Course outline*

L: On reserve at Perkins Library • \*: Required reading • T: Available at Textbook Store

**BACKGROUND** on Middle East, Islam, Ottoman Empire

- L Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.
- L Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2,000 Years*. New York: Scribner, 1995.
- L Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

### **I. THE MIDDLE EAST'S PRE-ISLAMIC AND ISLAMIC POLITICAL HERITAGES**

(2 weeks)

- \*L Karl A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), skim chap. 1, read chaps. 2-3.
- \*Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry R. Weingast. *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), chap. 1.
- L Patricia Crone, *God's Rule: Government and Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), chaps. 17-22.
- L Marshall Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), pp. 146-230.
- \*L Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), chaps. 6-9.
- L S. E. Finer, *The History of Government*, vol. 2 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), chap. 2.
  
- L Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), chap. 5.
- \*Eric Chaney, "Democratic Change in the Arab World, Past and Present." *Brookings Papers in Economic Activity*, 42 (2012): 363-414.
- \*T Timur Kuran, *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), chaps. 1-5.

### **II. PROPERTY RIGHTS AND TAXATION** (2 weeks)

- \* Timur Kuran, "Islamic Redistribution through Zakat: Historical Record and Modern Realities." In *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts*, edited by Michael Bonner, Mine Ener, and Amy Singer, pp. 275-93 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003).

- L Avner Greif, *Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy: Lessons from Medieval Trade* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 217-55.
- L James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), chaps. 1-2.
- \* L M. Shaban, "Conversion to Early Islam." In *Conversion to Islam*, edited by Nehemia Levtzion, pp. 24-29 (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979).
- \* L Halil İnalcık, "State, Land and Peasant." In *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, edited by Halil İnalcık with Donald Quataert, pp. 103-54 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
- L Suraiya Faroqhi, "Crisis and Change, 1590-1699: Finances." In *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, edited by Halil İnalcık with Donald Quataert, pp. 531-44 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
- \*L Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), chaps. 3-4.
- Metin Coşgel and Thomas Miceli, "Risk, Transaction Costs, and Tax Assignment: Government Finance in the Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Economic History*, 65 (2005): 806-21.
- \* Kamil Kıvanç Karaman, "Decentralized Coercion and Self-Restraint in Provincial Taxation: The Ottoman Empire, 15th-16th Centuries," *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 71 (2009): 690-703.
- \* L Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to Centralization* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), chap. 5.
- \* K. Kıvanç Karaman and Şevket Pamuk, "Ottoman State Finances in European Perspective, 1500-1914," *Journal of Economic History*, 70 (2010): 593-624.
- Eliana Balla and Noel D. Johnson, "Fiscal Crisis and Institutional Change in the Ottoman Empire and France," *Journal of Economic History*, 69 (2009): 809-45.
- Lisa Blaydes and Eric Chaney. "The Feudal Revolution and Europe's Rise: Political Divergence of the Christian and Muslim Worlds before 1500 CE." *American Political Science Review*, 107 (2013): 16-34.

### III. PUBLIC GOODS AND CIVIL SOCIETY (2 weeks)

- \* T Timur Kuran, *Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), chaps. 6-8.
- \* Timur Kuran, "Legal Roots of Authoritarian Rule in the Middle East: Civic Legacies of the Islamic Waqf," *American Journal of Comparative Law*, 63 (2015): in press.
- L John Robert Barnes, *An Introduction to Religious Foundations in the Ottoman Empire* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986).
- L Yaacov Lev, *Charity, Endowments, and Charitable Institutions in Medieval Islam* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2005).
- \*Şerif Mardin, "Power, Civil Society and Culture in the Ottoman Empire," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 11 (1969): 258-81.
- \* L Michaele L. Browers, *Democracy and Civil Society in Arab Political Thought: Transcultural Possibilities* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006), chap. 2.

François Facchini, "Religion, Law, and Development: Islam and Christianity—Why Is It in the Occident and not in the Orient that Man Invented the Institutions of Freedom?" *European Journal of Law and Economics*, 29 (2010): 103-29.

**MIDTERM: October 7, 2015 (in class at regular time)**

**IV. LEGAL SYSTEM AND THE COURTS (2 weeks)**

- \* **T** Knut S. Vikør, *Between God and the Sultan: A History of Islamic Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), chaps. 1, 10-11.
- \* **T** Colin Imber, *Ebu's-Su'ud: The Islamic Legal Tradition* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), chaps. 1, 4, 6.
- Richard C. Repp, "Qānūn and Sharī'a in the Ottoman Context." In *Islamic Law: Social and Historical Contexts*, edited by Aziz Al-Azmeh, pp. 124-45 (London: Routledge, 1988)
- \* **T** Sami Zubaida, *Law and Power in the Islamic World* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003), chaps. 1-3.
- \* **T** Timur Kuran, *Long Divergence*, chaps. 9-12.
- \* Timur Kuran and Scott Lustig, "Judicial Biases in Ottoman Istanbul: Islamic Justice and Its Compatibility with Modern Economic Life." *Journal of Law and Economics*, 55 (2012): 631-66.
- L** Timur Kuran (editor), *Social and Economic Life in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul: Glimpses from Court Records*, vols. 3-4 (Istanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2011).

**V. BEGINNINGS OF POLITICAL MODERNIZATION (1 week)**

- Stanford J. Shaw, "The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 6 (1975): 421-59.
- \* **L** Carter Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), chaps. 1, 4-5.
- \* **L** S. Sami Onar, "The Majalla," in *Law in the Middle East*, edited by Majid Khadduri and Herbert J. Liebesny, vol. 1, pp. 292-308 (Washington: Middle East Institute, 1955).
- \* **L** Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), chaps. 10-11.
- \* **T** Vikør, *Between God and the Sultan*: chap. 12 (to p. 245).
- T** Zubaida, *Law and Power*, chap. 4.

## VI. THE RISE OF MODERN ISLAMISM (1 week)

- L Sayyid Abul-Ala Mawdudi, *Nations Rise and Decline—Why?* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1976; orig. Urdu ed., 1947).
- \*L Sayyid Abul-Ala Mawdudi, “Are We True Muslims?” in his *Let Us Be Muslims*, ed. Khurram Murad (Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1985), pp. 111-118.
- Nilüfer Göle, “Contemporary Islamist Movements and New Sources for Religious Tolerance,” *Journal of Human Rights*, 2 (2003): 17-30.
- \* T L. Carl Brown, *Religion and State: The Muslim Approach to Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), chaps. 8-15.
- Timur Kuran, “The Genesis of Islamic Economics: A Chapter in the Politics of Muslim Identity,” *Social Research*, 64 (Summer 1997): 301-38.
- Christine Binzel and Jean-Paul Carvalho. “Education, Social Mobility and Religious Movements: The Islamic Revival in Egypt.” *Economic Journal* (2016), in press.
- Mona Atia., *Building a House in Heaven: Pious Neoliberalism and Islamic Charity in Egypt*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

## VII. ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY (1 week)

- \*L Browsers, *Democracy and Civil Society in Arab Political Thought*, chaps. 4-5.
- \*Charles K. Rowley and Nathanael Smith, “Islam’s Democracy Paradox: Muslims Claim to Like Democracy, So Why Do They Have So Little?” *Public Choice*, 139 (2009): 273-99.
- \*Robert Maseland and André van Hoorn, “Why Muslims Like Democracy Yet Have So Little of It,” *Public Choice*, 147 (2011): 481-96.
- \* L Nathan J. Brown, *The Rule of Law in the Arab World: Courts in Egypt and the Gulf* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), chap. 2.
- \* Larry Diamond, “Why Are There No Arab Democracies?” *Journal of Democracy* 21 (2010): 93-104.
- Iris Bohnet, Benedikt Hermann, and Richard Zeckhauser, “Trust and Reference Points for Trustworthiness in Gulf and Western Countries.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 125 (2010): 811-28.
- Yusuf M. Sidani and Jon Thornberry, “Nepotism in the Arab World: An Institutional Theory Perspective.” *Business Ethics Quarterly* 23 (2013): 69-96.

## VIII. ISLAM AND SECULARISM (1 week)

- \*L Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na’im, *Islam and the Secular State: Negotiating the Future of the Shari’a* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), chap. 1.
- \*Mustafa Akyol, *Islam without Extremes: A Muslim Case for Liberty* (New York: Norton, 2011), chaps. 8-11.
- \*T Noah Feldman, *The Fall and Rise of the Islamic State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

Clark Benner Lombadi, "Islamic Law as a Source of the Sharia in a Modern Arab State," *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law*, 37 (1998-99): 81-123.  
 Abdullah Saeed and Hassan Saeed. *Freedom of Religion, Apostasy and Islam*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2004.

#### **IX. POLITICAL USES AND EFFECTS OF ISLAM TODAY (1 week)**

- \* L Vikør, *Between God and the Sultan*, chap. 13, 16.
- \*L Yael Navaro-Yashin, *Faces of the State: Secularism and Public Life in Turkey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), chaps. 1, 3, 4.
- T Zubaida, *Law and Power*, chaps. 5-6.
- L Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), chaps. 1-4.
- L Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, trans. Carol Volk (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), chaps. 1, 6-7.
- L Tarek Fatah. *Chasing a Mirage: The Tragic Illusion of an Islamic State* (Mississauga, Ontario: Wiley, 2008), chaps. 1, 11-13.
- \*Jean-Philippe Platteau, "Political Instrumentalization of Islam and the Risk of Obscurantist Deadlock," *World Development*, 39 (2011): 243-60.

<b>FINAL: Saturday, December 12, 2015 (9-noon)</b>
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