

**FALL 2023  
MID EAST 2780-90  
RELIGIOSITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND U.S.A.**

**SYLLABUS**

**Instructor:** Dr. Ewa Wasilewska, the Middle East Studies Program

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Website: [www.ewas.us](http://www.ewas.us)

**Time:** Online

**Location:** Online

**Course Description:**

This course will examine origin and meaning of two important concepts, "religion" and "religiosity," and the affects their understanding, or lack of thereof, have on modern populations of the U.S.A. and the Middle East. It will discuss specific historical, economic, and political settings such as the emergence of monotheism, nationalism, terrorism, etc., in which these two concepts have been interchangeably used (or abused) for the real or perceived benefit of involved parties and for shaping their identities. Consequently, this course will introduce students to issues of religious diversity as perceived, practiced, and prescribed under rules of different religions within specific political, social, and cultural systems of these two regions. The stress will be put on mutual perceptions of the groups discussed (e.g., Jews, Christians, and Muslims) as insiders and/or outsiders of these systems. The course will provide students with a better understanding of present relations between the above religions, regions, and their representatives.

**Disclaimer:**

Some of the writings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking.

**Course Objectives:**

At the end of this course students will:

1. Acquire knowledge of the Middle Eastern religions from the beginning of the written records to the rise of Islam.
2. Be able to understand and discuss elements involved in defining and applying concepts of religion and religiosity with the special emphasis on the Middle East and the U.S.A.
3. Learn about the U.S. strategic interests in the Middle East and mutual interdependence of these regions.
4. Learn about numerous similarities in the official teachings of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
5. Be able to discuss issues of self-identity within the framework of modernity and modernization.
6. Be exposed to common misperceptions about discussed religious systems.
7. Be able to analyze situations and stereotyping of religious minorities in the Middle East and the U.S.A. by the same groups but within different contexts.

8. Become aware of the perceived double-standards of modern feminists (policy of appeasement toward some religious traditions vs hostility toward others).
9. Be able to understand the impact of the media and various policies on creating negative images of religious minorities in the Middle East and the U.S.A. (e.g., Islam versus Christianity; “Jewish conspiracy,” etc.).
10. Become acquainted with the history of conflict as based, presumably, on religion in the Middle East: its roots, continuation, and unpredictable future.
11. Be exposed to the opposing views on identity, conflict, and adaptability of one’s beliefs in the “wars” on religion, about religion, and through religion. Religiosity at work.
12. Be introduced to a variety of methods and theories employed in both social sciences and humanities when studying religion and/or religiosity. Their cognitive, conative and affective components will be presented, analyzed, and discussed using such methodologies as, for example, content analysis, comparative research, impact assessment and evaluation, etc., to provide students with tools to continue a basic research leading to practical goals they want to achieve in the future.

### **Content Overview:**

According to the World Religious Statistics monotheistic religions constitute 55.5% of all religious groups with Christianity and Islam being the leaders among them (Christianity –2.3 billion followers, Islam 1.6 billion, and Judaism 14 million). All three leading monotheistic religions were “born” in the Middle East on the foundations of the earlier polytheistic beliefs of the area. All three systems have been feeding off each other throughout the history focusing more on their differences than similarities.

This course will focus on the similarities between these religious systems and point out perceived differences as not necessarily parts of the official teachings but rather of customary traditions of the region with a tumultuous history of itself. The very beginning of the concepts which create a drift in communication and mutual misunderstanding of religious moods and motivations will be presented and explained within the reality of modernity and modernization in both regions. The perceptions of the Christian minority in the Middle East and of the Islamic minority in the U.S.A. as well as of the Jewish minority in both, will be discussed and compared in view of existing legal and customary laws, economic and political realities, as well as of the social climate. The issues of nationalism, Islamophobia, Islamization, the so-called “Jewish conspiracy,” and terrorism will be discussed and traced back to their origins.

### **Teaching and Learning Methods:**

This course is an online course. Some students believe that online courses are much easier than classroom learning but... You should be well organized, have a lot of self-discipline, and often be self-directed in order to be successful in online learning. Remember, you are expected to spend at least 9 hours per week on this class (i.e., 3 hours per every credit hour).

### **Course Communication:**

The student-teacher communication will be mainly via the internal Canvas email. Check your email frequently – no less than three (3) times a week. You can also contact me via my personal email address, which is [Mruczek@aol.com](mailto:Mruczek@aol.com) (or [realtorewa@gmail.com](mailto:realtorewa@gmail.com) ) Remember, I don’t use my U of U email address. It is YOUR responsibility to check the Canvas email as well as to provide the University of Utah with your private email address if you are not using the U email address. Sending me your private email address will not do you any good because it is very difficult and time consuming for me to keep and figure out all private addresses of many students whom I teach.

**Communication with the Instructor:**

I will check the class email as well as my personal email on regular basis. The response time will be no more than 48 hours but usually I respond within 12 hours. If you don't hear from me within 48 hours, it means that I didn't get your message so send it again or contact me through other means. Face-to-face interaction with me is also possible by scheduling an appointment on campus; live meetings can be arranged via phone or Skype.

***You can always reach me by phone but text first: 801-560-4949. By "always" I mean between 9:00 a.m. and 11 p.m. every day.***

**Navigating Canvas:**

Most of the information can be navigated by using the "Tabs"/navigation links on the left-hand side of the Canvas screen. **\*\*Most information and materials are found in the "MODULES" section\*\***, and are also broken down into a convenient week-by-week format. If you do NOT see any readings, pdfs. or materials that are in the syllabus, contact me immediately so I can address the issue.

If you need support for learning Canvas, check this website:

[http://support.instructure.com/index.php/Getting\\_Started\\_for\\_Students](http://support.instructure.com/index.php/Getting_Started_for_Students)

Don't contact me as I am not very good with any technical explanations.

**Electronic or Equipment Failure:**

Electronic or equipment failure is NOT an acceptable excuse for late or absent assignments. You must maintain a working computer/Internet needed to participate in this course. Keep your flash-drive ready to back up your assignments BEFORE you lose any data as the result of a computer malfunction. Avoid submitting your assignments at the last minute – remember Murphy's Law! Know your options in case of electronic or equipment failure – use campus lab computers, check public libraries, and have as many friends as possible with working computers/Internet. Remember, your urgency is not my emergency!

**Technological Help Through the U of U:**

Canvas support: [http://support.instructure.com/index.php/Main\\_Page#](http://support.instructure.com/index.php/Main_Page#)

UOnline:

Email: [info@uonline.utah.edu](mailto:info@uonline.utah.edu)

Phone: 801-585-5959

Campus IT Help Desk:

Phone: 801-581-4000

**Deadlines:**

Deadlines will be strictly enforced. Late work will not be accepted. However, unexpected things happen so if you have a legitimate excuse, let me know in advance, if possible. Legitimate excuses must be documented and verifiable. In case you have one, I will accept the late assignment at *my discretion* after I verify your excuse. Depending on circumstances, I may or may not grant you full credit, limited credit or no credit at all. I will post course content and/or assignments at least one week in advance so you can plan accordingly.

**Overview of Assignments:**

This course is designed to maximize your learning experience by using essays and reflection papers on specific topics and/or readings.

For a basic guideline how to write a reflection paper check

[http://www.ehow.com/way\\_5184362\\_tips-writing-reflection-paper.html](http://www.ehow.com/way_5184362_tips-writing-reflection-paper.html)

Your reflection papers must demonstrate not only acquired knowledge but also your ability to analyze, synthesize, and think both critically and creatively. Always pay attention to organization of your answers, chronological outline, logic (make sure you understand the concept before you start “connecting” words), and your audience (pretend that I know very little about the topic). The writing must be very clear.

**Suggestions – before writing your final answer:**

1. Study your notes and readings. Use stickers or yellow marker to mark points and information you want to use later. You may want to give them “titles.”
2. Prepare three or more points that you think will constitute a core of your answer.
3. Pull out all necessary dates that you will use in your answer to set up a sort of chronological outline.
4. Make sure that you know and understand all definitions.
5. Prepare an outline (general parts of your outline: introduction, discussion, conclusions).
6. Write your answer as you remember and understand it – don’t worry about details at this point, just make sure that your answer makes sense and “flows.”
7. Go back to your notes and readings – pull out all information that you can use and add it to your core making sure that your answer still makes sense. Correct any mistakes you might have made when doing #6. If you are getting lost – see if breaking your answer into sections would help.
8. Edit. Reading your answer loudly may help you to catch problems.
9. Turn it in and hope for the best.

**Writing is a very important part of this course** because this is the main communication between students and the instructor. You won’t be graded on your writing skills but... Remember, if you don’t use proper English (includes spelling, syntax, grammar, etc.), I will not be trying to guess what you are trying to say. You will have at least one week for each assignment so, if you need help, ask for it. The University of Utah offers a lot of assistance to all students so use its resources, especially the University Writing Center at <http://www.writingcenter.utah.edu/> (801-587-9122). It is for FREE! All assignments must be uploaded to Canvas as a file in **Microsoft Word format or PDF** (avoid any other formats for many different reasons) – **ON TIME.**

**NO PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM!!!**

**Discussions:**

There is a discussion section under the *Introductions* module for your comments on readings, lectures, current affairs, etc., and questions regarding assignments.

All students are encouraged to participate in these discussions but such participation is not required. This would be your opportunity to communicate with other students, share ideas, and learn even more, this time from your peers. Since you will be sharing information and ideas, make sure that you will NEVER copy and paste anything from these discussions, either yours or somebody else’s, because this will be classified as plagiarism by both plagiarism checking software and me. In simple terms, I don’t want for students to have the same answers, or even the same sentences and phrases when submitting an assignment. This means you have to formulate your answers in as individualistic manner as possible that would reflect your, and your opinion only, written in your style of writing. This is VERY important.

I will be monitoring these discussions adding my comments, explanations, etc.

When participating in these discussions you must remain respectful of all classmates and the instructor at all times: no shouting, no swearing, no name calling, etc.

**NO PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM!!!**

**Grading:** This an Online class, which requires a lot of self-discipline and planning. Postponing anything may result in a disaster. Thus, I have decided to reveal all assignments to you at the beginning of the semester, giving you a chance to work on them when it is most convenient for you. However, I will not be accepting any early submissions. All assignments must be submitted only during the scheduled times (I grade on a curve so I need all “comparative material”).

There are 6 assignments in this class. Their distribution is connected with specific modules/lectures as posted on Canvas. Their worth can be 15% or 20% of your final grade depending on the assignment. This format should cut on your possible stress and keep you current on all readings.

I may or may not offer an extra credit assignment at the end of the semester – it depends on the performance of all students in class.

Each exam and/or assignment and/or paper will be graded using the Letter-Grade scale (“A” as the highest, “E” as the lowest [no-pass] grade). The final grade will be calculated accordingly by setting up values of the Letter-Grade scale using the 4-Point scale. Please, don’t be concerned with the Canvas calculations of your grades – they are quite confusing so after each exam/assignment, I will be sending you an email with your grade as based on the letter and 4 point scales.

<u>Letter Scale</u>	<u>4 Point Scale</u>
A	4
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1
D-	0.7
E	0

**Expectations:**

Descriptive answers and papers or “just” summaries of readings will receive “C” or less. A “perfect” answer or paper will be analytical and written in precise and non-colloquial English, void of “empty” statements. Each assertion must be supported with specific examples from the class material or, if outside sources are used, proper references are a must.

Your assignments must demonstrate not only acquired knowledge but also your ability to analyze, synthesize, and think both critically and creatively. Always pay attention to organization of your answers, chronological outline, logic (make sure you understand the concept before you start “connecting” words), and your audience (pretend that I know very little about the topic). The writing must be very clear.

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### **Required Readings:**

All required articles, chapters from different books, etc., are listed under specific topics discussed during the semester. All of them are available at Marriott Library Reserve Desk through electronic reserve or as hard copies. All electronic copies will be online and linked to or provided via Canvas. Hard copies are available only through the Reserve Desk at Marriott Library.

The only exception to the above is the following book:

**Wasilewska, E.: *Creation Stories of the Middle East*.** Jessica Kingsley Press, London. 2000. This book is out of print so two hard copies will be available on reserve. You might be able to get a used copy for less than \$40.00 on Amazon. You read this book “as you go” but should be ready to use it for your second assignment. A lot of information included in this book is also outlined in pdfs.

### **Required – Instructor’s Lectures:**

Each week is associated with a specific lecture/PDF (see your modules). The content of these lectures is copyrighted so, please, do not share them and/or publish them anywhere. These lectures are very inclusive and detailed – use them wisely since they provide you with both an outline and content of specific “meetings.” Under no circumstances plagiarize any part of them. I remember them very well and will disqualify your assignment immediately (for more about plagiarism see the end of this syllabus). I am very strict with students who plagiarize. This is the reason why the red warning is repeated throughout the whole syllabus.

**Disclaimer: *The selected readings are basis for understanding of general issues in the area, not an update on its politics, etc. I am trying to provide you with a very solid background, which is designed to help you formulate your own opinions on rapidly changing events in the Middle East and the U.S. This class is a starting point, not the ending one.***

**For everything else: Check my “Personal message/practical” section in the first module entitled: Introductions.**

**NO PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM!!!**

### **WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS:**

#### **Week # 1 - starting with August 21, 2023**

Course information.

Is there a Middle East? Is there the U.S.A.? Is there ISIS?

**Such issues as:** How to define the Middle East? What are underlying organizational principles behind the term “Middle East?” One Middle East or many? ISIS as a territorial “state” and as a concept. Minorities and majorities in the Middle East and U.S.A. – a quick overview.

#### **Readings # 1:**

Alba, R. et al (2021): The Myth of a Majority-Minority America. In *The Atlantic*. Jun 13.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/06/myth-majority-minority-america/619190/>

Bonine, M., Amanat, A. and M. Gasper (2011):

Preface. Pp. XVII-XIX.

Introduction: Is there a Middle East? Problematizing a Virtual Space. Pp.1-7

Part I (1): The Eastern Question and the Ottoman Empire: The Genesis of the Near and the Middle East in the Nineteenth Century. Pp. 11-35.  
Conclusion: There is a Middle East! Pp. 231-240.  
In *Is There a Middle East?* Stanford University Press.

Bunzel, C. (2015): From Paper State to Caliphate: The Ideology of the Islamic State. *The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World. Analysis Paper*. No. 19, March 2015.

\* ISIS still exists although it lost almost all of its territories. This is a good introduction to ISIS. Do not memorize names, etc. – just make sure you understand main concepts.

### **Update:**

Tristam, Pierre: *What is the Middle East?* ThoughtCo. <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-the-middle-east-2353342>

This is a very interesting and important website prepared by Pierre Tristam, a very educated journalist, editor and lecturer. This website will direct you to other contemporary readings about the Middle East.

ISIS – Basic Info.

A Review of ISIS in Syria 2016-2019. Regional Differences and Enduring Legacy. The Carter Center Syria Project. March. 2019.

[https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict\\_resolution/syria-conflict/isis-review-2016-2019.pdf](https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/syria-conflict/isis-review-2016-2019.pdf)

This is a review of ISIS in Syria. Not required but might be helpful if you are interested in ISIS.

Hanna, Andrew (2021): Islamists Imprisoned Across the Middle East. In *Wilson Center*. June 24, 2021. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/islamists-imprisoned-across-middle-east>

Anti-ISIS Campaign in 2021. In *Wilson Center*. June 28, 2021.

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/anti-isis-campaign-2021>

**Comments:** The above readings are not only very interesting but also very explanatory regardless of your knowledge, or lack of thereof, of the Middle East.

**Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #1.**

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### **Week # 2 – starting with August 28, 2023**

Words really matter...

### **Readings #2:**

Fawcett, R. (2008-2010): Islamic Denominations. In *The Major Religions of the World ... Revisited*. Online Version. [http://www.majorreligions.com/islamic\\_denominations.php](http://www.majorreligions.com/islamic_denominations.php)

Huntington, S. (1993): The Clash of Civilizations? In *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 72 (3). Pp. 22-49.

Salazar, P-J. (2016): A Caliphate of Culture? ISIS's Rhetorical Power. In *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, Vol. 49, Number 3, 2016, pp. 343-354. Penn State University Press.

Stroop, Ch. (2019): America's Islamophobia is Forged at the Pulpit. White evangelicals' apocalyptic fantasies are driving U.S. policy. In *Foreign Policy*. March 26, 2019.  
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/26/americas-islamophobia-is-forged-in-the-pulpit/>

Yassin-Kassab, R. (2014): The Muslims Are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror – Review [of the book under this title written by Arun Kundnani]. In *The Guardian. Religion*. April 4. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/apr/03/muslims-are-coming-islamophobia-extremism-domestic-war-on-terror-review>

**Comments:** This lecture/module may seem somewhat disconnected but... This is a very interesting and important part of understanding issues of religiosity. Some of the above readings are controversial but you need to know different points of view. Enjoy!

## Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #2

### ASSIGNMENT!

**“A Caliphate of Culture.” This assignment will be available at 11:59 p.m., on Wednesday, August 30, 2023. It must be turned in by 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, September 9, 2023.**

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### Week # 3 – starting with September 4, 2023

Defining “non-definable:” Religion or religiosity? Religion as a cultural system. Religiosity as religion in practice. Self-identification: past and present. Is religion, or religiosity, a main factor or just one of them when defining oneself and others? The Middle East and the U.S.A. in numbers – statistical determinations.

### Readings # 3:

1. The Size of the U.S. Jewish Population.

And

3. Jewish Practices and Customs.

Both in Pew Research Center. May 11, 2021

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/the-size-of-the-u-s-jewish-population/>

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/jewish-practices-and-customs/>

Brink, T.L. (1993): Religiosity: Measurement. In *Survey of Social Science: Psychology*. F. N. Magill, Ed., Pasadena, CA: Salem Press, 1993. Pp. 2096–2102.

Geertz, C. (1999): Religion as a Cultural System. In *Ritual and Belief. Readings in the Anthropology of Religion*. D. Hicks, Ed. McGraw-Hill College. 1999. Pp. 11-35.

Haddad, Y. Yazbeck & R.S. Ricks (2009): Claiming Space in America's Pluralism: Muslim Enter the Political Maelstrom. In *Muslims in Western Politics*. A.H. Sinno, Ed. Indiana University Press. 2009. Pp. 14-34.

Paul, G. (2005): Cross-National Correlations of Quantifiable Societal Health with Popular Religiosity and Secularism in the Prosperous Democracies. A First Look. In *Journal of Religion & Society*. 2005. Vol. 5. <http://moses.creighton.edu/JRS/2005/2005-11.html>

Sinno, A. (2009): An Institutional Approach to the Politics of Western Muslim Minorities. In *Muslims in Western Politics*. A.H. Sinno, ed. Indiana University Press. 2009. Pp. 2-6.



Zuckerman, P. (2015): Think religion makes society less violent? Think again. In *Los Angeles Times*. October 30, 2015. <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-1101-zuckerman-violence-secularism-20151101-story.html>

**Comments:** The list seems very long but, if you pay attention, you will notice that they are all very short and straight to the point.

### **Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #3.**

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#### **Week # 4 - starting with September 11, 2023**

Ancient beliefs and traditions of the Middle East as the foundation of modern monotheistic systems. Re-interpretations of ancient themes.

#### **Readings # 4:**

Wasilewska, E. (2000): *Creation Stories of the Middle East*. Jessica Kingsley Press, London. 2000.

**Comments:** Since this book is out of print, there are two copies of this book on reserve. This is a short and concise book with many stories – so this is a rather easy read.

And interesting topic (not a part of this class): Do Animals Have Religion? A suggested article: Schaefer, D. O. (2012): Do Animals Have Religion? Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Religion and Embodiment. In *Anthrozoos*, Vol. 25, Supplementary, PP. S. 173-189.

[https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:52da46ba-0651-47cb-b26a-32bfb13d7b0c/download\\_file?file\\_format=pdf&safe\\_filename=Do%2BAnimals%2BHave%2BReligion%2BFinal.doc.pdf&type\\_of\\_work=Journal+article](https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:52da46ba-0651-47cb-b26a-32bfb13d7b0c/download_file?file_format=pdf&safe_filename=Do%2BAnimals%2BHave%2BReligion%2BFinal.doc.pdf&type_of_work=Journal+article)

### **Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #4.**

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#### **Week # 5 - starting with September 18, 2023**

The birth of the infallible god: The One and Only. Defining/explaining/understanding Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: inside and outside views under “Religious Tolerance Banner.” Formation of organized religions and foundations of modern manifestations of religiosity.

#### **Readings # 5:**

Meshel, Ze'ev (1979): Did Yahweh Have a Consort? In *Biblical Archaeology Review*. 1979. March/April. Pp. 24-36. Also: <http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-kadesh-barnea-did-yahweh-have-a-consort-kuntillet-ajrud-zeev-meshel-1979ad.htm>

Myhill, J. (2006): Premodern National Churches, Roman Empire, and the Caliphate. In *Language, Religion and National Identity in Europe and the Middle East*. John Benjamins Publishing Company. 2006. Pp. 27-40; 52-55; 69-70.

Wright, R. (2015): A Short History of Islamism. In *Newsweek*. Opinion. <http://www.newsweek.com/short-history-islamism-298235>

**Comments:** The above readings are quite introductory. The focus is on the origin of the Pentateuch (see also my book), monotheism, and Yahweh; and formation of premodern national churches. Understand the idea – don't get lost in details. Some themes will be referred to in the future lectures.

### **Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #5.**

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#### **Week # 6 - starting with September 25, 2023**

The Paradise story: the original, alterations, adjustments, and 72 virgins. Defining the role of women in monotheistic societies: past and present. What does it mean to be a feminist? Contrasting views from the Middle East and U.S.A. Modern feminists and perceived misogynist practices in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – equal treatment or yet another example of selected “causes” as shaped by religiosity?

#### **Readings # 6:**

Continue with Ewa's book:

Wasilewska, E. (2000): *Creation Stories of the Middle East*. Jessica Kingsley Press, London. 2000.

Camberlin, A. (2006): Introduction. Seclusion at Work. *A History of Women's Seclusion in the Middle East: The Veil in the Looking Glass*. Haworth Press, 2006. Pp. 1-25.

Chesler, P. (2005): The One-Sided Feminist Academy. In *The Death of Feminism: What's Next in the Struggle for Women's Freedom*. Palgrave Macmillan. 2005. Pp. 101-130.

Keaton, Grica D. (2006): Beyond Identity. Epilogue. In *Muslim Girls and the Other France*. Indiana University Press. 2006. Pp. 157-195.

Quraishi-Landes, A. (2016). Five Myths About Sharia. In *Washington Post. Opinion*. June 24, 2016. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/five-myths-about-sharia/2016/06/24/7e3efb7a-31ef-11e6-8758-d58e76e11b12\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.69719781bbbe](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/five-myths-about-sharia/2016/06/24/7e3efb7a-31ef-11e6-8758-d58e76e11b12_story.html?utm_term=.69719781bbbe)

**Comments:** The above readings are not only very interesting but also quite controversial. The lecture focuses on providing you with the background to understand the origin of variety of customs and traditions – the same for all three monotheistic systems. These articles will help you formulate your own opinions.

### **Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #6.**

#### **ASSIGNMENT!**

**“The “only” god of monotheism.” This assignment will be available at 11:59 p.m., on Wednesday, September 27, 2023. It must be turned in by 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, October 7, 2023.**

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#### **Week # 7 - starting with October 2, 2023**

The Golden Age of Islam and the birth of martyrdom. Shahid – the witness to the truth or...? The Jihad, suicide bombers, and Christian saints – what do they have in common? The origin of such concepts as Dar al-Islam (“house of peace”) and Dar al-Harb (“house of war” also referred to as Dar al-Garb, “house of the West”), and their modern implications.

### **Readings # 7:**

Essa, A. & A. Othman (Abridged by Alison Lake; 2012): *Studies in Islamic Civilization. The Muslim Contribution to the Renaissance*. IIIT Books-In-Brief Series. International Institute of Islamic Thought.

Esposito, John L. (1988): The Content of Law. In *"Islam. The Straight Path."* Oxford University Press. 1988. Pp. 87-93.

Fierke, K. (2009): Agents of Death: The Structural Logic of Suicide Terrorism and Martyrdom. In *International Theory*. 2009 (1). Pp.155-184.

Price, K. (2014?): Exploring Violence & Culture of Martyrdom in Shi'a Islam.

This paper is written by one of my former students for a class offered by another professor. I believe that this paper will be of great use to you in order to get a better understanding of the idea of "martyrdom." From one student to another – with Kelsey's permission.

### **The Golden Age of Islam – opposing (non-scholarly) views and consequential perceptions:**

Islamic Golden Age. <http://islamichistory.org/islamic-golden-age/>

Mirza, S. Kamran (2007): The Nostalgia of Islamic Golden Age vs the History of Science. In *Islam Watch*. 2007. <http://www.islam-watch.org/SyedKamranMirza/Nostalgia-of-Islamic-Golden-Age.htm>

**Comments:** The above readings might seem somewhat disconnected but Lecture #7 connects them.

**Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #7.**

### **ASSIGNMENT!**

**"The Islamic Golden Age." This assignment will be available at 11:59 p.m., on Wednesday, October 4, 2023. It must be turned in by 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, October 21, 2023.**

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**Week # 8 - starting with October 9, 2023**

**FALL BREAK – ENJOY IT!**

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**Week # 9 - starting with October 16, 2023**

"The First Contact" in the name of One and Only. The Crusades and their legacy: setting foundations for future conflicts. Old memories, modern geopolitical and social realities.

### **Readings # 9:**

Chevedden, Paul E.: *The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades: A New Synthesis*. © The Author. Journal compilation © the Historical Association and Blackwell Published. Pp. 181-200.

Ford, P. (2001): Europe cringes at Bush 'crusade' against terrorism. In *The Christian Science Monitor*. September 19, 2001. <https://www.csmonitor.com/2001/0919/p12s2-woeu.html>

Gosztola, K. (2017): Trump's Inaugural Address: A Call for Holy War. In *Common Dreams*. January 21, 2017. <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2017/01/21/trumps-inaugural-address-call-holy-war>

Haykel, B. (2016): ISIS and al-Qaeda – What Are They Thinking? Understanding the Adversary. In *Annals, AAPSS*, 668, November 2016.

MacEvitt, Ch. (2008): Introduction. Chapter 1: Satan Unleashed: The Christian Levant in the Eleventh Century. In *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East. Rough Tolerance*. University of Pennsylvania Press. 2008. Pp. 1-49.

Senzai, F. (2017): Donald Trump's Crusade against Muslims. In *TIM, The Islamic Monthly*. February 1, 2017. <https://www.theislamicmonthly.com/donald-trumps-crusade-muslims/>

**Comments:** These readings are very interesting and will provide you with much better understanding of current situation in the Middle East and in the U.S.A.

**Funny clip:** Islam vs Christianity (Carell vs Colbert; Comedy Central).

<http://www.cc.com/video-clips/hsf2pw/the-daily-show-with-jon-stewart-even-stevphen---islam-vs--christianity>

Pay attention to similar and circular arguments that both parties are using in the “defense” of “their” religion. Please pay attention to proposed resolutions of the conflict and final “agreement” on “something.”

Do you think that this might be, just might be, a pretty good summary of a very old conflict?

**Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #9.**

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## **Week # 10 - starting with October 23, 2023**

Defining Orientalism, Occidentalism, and modernism: Western concepts or realities?

### **Readings #10:**

Arkoun, M. (2009): Islam, Europe, the West. Meanings-at-Stake and the Will-to-Power. In *Islam and Modernity. Muslim Intellectuals Respond*. J. Coopers, R.L. Nettler, & M. Mahmoud, Eds. I.B.Tauris. 2009. Pp. 172-189.

Hillegas, C. (2017): Trump's Islamophobia: The Persistence of Orientalism in Western Rhetoric and Media. In *Counter Punch*. May 25, 2017. <https://www.counterpunch.org/2017/05/25/trumps-islamophobia-the-persistence-of-orientalism-in-western-rhetoric-and-media/>

Jervis, D.T. (2005): Orientalism, Occidentalism, and American Policy in the Middle East. In *Journal of Third World Studies*. 2005. Spring. [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3821/is\\_200504/ai\\_n13642836/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3821/is_200504/ai_n13642836/)

Pick, L.L. (2012): Orientalism and religion. In *the Middle East Institute*. April 20, 2012. Originally posted September 2009. <http://www.mei.edu/content/orientalism-and-religion>

Stewart R., Wesley K. and Shannon Weiss: Postmodernism and Its Critics. In ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORIES; A GUIDE PREPARED BY STUDENTS FOR STUDENTS <http://anthropology.ua.edu/cultures/cultures.php?culture=Postmodernism%20and%20Its%20Critics>

**Comments:** Though the above readings are seemingly different, they all are very relevant for the topic of this week's meeting. They are all short, quite straight to the point, and quite fascinating.

**Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #10.**

### **ASSIGNMENT!**

**“Words matter...” This assignment will be available at 11:59 p.m., on Wednesday, October 25, 2023. It must be turned in by 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, November 4, 2023.**

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### **Week # 11 – starting with October 30, 2023**

Searching for identity: self-defining in the modern Middle East and U.S.A. A case for unity or disparity? Part 1 & 2.

### **Readings #11 & 12:**

Abu-Zahra, N. (1998): Islamic History, Islamic Identity and the Reform of Islamic Law. The Thought of Husayn Ahman Amin. In *Islam and Modernity. Muslim Intellectuals Respond*. J. Coopers, R.L. Nettler, & M. Mahmoud, Eds. I.B.Tauris. Pp. 82-104

Calvert, D. (2020): The Political Divide in America Goes Beyond Polarization and Tribalism. Based on the Research and Insights of Eli. J. Finkel and Cynthia S. Wand. In *KelloggInsight*. <https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/political-divide-america-beyond-polarization-tribalism-secularism>

Hopwood, D. (1998): Introduction. The Culture of Modernity in Islam and the Middle East. In *Islam and Modernity. Muslim Intellectuals Respond*. J. Coopers, R.L. Nettler, & M. Mahmoud, Eds. I.B.Tauris. 1998. Pp. 1-9.

Jones, R. P. (2017): The Collapse of American Identity. In *New York Times. Opinion*. May 2, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/02/opinion/the-collapse-of-american-identity.html>

Mogahed, D. Ikramullah E., and Y. Chouhoud (2020): American Muslim Poll 2020: Amid Pandemic and Protest. Featuring Five Years of Civic Engagement Trends. *ISPU publication*. 2020. [https://21702012.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/21702012/Research/ISPU\\_AMP2020-Pandemic-Report2.pdf](https://21702012.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/21702012/Research/ISPU_AMP2020-Pandemic-Report2.pdf)

Myhill, J. (2006): Language, Religion, and Nationalism in the Middle East. Conclusion. In *Language, Religion and National Identity in Europe and the Middle East*. John Benjamins Publishing Company. 2006. Pp. 230-281.

Owen, D. (2005): American Identity, Citizenship, and Multiculturalism. Paper presented at the German-American Conference cosponsored by the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung and the Center for Civic Education, September 11-16, 2005, Freiburg, Germany.

**Comments:** Focus on a lecture to provide you with a structure.

**Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #11-12.**

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**Week # 12 – starting with November 6, 2023**

Searching for identity: self-defining in the modern Middle East and U.S.A. A case for unity or disparity? Part 1 & 2.

**Readings #12 – see Week #11.**

**Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #11-12.**

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**Week # 13 – starting with November 13, 2023**

Searching for identity: self-defining in the modern Middle East and U.S.A. A case for unity or disparity? Eliminating the past. Reclaiming the past. Part 1.

**Readings for #13 & 14:**

Creatura, I. (2015): Digging for the Holy Land: The politicization of archaeology along the Israel-Palestine border. In *Brown Political Review*. Nov. 6, 2015.

<http://www.brownpoliticalreview.org/2015/11/digging-for-the-holy-land-the-politicization-of-archaeology-along-the-israel-palestine-border/>

Macintyre, Ben (2008): “Let’s all have tickets to the universal museum.” In *The Times*, July 10, 2008.

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/ben\\_macintyre/article4304258.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/ben_macintyre/article4304258.ece)>

Pettengill, M.(2012): Nationalism, Archaeology, and the Antiquities Trade in Turkey and Iraq. In Classics Honors Projects. Paper 16. Macalester College.

[http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/classics\\_honors/16](http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/classics_honors/16)

Yazdi, L. P. & A. Massoudi (2017): The Consumptive Ruins Archaeology of Consuming Past in the Middle East. In *Archaeologies*, Dec. 2017, Vol. 13/3. Pp. 435-459.

Fighting back – see, for example: The International Institute for Conservation.

<https://www.iiconservation.org/>

**ASSIGNMENT!**

**“Searching for identity...” This assignment will be available at 11:59 p.m., on Wednesday, November 15, 2023. It must be turned in by 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, December 2, 2023.**

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## **Week # 14 – starting with November 20, 2023**

Searching for identity: Eliminating the past. Part 2.

**Readings for #14 – See #13.**

**Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #13-14**

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## **Week # 15 – starting with November 27, 2023**

“Give War A Chance.” In the name of freedom – fighting for God to live in heaven or...?  
The militant piety of monotheism in the Middle East and U.S.A. Religiosity, reformation, and democracy – can we all get along? Part 1.

### **Readings for Meetings # 15 & 16:**

Armstrong, K. (2000): A New Preface. Introduction. In *The Battle for God. A History of Fundamentalism*. Random House. 2000. Pp. vii-xviii.

Armstrong, K. (2000): Ch. 10. Defeat? (1979-1999). Afterword. Glossary. In *The Battle for God. A History of Fundamentalism*. Random House. 2000. Pp. 317-379.

Aslan, R. (2006): Preface to the Paperback Edition. Prologue: The Clash of Monotheisms. In *No god but God. The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*. Random House. 2006. Pp. xiii-xxviii.

Aslan, R. (2006): Ch. 9. An Awakening in the East: The Response to Colonialism. Ch. 10. Slouching Toward Medina: The Islamic Reformation. In *No god but God. The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*. Random House. 2006. Pp. 220-266.

Gregg, H. S. (2016): Three Theories of Religious Activism and Violence: Social Movements, Fundamentalists, and Apocalyptic Warriors. In *Terrorism and Political Violence*. Taylor & Francis Group, LLC. 28:338-360. DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2014.918879.

Baer, R. (2002): Part III. You're on Your Own. In *See No Evil. The True Story of a Ground Soldier in the CIA's War on Terrorism*. Three Rivers Press. 2002. Pp. 169-213.

For a review of Baer's book, see:

Wasilewska, E.: Seeing Evil But Blinking. In *The World & I*. The Washington Times Corporation. July 2002. Pp. 236-242.

Profile: Hamas Palestinian movement. In *BBC News*. May 12, 2017.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-13331522>

**Comments:** I know, I know... the number of pages for the last 6 hours of lectures and discussions seem to be excessive but... The above readings are so interesting and captivating that many of you won't be able to put them down and will check out the whole books. Don't get lost in details – get the concepts. You may also wish to have access to <http://www.terrorism-research.com/> to learn more about terrorism, its definitions, history, etc.

**Ewa Wasilewska: Lecture #15 and 16.**

**ASSIGNMENT! “Give peace a chance.” This final assignment will be available at 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, December 6, 2023. It must be turned in by 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, December 13, 2023.**

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**Week # 16 – starting with December 4, 2023**

“Give War A Chance.” In the name of freedom – fighting for God to live in heaven or...? The militant piety of monotheism in the Middle East and U.S.A. Religiosity, reformation, and democracy – can we all get along? Part 2.

**Readings: See #15.**

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**ADA Statement:**

*The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability & Access, 162 Olpin Union Building, 801-581-5020. CDA will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.*

*All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability & Access.*

<https://disability.utah.edu/faculty/syllabus-statement.php>

**Faculty Responsibilities:**

“All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, and I will do so, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from and class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.”

**Academic Misconduct:**

**Please familiarize yourself with the University of Utah CODE OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (“STUDENT CODE”) at**

<https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>

**The following is an excerpt from this CODE explaining specific actions that won’t be tolerated in this class.**

“2. ‘Academic misconduct’ includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one’s work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information, as defined further below. It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

a. ‘Cheating’ involves the unauthorized possession or use of information, materials, notes, study aids, or other devices in any academic exercise, or the unauthorized communication with



another person during such an exercise. Common examples of cheating include, but are not limited to, copying from another student's examination, submitting work for an in-class exam that has been prepared in advance, violating rules governing the administration of exams, having another person take an exam, altering one's work after the work has been returned and before resubmitting it, or violating any rules relating to academic conduct of a course or program.

b. Misrepresenting one's work includes, but is not limited to, representing material prepared by another as one's own work, or submitting the same work in more than one course without prior permission of both faculty members.

c. 'Plagiarism' means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person's work in, or as a basis for, one's own work offered for academic consideration or credit or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one's own, without attribution, any other individual's words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression.

d. 'Fabrication' or 'falsification' includes reporting experiments or measurements or statistical analyses never performed; manipulating or altering data or other manifestations of research to achieve a desired result; falsifying or misrepresenting background information, credentials or other academically relevant information; or selective reporting, including the deliberate suppression of conflicting or unwanted data. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data and/or results."

So: **NO PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM!!!**

**Remember**, four (4) or more words in the same **order of someone** else's work, without providing references to the original work, constitute plagiarism.

It doesn't matter whether you plagiarize 1% or 20% of your assignment – the outcome will be the same.

The first (proven) offense: an "E" for the assignment.

The second offense is your last in this class: an "E" for a semester and report to the U of U authorities that make decision about any action to be taken.

**Non-Contract Note:**

This syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor when the student is given a reasonable notice of the modification.