

Revolutions, Political Islam, & Leadership in the Middle East

Dr. Houman A. Sadri
Information & Policy Analysis Center President
& Associate Professor, Univ. of Central Florida

Introduction

- ▶ Revolutions, Religion, & Leadership
- ▶ Complexity of & Diversity in Middle East
 - Geographical & Ethnic Diversity
 - Econ Diversity: Rich vs. Poor & Oil Vs. Non-Oil
 - Historical & Political Impact of Global & Regional Powers

Geographic Diversity



Ethnic Diversity



Widening Gap: Europe vs. Mid East

- ▶ 18th & 19th Cent European invasions
Different from the Past
- ▶ Europe Econ & Technological Revolution
- ▶ European Socio–Political Progress After
the Dark Ages:
 - Citizens vs. Subjects
 - Euro Nationalism vs. Islam Internationalism

Historical Shock: 9/11 of Islam

Egyptian Campaign

Part of the [Mediterranean campaign of 1798](#)



Historical Shock of Islam

- ▶ **The French Campaign** in Egypt and Syria (1798–1801) was Napoleon Bonaparte's campaign in the Orient, ostensibly to protect French trade interests, undermine Britain's access to India, and to establish scientific enterprise in the region. It was the primary purpose of the Mediterranean campaign of 1798, a series of naval engagements that included the capture of Malta.
- ▶ Despite many decisive victories and an initially successful expedition into Syria, **Napoleon and his Armée d'Orient were eventually forced to withdraw by the British army**, after sowing political disharmony in France, conflict in Europe, and suffering the defeat of the supporting French fleet at the Battle of the Nile. Although the Ottoman forces greatly outnumbered the French, they didn't win any decisive battles or make a significant contribution.

The Islamic World in Crisis

- ▶ The defeat of Egypt led to the following Basic Question:

How could the European infidels so easily defeated the followers of the perfect and peaceful religion?

The Islamic World In Crisis

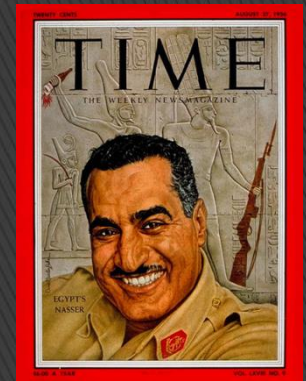
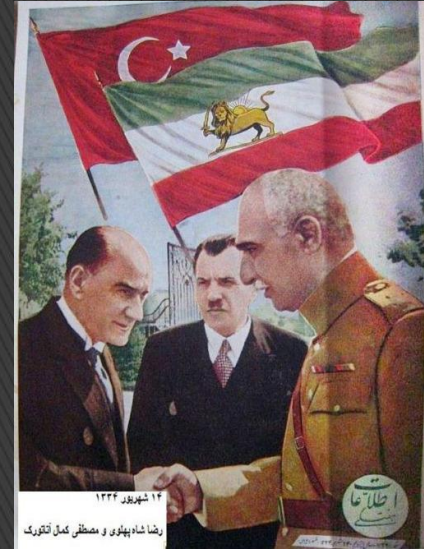
▶ Three General Possible Answers:

▶ 1. Revolutionary Secular Leaders

◦ Answer: Westernization

▶ Looking to the future since the past dominated by religion put us behind Europe

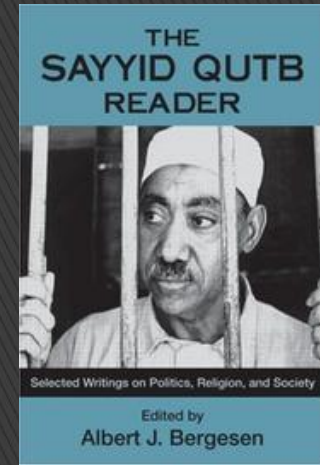
▶ Examples: Ataturk, Reza Shah, President Nasser




The Islamic World In Crisis

- ▶ 2. Revolutionary Religions leaders:
- ▶ Answer: Reviving/Saving Islam
- ▶ Looking to the glorious past
- ▶ Deviation from Islam led to falling behind Europe.


Examples: Ayatollah Khomeini for Shias
& Sayyid Qutb for Sunnis



The Muslim Brotherhood



- Founded in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949)
- It is the world's largest and most influential Islamic political group
- Called for the return to "original" Islam and that the Arab world today has been corrupted by Western influences
- Was often in conflict with Nasser
- Attempted assassination of Nasser in 1954 led to full scale repression of MB



The Islamic World In Crisis

3. Reformist leaders:

Answer: Gradual Modernization

Focusing on the present to make a better future as honoring the past & Islam.

Examples: President Erdogan, Justice & Dev Party
Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Muslim League



WWI: Opposing Powers

Europe in 1914

ALLIANCES



Ideological Declines & Rise

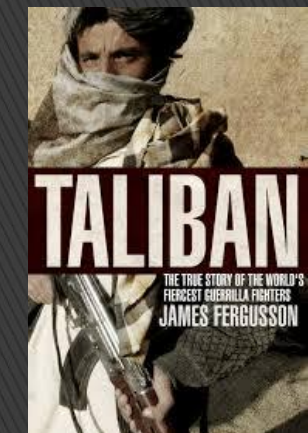
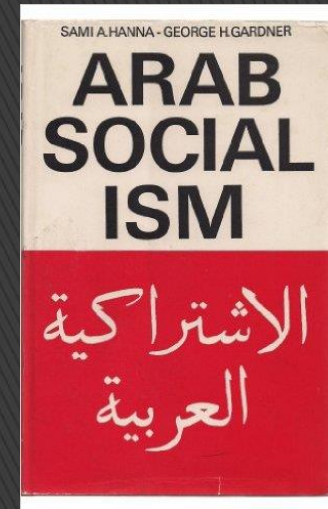
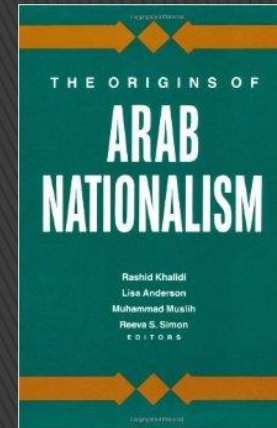
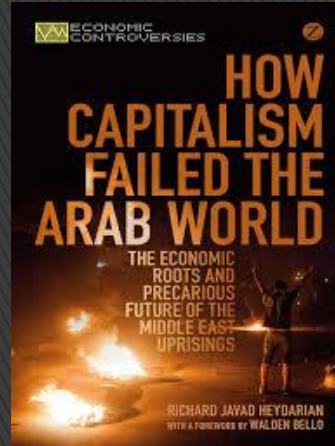
▶ Ideological Bankruptcy in the Mid East & Change

▶ Decline of:

- Arab Nationalism
- Socialistic Experience
- Arab Capitalism

▶ Rise of Political Islam

- 1987 Hamas
- 1988 Al Qaeda
- 1994 Taliban
- 2014 ISIL



ISIS
TRAIL OF TERROR



Major International Events

- ▶ 1. French & Other Euro Invasions
- ▶ 2. 1917 Balfour Declaration of the British Gov
- ▶ 3. Post-WWI Era of British & French Division of the Ottoman Empire

European colonialism in the Middle East, late 18th-late 19th c.

- 1798-1801 French invasion of Egypt
- British outposts on the Arabian Peninsula, 1799
- French annexation of Algeria, 1834 (settler colonialism)
- British administrative occupation of Egypt, 1882
- Russian and British Imperialism in Iran



General's Report in Egypt
1893



Post-WWI Middle East (1923)



Influential Individuals & Groups

1. Jamal al Din al Afghani (1839–1897)


Motivating Sunni & Shia Groups



2. Hassan al Banna (1906–49)

Muslim Brotherhood
Qutb in Saudi

Muslim Extremism

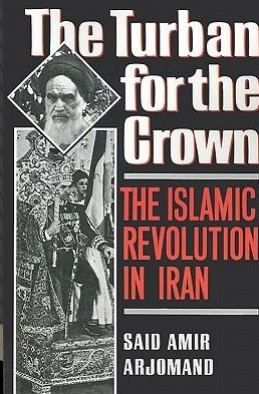


- Sayyid Qutb
- Ideologue of Muslim Brotherhood
- First Takfirist
- Studied in United States
- Hanged By Abd Ul Nasir



3. Iran Islamic Revolution

Ayatollah Khomeini



Islamic vs. Secular Leaders

- ▶ Expanding the Role of Islam in Society
- ▶ Demanding Political Voice & Accountability
- ▶ Identifying State Economic Failures
- ▶ Imbalanced Population Pyramid: Extra Youth
- ▶ Questioning Foreign Policy Choices