



The Lester and Sally Entin
Faculty of Humanities
Tel Aviv University

INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROGRAM IN THE HUMANITIES

The Shi'i Crescent: History, Culture and Religion

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2020/21

2 credits

Office hours: by appointment

Midterm: In-Class Exam – 19%

Final: Take-home Paper – 81%

General:

The Islamic Revolution in Iran and the rise of radical Jihadist movements brought sectarianism back to the center-stage of politics in the Middle East. Empowerment of the Shi'is in Iraq following the US-led invasion of the country in 2003, further intensified the sectarian rift in the region. This course will analyse the history, culture and religion of Shi'i world as it evolved over centuries. The aim is to assess the variants and offshoots of the Shi'i world to demonstrate the multiple strands of Shi'i Islam from its early times until the present.

Schedule:

1. Introduction: The Return of Sectarianism

Nasr, Vali. *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam will Shape the Future* (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006).

2. Sunna and Shi'i Historical Overview

M. Sharon, "The Development of the Debate around the Legitimacy of Authority in Early Islam", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (1984).

3. Twelver Shi'ism

Momen, Moojan *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: the History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1985), 147-166, 189-191.

4. The Mujtahids Leadership

AA Sachedina, *The Just Ruler in Shi'ite Islam: A Comprehensive Authority of the Jurist in Imamate Jurisprudence* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press), 29-57.

5. The Ismaili Community

F. Daftari, "The **Ismaili** Da 'wa outside the **Fatimid** Dawla"
L'Egypte fatimide: Son art et son histoire, Paris, 2000

6. The Secretive Druze Community

Anne Bennett, "Reincarnation, Sect Unity and Identity among the Druze",
Ethnology; 45:2 (Spring 2006): 87-104.

7. Alawites and their Unique Beliefs

L. Goldsmith, "God Wanted Diversity': Alawite Pluralist Ideals and their Integration into Syrian Society 1832–1973", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2013.

8. The Bahai Faith

D MacEoin, "From Babism to Baha'ism: Problems of Militancy, Quietism, and Conflation in the Construction of a Religion", *Religion* 1983.

9. Twelver Shi 'is under Nation-States: The Case of Iraq

Zubaida, Sami. "The Fragments Imagine the Nation: The Case of Iraq", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34 (2002), 205-215.

10. Shi'i Reformism

Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought: The Response of the Shi'i and Sunni Muslims to the Twentieth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 41-51.

Elisheva Machlis, *Shi'i sectarianism in the Middle East: Modernization and the Quest for Islamic Universalism* (I.B. Tauris, 2014).

11. Twelver Shi'is in the Gulf Countries

Y. Nakash, *Reaching for Power: The Shi'a in the Modern Arab World* (2011)

12. The Islamic Revolution and its Religious Message

H. Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran* (1993).

E. Machlis, "Alī Shar'atī and the Notion of tawhīd: Re-exploring the Question of God's Unity", *Die Welt des Islams* (2014).

13. Hizballah

Martin Kramer, "Redeeming Jerusalem: The Pan-Islamic Premise of Hizballah" in David Menashri (ed.) *The Iranian Revolution and the Muslim World* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), 105-30.

14. Jihadist Movements

Nibras Kazimi, "Zarqawi's Anti-Shi'a Legacy: Original or Borrowed?", *Current trends in Islamist ideology*, (2006).

15. Iraq after 2003

Post-Saddam Iraq: New Realities, Old Identities, Changing Patterns (Sussex Academic Press), 2011.

16. The Arab Spring, Sunni and Shi'i Relations

Elishva Machlis, "The Arab State between Sectarianism, Nationalism, and Islamism" in B Friedman, B Maddy-Weitzman (eds.) *Inglorious Revolutions: State Cohesion in the Middle East After the Arab Spring* (Dayan Center), 1-18.