

The Concept of the State in Islam: (Spring 2008)  
LSHV-514-10  
Tuesdays, 7:00-9:00 PM (no class March 4)

Paul L. Heck  
New North 125; 687-2051  
[plh2@georgetown.edu](mailto:plh2@georgetown.edu)

**Description:** Islam has existed in different historical contexts—tribal, imperial, and now national. It has also known different forms of statehood—dynasties and democracies, republics and monarchies, authoritarian regimes and civil systems of rule. What is the Muslim understanding of state power and its purpose? We will look at illustrations of statehood in Islam’s history alongside Muslim theories of rule and consider key concerns of Islam when it comes to governance and the institutions of governance. What is to be protected when it comes to Muslim views of public interest and what is the role of Islam in that process and its relation to the laws of public administration? One area of focus will be changing Muslim notions of the nature and scope of shari‘a (revealed norms of behavior) and its place in the governance of Muslim society. We will also consider Muslim assessments of states and societies where shari‘a does not obtain. Finally, we will ask whether the concept of the state in Islam lines up—how and to what degree—with western concepts of statehood.

**Disabilities Statement:** If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center ([arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

**Readings:** All readings are available on blackboard under course documents.

**Requirements:** A mid-term paper and a final paper.

**Schedule** (subject to change):

Week 1	<u>Introduction: Beliefs and Politics</u>
Week 2	<u>The Moral Economy of Islam</u> Nawawi’s Forty Hadith Selection of Fatwas “The Moral Economy of Islam—Based on Qur’an and Hadith”
Week 3	<u>Classical Islam – Divine Right of Kings</u> Tabari on the Killing of ‘Uthman Nizam al-Mulk on the Sultanate Selection from Patricia Crone, <i>God’s Rule</i>
Week 3	<u>Classical Islam – Caliphate</u> Testimonial Letter of Walid II Mawardi on the Caliphate: Theory and Practice Selection from Patricia Crone, <i>God’s Rule</i>
Week 4	<u>Classical Islam – Shari‘a Politics</u> Ibn Taymiyya on Public Policy ‘Izz al-Din on the Common Interests of Muslim Society “Jihad Revisited”
Week 5	<u>Group Solidarity and Urban Institutions</u> Ibn Khaldun’s Introduction to History “The Role of Law in ‘Abbasid Political Thought”
Week 6	<u>Empire in Transformation: Administrative Reform and Constitutionalism</u> Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi. The Surest Path

The Creation of an Iranian Constitution  
Two Clerical Tracts on Constitutionalism

- Week 7      The Response to Western Colonialism: Intellectual Reform  
Muhammad ‘Abduh, Islam, Reason, and Civilization  
Rashid Rida, Patriotism, Nationalism and Group Spirit  
Khalid Muhammad Khalid, On Theocratic Government  
Mahmud Shaltut, Socialism and Islam  
Mustafa Mahmud, Islam vs. Marxism and Capitalism  
Abd al-Rahman al-Bazzaz, Islam and Arab Nationalism
- Week 8      Islamic Nation I – shari‘a supremacy  
Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*  
Hizbullah Documents  
Mawdudi, Political Theory in Islam  
Hasan Turabi, The Islamic State
- Week 9      Islamic Nation II – shari‘a democracy  
The Muslim Brotherhood Documents  
Selections from Carrie Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam*
- Week 10     Kingdoms and Monarchies  
“Absolutism and the Resilience of Monarchy”  
“Conundrums in Constitutionalism”
- Week 11     Alternative Realms: Sufism  
“Sufism and Political Economy of Morality in Syria”  
Selections from D.B. Cruise O’Brien, *Symbolic Confrontations*  
“Between Sufism and Islamism in the Sudan”
- Week 12     Jihadism  
Selections from Abd al-Salam Faraj, *The Neglected Duty*  
Selections from Usama Bin Ladin’s communiqués
- Week 13     Classical Islam Reasserted: The Civil State  
Abdurrahman Wahid: Scholar-President  
Selections from Abdolkarim Soroush
- Week 14     Conclusion: What’s Next?