

Name:

Religions of the Middle East

Match each religion with the term(s) it is associated with.

Church

Kabbalah

Islam

Iran

Sunni

Holy Trinity

Baha'i

Harmony of Religion and Science

Mosque

Synagogue

Christianity

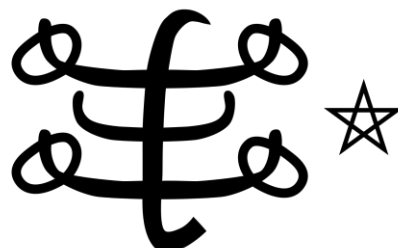
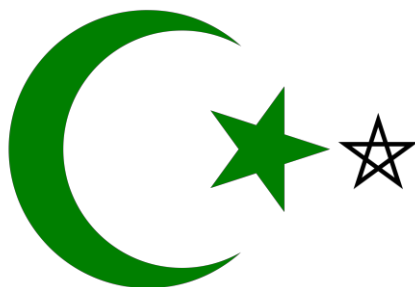
Crucifixion

Equality

Saudi Arabia

Judaism

Torah



Religion and Conflict in the Middle East 1

Read the selection below and write the main ideas, important quotes, and keywords in the key ideas section. Then, in your group, discuss these key ideas and create a poster presenting the three most important points of the article. At least one must be a quote from the text. Each group will present its poster to the class.

“ Tradition vs. Charisma: The Sunni-Shi’I Divide in the Muslim World” By Stephen Dale	Key Ideas
<p>Throughout the history of the Muslim world Shi'i's were always a minority community, often attracting to themselves Muslims who were socially marginalized or dispossessed. One of the consequences of their minority status was peculiarly Shi'i theological ruling that it was justified for Shi'is to conceal their beliefs. In consequence, Shi'i political activism had a conspiratorial or revolutionary quality from a very early date. Occasionally before the Iranian revolution of 1979 Shi'is founded dynasties. The Fatimids of Yemen, North Africa, Egypt and Syria (r. 909-1171 CE) were the most important of these. Shi'is of the Ismai'li sect, the Fatimids took their name from Muhammad's daughter Fatima. The dynasty's founder, the Fatimid Imam, proclaimed himself caliph and al-Mahdi, the Shi'i messiah, and aggressively sponsored the missionary activity that brought them to power.</p> <p>The Fatimid Imam, who consistent with Shi'i doctrine, presented himself as the divinely guided leader of all Muslims, established a state-financed mission that dispatched agents to convert the Sunni world to Shi'i Islam. The most notorious of these missions was led by Hasan-i Sabbah in Iran, who organized assassinations of Sunni Muslim leaders. The English word assassin is thought to derive from Hasan-i Sabbah's supposed practice of giving his agents hashish before their missions, who then became known as <i>hashishiyyin</i>.</p>	

Religion and Conflict in the Middle East 2

Read the selection below and write the main ideas, important quotes, and keywords in the key ideas section. Then, in your group, discuss these key ideas and create a poster presenting the three most important points of the article. At least one must be a quote from the text. Each group will present its poster to the class.

"From Gaza to Jerusalem: Is the Two State Solution under Siege?" Bv M. M. Silver	Key Ideas
<p>This month, the Obama Administration has restarted its efforts to broker a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians through a series of regular meetings, scheduled to begin September 14-15 in Egypt. As in previous efforts at peace, arriving at a peaceful solution will not be an easy task.</p> <p>The conflict's causes are (it almost goes without saying) complex, combining conflicting land claims of rival nationalist movements, religious emotion, international strategic factors, and basic disagreements over the narrative of history.</p> <p>Over the years, the geography of the conflict has shifted, never staying in one place for too long, and involving ever-shifting antagonists.</p> <p>After Israel's establishment, as a result of a war in 1948, the country's dispute for the next quarter century was regional in character, and is best described simply as the "Israeli-Arab" conflict. The bewildering and embittering character of the dispute is reflected in the fact that from 1948 to 1973 Israel and Egypt fought <i>four</i> wars, and the Israel-Egypt fighting was just one of several theaters of the conflict.</p> <p>Since 1973, it is most accurate to refer to the topic as the "Israeli-Palestinian" dispute, since all-out warfare between Israel and other Arab states abated, but violence between Israelis and Palestinians has at times reached agonizing levels. This was particularly true during the two Palestinian uprisings (Intifadas, 1987-1993 and 2000-2005) in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (territories conquered by Israel during the 1967 Six Day War).</p> <p>Ostensibly a conflict between two nations, Jewish Israelis and Christian and Muslim Palestinians, for control of one land, the 1973-2010 phase of the conflict has sprawled north and south, from Lebanon to the Gaza Strip, and involved an array of secular and religious groups on the Arab side, such as the Palestine Liberation Organization, Hezbollah, and Hamas.</p>	

Religion and Conflict in the Middle East 3

Read the selection below and write the main ideas, important quotes, and keywords in the key ideas section. Then, in your group, discuss these key ideas and create a poster presenting the three most important points of the article. At least one must be a quote from the text. Each group will present its poster to the class.

<p>“Clampdown and Blowback: How State Repression Has Radicalized Islamist Groups in Egypt” By Elizabeth Perego</p>	<p>Key Ideas</p>
<p>As the government inflicts more acts of horrendous violence upon Muslim Brotherhood partisans, fringes of the broad Islamist movement are increasingly joining up with hardline groups espousing armed struggle. They hope to inflict revenge upon the state that robbed Morsi and the Brotherhood of the political power the Egyptian people legitimately invested in them through the 2012 elections.</p> <p>On December 24, 2013, a car bomb set off outside of the Security Directorate in Mansoura killed 16 and left hundreds wounded, echoing an attack by armed agents against military conscripts that left 25 dead in August.</p> <p>A month later, on January 24, 2014, the eve of the third anniversary of former Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak’s departure from power saw a series of four bomb explosions in public places during morning rush hour in central Cairo. The attacks left six dead and dozens more injured.</p> <p>These bombings, as well as some attacks on Coptic Christians, reflect how armed associations are harming civilians in their quest for vengeance and justice. As of late May, there have been more than 300 coordinated attacks on civilians and security forces. The gunpowder appears lit for a long, violent struggle over Egypt’s future.</p> <p>The prediction of a new Taliban and al-Qaeda has precedent in the region’s recent past. Historically speaking, the harder states clamp down on the activities of Islamists, the more likely members of these groups are to counter this aggression, at times espousing ultraconservative views of Islam.</p> <p>The history of the encounters of the Muslim Brotherhood with various Egyptian leaders and regimes since the birth of the world’s first modern Islamist movement elucidates how state repression of this group has typically culminated in the radicalization of the organization.</p>	

Religion and Conflict in the Middle East 4

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<p style="text-align: center;">“Syria’s Islamic Movement and the 2011-2012 Uprising” By Fred Lawson</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Key Ideas</p>
<p>Armed struggle against the Ba'thi leadership in Syria peaked at the close of the decade, with the execution of eighty-three 'Alawi cadets at the military academy in Aleppo in June 1979, a cluster of mass demonstrations and boycotts in Aleppo, Hama and Homs in March 1980, and a failed attempt to assassinate President Hafiz al-Asad later that year.</p> <p>In the face of escalating violence, the authorities decreed in July 1980 that membership in the Muslim Brotherhood would incur the death penalty. The government then cracked down on the organization using its formidable elite military and security units, whose ranks consisted almost exclusively of 'Alawi personnel. The Brothers regrouped under the banner of the Islamic Front in Syria, a broad alliance of Islamist organizations that came together in October 1980.</p> <p>Muhammad al-Bayanuni, a respected member of the religious hierarchy of Aleppo, became the Islamic Front's Secretary General, but its leading light remained 'Adnan Sa'd al-Din, the General Supervisor of the Muslim Brothers. The chief ideologue of the Islamic Front was a prominent religious scholar from Hama, Sa'id Hawwa, who along with Sa'd al-Din had been a leader of the northern militants during the mid-1970s.</p> <p>Six years of armed struggle culminated in the February 1982 confrontation between the Muslim Brothers and the Ba'thi regime in the long-time Islamist stronghold of Hama. Militants proclaimed a popular uprising and seized control of several neighborhoods in the heart of the city. It took elite military and security forces two weeks to crush the revolt, during which time between 5,000 and 20,000 civilians were killed and the central business district and historic grand mosque were razed to the ground.</p> <p>The showdown dealt a devastating blow to the Muslim Brothers, and put Islamist activists on notice that the authorities would no longer tolerate violent challenges to Ba'th Party rule.</p> <p>After the crushing defeat at Hama, prospects for Syria's Muslim Brotherhood dimmed dramatically. Armed struggle proved an utter failure, and severely damaged the organization's reputation among the general public.</p>	

Name:

Ways religion has lead to conflict in the Middle East

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Fundamental differences between or within religions

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Answer: Are conflicts in the Middle East today more a result of religion or nationalism?

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