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HISTORY OF ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS IN MIDDLE EASTERN CIVILIZATION

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A B S T R A C T

This study examines the historical traces of the Abrahamic religions Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in the context of Middle Eastern civilization through a qualitative approach using literature study and historical-descriptive analysis. The focus of the study includes the origins of the three religions, the development of their teachings and institutions, and the accompanying social, cultural, and political influences. The results of the study indicate that all three religions are rooted in the same monotheistic teachings, inherited from the central figure of the Prophet Abraham. Despite having similar theological sources, each religion developed in a different historical and socio-political context, giving rise to distinctive characters of teachings, legal systems, and religious traditions. The interaction between religion and political power has shaped the social, legal, and cultural structures of Middle Eastern society, both in the form of cooperation and conflict. This study also found that conflicts often considered religious conflicts are essentially more influenced by political factors, power, and social interests. In the modern context, globalization and interfaith dialogue are important factors in building interfaith understanding. This study is expected to enrich academic insight into the relationship between religion, history, and civilization, as well as serve as an analytical basis for understanding religious dynamics in the contemporary era.
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KEYWORDS

Abrahamic Religions, History, Middle East

INTRODUCTION

For Middle Easterners, religion serves as a primary foundation for life and a unifying factor in society. This region holds a significant place in world history as it was the birthplace of several major religions, many of which are still practiced today. These religions share historical ties and stem from the same tradition: the Abrahamic religions, which include Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In general, Abrahamic religions believe in one God, Allah. This religious group is referred to as a major religion because it has the largest number of followers compared to other religions outside the Abrahamic tradition (Rahman, 2019). Abrahamic religion is a term for three major religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. These three religions are also often called Samawi religions, revealed religions, or divine religions. The term "Abrahamic" is used because all three have the same historical roots and are related to the Prophet Abraham. In Jewish tradition, he is known as Abraham, “father of many nations.” In essence, Abrahamic religions are religions that teach belief in one God. This teaching about monotheism has actually existed since the time of Prophet Adam (AS), but disappeared from the earth after the great flood at the time of Prophet Nuh (AS), when the Kaaba also sank and the tradition of monotheism faded. After the teachings of monotheism faded, Allah ordered Prophet Ibrahim to rebuild the Kaaba. The election of the Prophet Ibrahim as a noble figure and chosen by Allah is also confirmed in the QS. Al-Baqarah verse 130.

وَمَن يَرغَبُ عَن مِّلَّةِ اِبرَهِيمَ اِلاَّ مَن سَفِهَ نَفسَهُ وَلَقَدِاصطَفَينَهُ فِي الدُّنيَا, وَاِنَّهُ فِي النَاخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّلِحِينَ

Meaning: "And the person who hates the religion of Abraham, is only a person who makes a fool of himself. And indeed we have chosen him (Ibrahim) in this world. And indeed in the hereafter he will be among the pious." (QS. Al-Baqarah: 130)

These three religions provide a moral foundation that binds social life and also shapes group boundaries within society. In politics, religion often serves as a source of legitimacy for power, influences intergroup relations, and helps determine the direction of policy and relations between countries. This is clearly evident in the various geopolitical changes currently occurring (Akmir et al., 2025). Religious values have significantly influenced Middle Eastern culture, evident in art, architecture, language, literature, and education. Sharia and other religious laws also shape family rules, social norms, and legal systems in many countries. Because several Abrahamic religions exist within the region, a dynamic of pluralism emerges, sometimes giving

rise to cooperation but also to identity conflict. This demonstrates that religion is not only about worship, but also plays a significant role in social and political life. The Middle East became the birthplace of the Abrahamic religions because the region has long had strong religious traditions and a written culture, as well as large cities and busy trade routes.

Middle Eastern society at that time was quite receptive to change, especially during times of chaos, allowing new teachings to develop more quickly. The emerging religious figures were also highly influential and left behind important legacies such as religious institutions and easily understood scriptures. Therefore, this region became the perfect place for the birth and spread of major religions (Valid Notes, 2023). In other regions, beliefs developed differently due to disparate social, political, and cultural conditions. Jerusalem is an ancient city located in the Judean mountains (Jibal al-Khalil), between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea, near the southeastern Mediterranean and the Jordan River. According to the Book of Genesis, the Prophet Abraham journeyed from the city of Ur (modern-day Iraq) to the promised land of Canaan, Palestine. He then arrived at a place called Salem, now known as Jerusalem, and was welcomed by King Melchizedek.

The Torah, the Gospel, and the Qur'an serve as the primary sources of moral, legal, and social values in Middle Eastern societies. These holy books shape thought patterns, behavior, and social relationships through teachings about honesty, justice, compassion, and concern for others, which later developed into societal norms. The Qur'an, as a revelation revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), is not only a religious text, but also a guide to life that regulates aspects of faith, law, worship, and ethics, and serves as guidance for all humanity, as affirmed in QS. Al-Takwīr [81]: 27 (Jaiyeoba et al., 2024).

Besides serving as moral guidance, scripture also plays a role in shaping legal structures and social norms. In the Jewish tradition, the Torah contains numerous laws governing social life and worship, providing a legal framework that became the basis for religious and social law in ancient Israelite communities. Likewise, in the Islamic tradition, the Qur'an is the primary source of Islamic law, which regulates not only worship but also various aspects of social life such as property rights, family law, economic affairs, and interpersonal relationships (B. A. Saputra et al., 2025). Scripture also serves as a social reference in shaping societal structures, influencing

relationships between families and communities. For example, the teachings of compassion, solidarity with the underprivileged, and ethical social codes outlined in the Bible and the Quran contribute to the formation of community-based social norms that value the common good, orderly living, and civilized human relationships (Hanifah et al., 2024).

The Abrahamic religions, namely Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, emerged in the Middle East through a long and interconnected historical process. This region has been strategically located due to its location as a trade route, a meeting place for various nations, and a center for cultural and religious exchange since ancient times. The emergence of these religions began with Judaism, which developed from Babylonian traditions. This belief stems from a covenant between God and the Prophet Abraham, then continued by the Prophet Moses with the revelation of the Torah. During this period, the concept of monotheism, namely the belief in one God, began to be firmly established as the primary identity of the Jewish people (Khoidir et al., 2023). Christianity then emerged within Jewish communities in the early Christian era. Christian teachings are based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, whom Christians consider the Messiah. Christianity developed as a continuation and development of Jewish traditions, with a focus on compassion, salvation, and the spread of teachings applicable to all people. The religion spread further through the Roman Empire, eventually becoming a major worldwide religion (Putri et al., 2025).

The next stage was the emergence of Islam in the 7th century AD in the Arabian Peninsula. Islam came through revelations received by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, and strengthened the teachings of monotheism that had been conveyed by previous prophets, such as Abraham, Moses and Isa. The Qur'an sees Islam as perfecting the pre-existing teachings about one god, as well as forming a new social, legal and political system in the Middle East region (Harahap et al., 2025). Overall, the development of the Abrahamic religions in the Middle East demonstrates a continuous connection between history and theology. All three originated with the figure of the Prophet Abraham, developed under different social conditions, and have had a significant influence on shaping civilization, moral values, and the social systems of Middle Eastern society to this day (Wijayanto, 2022).

Thus, the historical sequence of the Abrahamic religions demonstrates a mutually interconnected historical and theological relationship: Judaism became the

foundation of the belief in one God, Christianity developed within the context of Roman development, and Islam strengthened and complemented the teachings of divinity. This relationship forms a line of religious history that has greatly influenced the development of civilization in the Middle East and the world (Arman et al., 2025).

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method with a library research approach to understand the historical footprint of Abrahamic religions in Middle Eastern civilization. The primary data comes from relevant scientific articles in academic journals. Data collection was conducted by exploring various literature related to the research topic. The analysis process includes data reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions, while maintaining validity through source triangulation. This approach is used to more deeply examine the development and role of Abrahamic religions in Middle Eastern civilization.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) emerged and developed in the Middle East through interconnected historical processes. All three are based on the monotheistic teachings inherited from the Prophet Abraham, but they developed in distinct social, political, and cultural contexts, forming distinctive theological, legal, and religious traditions. Judaism became the initial foundation of monotheism, with a strong legal system and ethno-religious identity. Christianity developed from Jewish traditions, emphasizing salvation and compassion, and spread through Roman and Byzantine rule. Islam emerged as a refinement of the monotheistic teachings while establishing a comprehensive social, legal, and political system.

Interfaith interaction in the Middle East is characterized not only by conflict, but also by dialogue, exchange of knowledge, and cultural influences that have shaped great civilizations. This research confirms that conflicts often perceived as religious in nature are more fundamentally influenced by political interests and power. The socio-cultural heritage of the Abrahamic religions such as legal systems, education, architecture, and moral values has made significant contributions to Middle Eastern and global civilization.

Table 1. Table of Results of Discussion of Abrahamic Religions in Middle Eastern Civilization

NO	Discussion Aspects	Key Results
1.	Theological Roots	Judaism, Christianity, and Islam share the same root teachings: monotheism (tawhid), inherited from the Prophet Abraham, the central figure of the Abrahamic religions.
2.	Historical Context	These three religions developed in different historical and socio-political contexts, resulting in distinctive teachings, laws, and religious traditions.
3.	Judaism Development	Judaism served as the initial foundation of monotheism, with its legal system (Torah and Halakhah) and strong ethno-religious identity, forming the theological foundation for subsequent religions.
4.	Christianity Development	Christianity developed from Jewish traditions with its emphasis on salvation and love, then spread widely through Roman and Byzantine rule and church institutions.
5.	Islamic Development	Islam emerged as a refinement of the teachings of monotheism and established a comprehensive social, legal, political, and governmental system, primarily through the Islamic Caliphate.
6.	Interfaith Interaction	Interfaith relations in the Middle East are not only conflict, but also dialogue, coexistence, and the exchange of knowledge and culture.
7.	Religious Conflict	Conflicts often considered religious are fundamentally influenced by political factors, power, and social interests.

8.	Political Influence	Religion serves as a source of legitimacy for power, while political power also influences the interpretation and application of religious teachings.
9.	Socio-Cultural Legacy	The Abrahamic religions inherited legal systems, education, religious architecture, moral values, and social traditions that shaped Middle Eastern civilization.
10.	Modern Relevance	Globalization and interfaith dialogue are crucial factors in building interfaith understanding and maintaining social stability in the contemporary era.

Based on Table 1, it can be concluded that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam share common monotheistic roots derived from the Prophet Abraham, yet developed within different historical and socio-political contexts, resulting in distinctive teachings and religious traditions. Judaism served as the initial foundation of monotheism, Christianity evolved from Jewish traditions and expanded through church institutions and political authority, while Islam emerged as a refinement of monotheistic teachings with a comprehensive social, legal, and political system. Interfaith relations in the Middle East were characterized not only by conflict but also by dialogue and coexistence, with many so-called religious conflicts largely driven by political and social interests.

DISCUSSION

Origins of Abrahamic Religions

Prophet Ibrahim is known as the central figure of the three monotheistic religions: Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. His role is crucial because he set numerous examples through his attitudes and actions. Many of his descendants were chosen by Allah SWT to become prophets, and from them the teachings of the monotheistic religions developed. Ibrahim is one of the most influential figures in human history and is among the prophets who serve as prime role models or uswatun hasanah for believers (Alif & M. Azka, 2023). This is as stated in QS. Al-Mumlahanah [60]: 4

قَدْكَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌحَسَنَةٌ فِى إِبْرَهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ

"Indeed, there was a good example for you in Abraham and those who were with them..."

According to strong tradition, Prophet Ibrahim was born in the city of Babylon. His lineage was Ibrahim ibn Tarikh ibn Nahur ibn Sarug ibn Argu ibn Falig ibn 'Abir ibn Shalikh ibn Arfakhsyaz ibn Sam ibn Nuh (peace be upon him). Ibn Kathir, citing Ibn 'Asakir, also mentions that Prophet Ibrahim's mother's name was Umailah (Wijayanto, 2022). However, al-Kulaiby mentions that the name of Prophet Ibrahim's mother was Buna bint Karibta bin Kartsy from the Banu Arfakhshadz bin Sam bin Nuh. Prophet Ibrahim was known by the nickname Abu al-Dzaifan, which means "Father of the Guests." He was born when his father was around 75 years old. Ibrahim also had two brothers, Nahur and Haran. Ibrahim (Abraham) in Jewish tradition is told in full in the Tanakh, their holy book. He came from the city of Ur in Mesopotamia (now Iraq) and was the son of Terah. His lifetime is estimated to have been around the 19th or 18th century BC (Alif & M. Azka, 2023).

The term Abrahamic comes from the name Abraham, or Prophet Ibrahim in Islam. He is considered the central figure and ancestor of three major religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. All three religions adhere to monotheism, that is, worship of only one God. Abraham is also considered very important in the history of the Semitic religions. For the Jews, he is their ancestor and is referred to as the "Father of the Nations." In Christian tradition, Abraham is seen as an ancestor of Jesus. Even the Apostle Paul referred to him as the father of the faithful, both circumcised and uncircumcised (Afdillah, 2016). Tawhid means releasing oneself from all forms of dependence and servitude to other than Allah, such as worshiping idols or objects that can lead to shirk. In essence, humans only submit completely to Allah. This teaching of monotheism is the main message of the prophets and apostles in calling on their people (Sidiq, 2021).

Yudaisme (Yahudi)

Judaism is a religion that adheres to monotheism, namely the belief in one God. This religion is the earliest of the Abrahamic religions. Judaism, or Judaism, comes from the word "Yehuda" and is the native religion of the Jewish people, encompassing their teachings, traditions, culture, and rules of life (Andika, 2022). Judaism is a

monotheistic religion, meaning it derives from divine revelation. It existed approximately two thousand years before the advent of Islam. Muslims view Judaism as the religion taught to the Prophet Moses, through his holy book, the Torah. Its adherents were relatively few, around six million before World War II, and today their number has grown to tens of millions (Khoidir et al., 2023).

There are several opinions regarding the origin of the word "Jew." One of the strongest theories states that the word "yahud" comes from the root word "haada-yahuudu," which means "to return," similar to the word "raja'a-yarji'u." This term is associated with the words of the Prophet Moses in the Quran, Surah al-A'raf, verse 156: "inna hudnaa ilaika," which means "we return to You in repentance." This verse indicates that the Prophet Moses came to invite his people to return to the righteous path.

a. *Ibri,* The word Ibri comes from the verb tsulatsi 'abara, a three-letter verb meaning to pass or cross, such as across a valley, river, or road. The term Ibri, or Hebrew, was later understood as a term for people who like to move around, in accordance with the life of desert communities and remote villages that often move from one location to another. Ahmad Salabi explains that Ibri is likely the name given by the Prophet Abraham to his people because they lived in an area across the Euphrates River, or perhaps also the Jordan River.

b. *Israel*, the name Israel has two meanings, one general and one specific. In the specific sense, this term refers to the Prophet Jacob, also known as Israel. The name "Israel" was given to the Prophet Jacob as a form of respect, and in Hebrew means obedient servant of God. Therefore, his descendants were called Bani Israel, namely the children and grandchildren of Jacob. The Torah also explains that the name Israel was used to distinguish the lineage of the Prophet Isaac (peace be upon him) from the lineage of the Prophet Ishmael (peace be upon him). Around the 18th/19th century BC, the term Ibri began to be abandoned and replaced by the term Israel.

c. *Jews*. The term "Jew" is used to refer to anyone who adheres to the Jewish religion. This name comes from Yahuda, one of the twelve sons of the Prophet Jacob, who later became one of the tribes of the Children of Israel. These twelve tribes came from Jacob's twelve sons.

Prophet Abraham had several sons, including Ishmael, Isaac, and Jacob, also known as Israel. From Jacob's descendants, the nation of Israel was born. One of

Jacob's famous sons was the Prophet Joseph. After Joseph's death, the Israelites lived in slavery in Egypt under Pharaoh. From their lineage came the Prophet Moses, but he died before leading his people to the promised land, Palestine. The Israelites only successfully entered the region during the time of the Prophet David, and their greatest glory came under the leadership of Prophet Solomon. After Solomon's death, their kingdom split into two namely the Kingdom of Israel in Samaria which was later controlled by Assyria, and the Kingdom of Judah in Jerusalem which was finally conquered by Babylonia. These two kingdoms originated from the descendants of the Prophet Ya'qub and became the origins of the Jewish people who then spread to various regions of the Middle East.

Jewish traditions through the synagogue, the rules of Halakhah, and the teachings about the One God had a big influence as the basis for the birth of the Abrahamic religions that followed, especially Christianity and Islam (Khoidir et al., 2023). Synagogues were not only used for worship, but also as places of learning, legal discussions, and community building. This role later became a model for other religions in establishing their own religious institutions. Meanwhile, Halakhah, as a code of life governing ethics, worship, diet, and social relationships, demonstrated how religion can serve as a comprehensive guide for life. This pattern influenced how subsequent religions developed their own rules and norms (Santoso, 2020). The deeply rooted monotheistic culture of Judaism provided a solid theological foundation, allowing the idea of the One Supreme God to be inherited, expanded, and reinterpreted in the development of both Christian and Islamic teachings. Through the integration of these elements, Judaism established a narrative, ethical, theological, and institutional foundation that later became a crucial foundation for the birth and growth of other major religious traditions (Pauzian, 2023).

Christian

In Christian teachings, there is the concept of the Trinity, namely the belief that God consists of three persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit. This term comes from the Latin trinitas, meaning "three." Some views believe that this idea developed through a long process in early Christian history, including the interpretations of figures such as Paul. Although consisting of three persons, all three are understood as one God, with each demonstrating a distinct divine role for humanity (Na’imah et al., 2025).

The Church has deep historical roots in the Middle East, dating back to the time of the apostles, when Jesus' teachings began to spread in Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, and parts of Asia Minor. During the Byzantine Empire, the church grew rapidly, establishing important centers such as the Patriarchate of Antioch. With the arrival of Islam in the 7th century, the political and religious landscape changed, but the Orthodox community remained, albeit small in size. Over time, the Eastern Orthodox Church grew to become the second-largest Christian denomination, with approximately 260 million adherents. It later split from the Catholic Church in the Great Schism of 1054, leaving the two with distinct theologies and traditions. To this day, the original sites of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem remain important historical centers for the Orthodox Church (Laia et al., 2025).

The early spread of Christianity was influenced by three main factors: education in churches and monasteries, the tradition of writing religious manuscripts, and the introduction of Hellenistic philosophy. Churches and monasteries became centers of learning that preserved and disseminated teachings through manuscripts, while Hellenistic thought helped establish a theological foundation that was readily accepted (Gulo et al., 2025). These three elements made the development of Christianity more orderly and spread to various regions.

Islam

Islam is the great religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad SAW as the last prophet. This teaching was born in Arab society which at that time was filled with idolatrous practices and social injustice. The Prophet Muhammad SAW, who was born in Mecca in 570 AD, was sent to improve this situation. Before the first revelation came down, he often kept to himself and meditated in the Hira Cave. At that time, Arab society experienced a moral and spiritual emptiness, so revelation emerged as a guide to life for humans (Harahap et al., 2025).

Islam developed as a social movement in the Arabian Peninsula in the 7th century CE through the preaching of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Mecca. Within two decades, his teachings had spread beyond Arabia. Archaeological evidence shows early traces of Islam's spread in Southeast Asia, such as tombstones in Kufic Arabic script in Pharang, South Campa, as well as other tombstones with inscriptions similar to Javanese script containing administrative records. These findings confirm that Asia and Africa are the regions with the greatest growth in the Muslim population (D. Saputra, 2024).

Since its birth in the 7th century CE in the Arabian Peninsula, Islam has rapidly spread to Asia, Africa, and Europe. Besides bringing religious teachings, Islam also established an orderly social, legal, and governmental system. Its heyday was clearly visible during the Umayyad, Abbasid, and other major dynasties, when the Islamic world became a center of knowledge and culture (Widiarti, 2023). After the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), Islamic leadership was continued by four caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali. During the reign of Uthman ibn Affan, political tensions arose because some groups considered his policies too favorable to the Umayyads. The Umayyad dynasty then emerged as a major power that ruled a vast territory from Spain to India. During this period, Islam spread rapidly to North Africa, Spain, West Asia, and Central Asia. The Abbasid dynasty came to power from 750–1258 CE after defeating the Umayyads in the Battle of Zab. They moved the center of government from Damascus to Baghdad in 762 CE. Baghdad then developed into a center of science, trade, and culture, so this period is known as the "Golden Age of Islam." Although their rule was more open to various non-Arab tribes and groups, the Abbasid dynasty ultimately still experienced decline (Yusrianto & Harun, 2025).

The Abbasid Dynasty brought many advancements to the development of Islam, leading to this period being known as the "Golden Age of Islam." Islam itself is a comprehensive religion, governing not only worship but also social aspects such as politics, economics, law, and education (Qomariyah & Rizqa, 2023). Great advances in science and culture were the main characteristics of the heyday of the Abbasid dynasty (Ifendi, 2020). In this period, Muslims achieved many important developments in various fields, including:

a. Political Field

Even though the Abbasids had tried hard to get rid of all parties who were considered a threat, this step did not automatically make their government truly stable.

b. Administration

During the Abbasid government, the position of vizier was held as the chief minister, managing the administration of the state according to Islamic law, including the appointment and dismissal of officials. There were two types of viziers: the tafwidh vizier, who had extensive powers similar to a prime minister, and the tanfidh vizier, whose powers were more limited.

c. Economic Field

At the beginning of the Abbasid reign, a strong focus on the economy enabled the state to generate high revenues for the welfare of the people. This success marked one of the peaks of the Abbasid Dynasty's economic glory.

d. Education and Science

Muslim scientists during the Abbasid era made many important achievements in mathematics and astronomy. Al-Khwarizmi, for example, is known as the pioneer of algebra, as well as the discovery of zero, which significantly influenced the way we calculate today. This scientific progress took place through various phases, including the establishment of a library by Caliph Harun al-Rashid, who founded the House of Wisdom. Furthermore, there were developments in medicine, mathematics, philosophy, Islamic jurisprudence, and various other disciplines (Niswah et al., 2025).

Interfaith Interactions and Meetings

Besides being known as a center of scientific development, the Middle East also served as a meeting place for the world's three major monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The presence of these three religions in one region gave rise to complex social and intellectual relationships. Interfaith interaction was evident not only in coexistence but also through dialogue, religious debate, and the exchange of ideas. Discussions about God, prophets, law, and ethical values were a vital part of the intellectual life of Middle Eastern societies, particularly in large cities (Hermawan et al., 2025).

Cities such as Baghdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, and Cairo developed into multicultural regions that brought together various religious and ethnic groups. In these cities, Jews, Christians, and Muslims lived side by side in a unified social order, despite differing rights and obligations. Relations between these groups were not always harmonious, but they nonetheless demonstrated interconnectedness and mutual influence. Therefore, Middle Eastern civilization cannot be seen as a single civilization, but rather as the result of the confluence and interaction of various religious and cultural traditions (Adib et al., 2024). The Crusades were one of the most significant events in the history of interfaith relations in the region. Although dominated by conflict and violence between the Islamic and Christian worlds, the Crusades also opened up intensive contact between East and West. Through this contact, there was an exchange of knowledge, technology, military systems, and social and cultural

customs. Thus, interfaith relations in the Middle East were marked not only by conflict but also by a process of mutual learning and the transfer of civilization that had a far-reaching impact on world history (Athallah & Sudjatnika, 2025).

Social and Cultural Heritage

The long-standing relationship between religion, science, and politics in the Middle East has yielded a diverse social and cultural heritage. One key legacy is the emergence of legal traditions rooted in religious teachings. Law was used not only to regulate social life but also to instill moral values and justice. This legal tradition subsequently had a significant influence on systems of government, education, and social life as a whole (Arianti & Alvian, 2025). In urban planning and architecture, the influence of Middle Eastern culture is evident in the neat and symbolic planning of cities. Religious buildings such as synagogues, churches, and mosques play a vital role in community life, both physically and symbolically. These buildings are not only used for worship but also serve as places of education, social activities, and the formation of community identity. This demonstrates that symbols of the oneness of God are an integral part of public space and the daily lives of Middle Eastern communities (Gustina et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the religious calendar plays a crucial role in regulating social life. The determination of holy days, prayer times, and religious celebrations shape the pattern of community activities throughout the year. The teaching of sacred texts serves as a primary medium for transmitting religious values, ethics, and knowledge from one generation to the next. The practice of worship, both individually and collectively, strengthens a sense of togetherness and social solidarity. All of this demonstrates that the Middle East's social and cultural heritage was formed through a long historical process, with a close relationship between religion, culture, and social order (Futaqi & Yenuri, 2023).

Interaction of Political Influence and Power

The history of the Middle East is deeply influenced by the relationship between religion and political power. The ancient Israelite kingdom, the Byzantine Empire, and various Islamic caliphates played a major role in shaping the region's political system and identity. Religion served as a basis for strengthening the legitimacy of power, so that the relationship between rulers and society was not only political but also religious. In many situations, power was considered legitimate if it aligned with religious

teachings. Rulers were often viewed as executors of God's will or implementers of divine law, so obedience to leaders also had religious significance. Furthermore, religion served as the primary basis for establishing laws governing social, economic, and political life. However, the practical application of laws and political policies was often influenced by the interests of those in power, social conditions, and the prevailing economic situation (Yahya, 2024).

These conditions demonstrate that the relationship between religion and politics in the Middle East is complex and constantly evolving. On the one hand, religion serves as a moral foundation and a source of legitimacy for power. On the other hand, political power influences how religious teachings are interpreted and applied. This interplay has shaped the course of Middle Eastern political history and made the region one of the most dynamic social and political regions in world history (Jailani, 2006).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Abrahamic religions Judaism, Christianity, and Islam were born and developed in the Middle East through interconnected historical processes influenced by different social, political, and cultural contexts. All three are rooted in the monotheistic teachings inherited from the Prophet Abraham, but they developed with distinctive theological characteristics, religious practices, and institutional structures suited to the conditions of their respective times. Judaism became the initial foundation of monotheism, Christianity developed as a continuation of Jewish tradition within the context of the Roman and Byzantine empires, while Islam emerged as a refinement of the monotheistic teachings while establishing a comprehensive social, legal, and political system.

The research also confirms that interfaith interaction in the Middle East is not only characterized by conflict, but also by dialogue, exchange of knowledge, and processes of mutual influence that shape the region's civilization. Many conflicts often considered religious are actually more driven by political interests, power struggles, and social dynamics. Furthermore, the social and cultural heritage of the Abrahamic religions such as legal systems, educational institutions, religious architecture, and moral values has contributed significantly to the development of Middle Eastern and global civilization. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of the history of the Abrahamic religions is crucial for understanding the close relationship between religion, power, and society. This study is expected to enrich academic perspectives

in religious studies and encourage mutual understanding and interfaith dialogue amidst today's global challenges and modernity.

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