

INTL 4370
Middle Eastern Political Systems
Tuesdays & Thursdays 2pm-3:15pm
MLC 245

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Course Description

The “Arab Spring” uprisings that swept the Middle East in 2011 and their contentious aftermath have put into question a great deal of the scholarly and popular literature about the region. For decades, the persistence of non-democratic regimes and authoritarian durability dominated discussions about Middle Eastern political systems. Scholars concerned themselves with explaining why there seemed to have been so little progress toward democratization in the region, while elsewhere in the world - from Eastern Europe to Latin America and Asia - countries made strides on the path to democracy. The outburst of popular demand for democracy that brought thousands of people to the streets of Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya, Syria, and elsewhere in 2011, and led to the toppling of several regimes in some countries, and to violent conflicts in others, requires a reevaluation of scholarly theories about the region.

In this course, we will begin by gaining familiarity with the history of the modern Middle East and with the varieties of non-democratic political systems that have characterized most countries in the region in the last decades. We will then examine the causes and effects of authoritarianism in the Middle East, considering cultural, social, economic, political (domestic, regional, and international) and other factors that have both shaped, and were shaped by, non-democratic regimes. Alongside reviewing the traditional scholarship on the region we will also explore the challenges to these regimes that have over the years laid the foundations for the unfolding of events since 2011. This will allow us to critically evaluate and question longstanding assumptions about authoritarian robustness and the prospects for democracy in the region. Finally, we will turn our attention to current political developments in the Middle East since the start of the uprisings and consider their causes, their divergent trajectories, and the extent to which they open new possibilities for significant political transformation.

Required Texts

- Lust, Ellen. *The Middle East*, 13th Edition, CQ Press

(Both books are available for purchase at the UGA bookstore and on reserve at the library).

- Additional articles and chapters will be available on ELC.
- Students should also regularly read Middle East current affairs articles on:
Al-Monitor: <http://www.al-monitor.com>
Foreign Policy: <http://foreignpolicy.com/channel/middle-east-africa>
Al-Jazeera: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast>
New York Times: <http://www.nytimes.com>
Sada: <http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/>

Grading

Grading Scheme

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	00-59

Grade Composition

Quizzes: 10%
Presentation: 15%
Participation: 15%
Midterm: 20%
Final paper: 40%

Assignments

Presentation

Each pair of students will choose one article/chapter from those appearing under “presentation” on the syllabus and will present it in class during the relevant week. The presentation should be of about 10 minutes, and include a brief summary of the piece and an explanation of how it relates to the other readings and topic for that week. The students presenting will also be responsible for preparing three discussion questions and for leading a short classroom discussion about the article.

Discussion

This has two components: 1) Students should come to class having read all the required readings and prepared to both pose and answer questions, and engage in discussion on the subject matter. 2) Student should post to ELC a one-paragraph response to the readings by 5pm on the day before each class.

Midterm Exam

Midterm exam covering the topics covered in the course so far.

Final Paper

The final assignment will be a research paper on a topic of students' choice. Students should select at least 7-10 academic sources to draw on for their paper's literature review. The paper should be between 10-12 double-spaced pages. Further instructions about the final assignment will be provided in the second half of the semester.

Policies

Academic Integrity

Every student must agree to abide by UGA's academic honesty policy and procedures known as A Culture of Honesty and the University of Georgia Student Honor Code, which work together to define a climate of academic honesty and integrity at the university.

Special Needs

This course is guided by the assumption of dignity and respect for all persons in the classroom. My hope is to support diversity of learners and to provide a non-threatening environment. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact me as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of classes), and make sure that you have contacted the Disability Resource Center: <http://drc.uga.edu>

Laptops and Other Devices in Class

The use of laptops, ipads, phones, and any other electronic devices in class is not permitted. If you require the use of an electronic device due to a disability, speak with me during the first week of classes to receive permission.

Attendance

Missing classes and coming late to class will impact a student's grade. Missing more than two classes without prior approval by the instructor will result in a 5-point grade reduction for each class missed.

Class Schedule and Readings

*** Please note that this is a tentative schedule and changes will be made during the semester

1.Thur. August 11: Introduction to the course

Historical Background

2.Tue. August 16: Imagining the Middle East – Conceptions and Misconceptions

- Lewis, Bernard. "The roots of Muslim rage." *The Atlantic Monthly* 266.3 (1990): 47-60.
- Huntington, Samuel P. "The clash of civilizations?" *Foreign affairs* (1993): 22-49.
- Said, Edward. "The clash of ignorance." *The Nation* 22.10 (2001): 2001.
- "The tragedy of the Arabs." *Economist*. July 5, 2014.
- Said, Edward. "Orientalism. 1978." *New York: Vintage* 1994 (1979). Introduction

3.Thur. Aug 18: Colonialism and State Formation

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 1: "The Making of the Modern Middle East." pp. 1-53
- Study Map for Mapping Quiz
- Due: Sign up for class presentations

Non-Democratic Political Systems

4.Tue. Aug 23: Overview of Institutions and Governance

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 4: "Institutions and Governance"

5.Thur. Aug. 25: Single Party Authoritarianism

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 10: "Egypt"
- Film: *Egypt, We Are Watching You*

Presentation:

- Albrecht, Holger. "How can opposition support authoritarianism? Lessons from Egypt." *Democratization* 12.3 (2005): 378-397.

6.Tue. Aug. 30: Monarchy

- Lucas, Russell E. "Monarchical authoritarianism: survival and political liberalization in a Middle Eastern regime type." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36.01 (2004): 103-119.
- Herb, Michael. "Princes and parliaments in the Arab world." *The Middle East Journal* 58.3 (2004): 367-384.

Presentation:

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 14: "Jordan"
- *The Middle East*, Chapter 19: "Morocco"

7.Thur. Sep 1: Theocracy I

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 11: "Iran"
- Screening: *Persepolis*

Presentation:

- Choose an article from Al-Monitor's Iran Pulse (www.al-monitor.com)

8.Tue. Sep 6: Theocracy II

- Guest Lecture: Dr. Sara Kutchesfahani
- <http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/06/09/iran-deal-s-building-blocks-of-better-nuclear-order-pub-63780>
- <http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/06/21/iran-deal-s-future-remains-uncertain-pub-63889>
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9.Thur. Sep 8: Political Islam in Opposition - The Alternative?

- El-Ghobashy, Mona. "The metamorphosis of the Egyptian Muslim brothers." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37.03 (2005): 373-395.
- Masoud, Tarek. "Are They Democrats: Does It Matter?" *Journal of Democracy* 19.3 (2008): 19-24.

Presentation:

- Schwedler, Jillian. "Can Islamists become moderates? Rethinking the inclusion-moderation hypothesis." *World Politics* 63.02 (2011): 347-376.

10.Tue. Sep 13: Secularism, Islamism and Democracy - The Turkish Case

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 25: "Turkey"
- Bali, Asli. "A Turkish Model for the Arab Spring?" *Middle East Law and Governance* 3 (2011), 24-42
- <http://observer.com/2016/08/why-im-leaving-my-beloved-istanbul/>

Presentation:

- POMEPS: Turkey's Attempted Coup http://pomeps.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/POMEPS_BriefBooklet30_Turkey_Web.pdf

Authoritarian Durability? Causes, Effects, and Challenges

11.Thur. Sep 15: Political Economy I

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 3: "The Political Economy of Development in the Middle East"

Presentation:

- Kuran, Timur. "Why the Middle East is economically underdeveloped: historical mechanisms of institutional stagnation." *Journal of economic perspectives* (2004): 71-90.

12.Tue. Sep 20: Political Economy II- The Politics of Oil

- Ross, Michael. "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics* 53:3 (2001)
- Herb, Michael. "No Representation without Taxation? Rents, Development, and Democracy." *Comparative Politics* 37:3 (2005)
- Ross, Michael L. "Will Oil Drown the Arab Spring?: Democracy and the Resource Curse." *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 5 (2011): 2-7.

Presentation:

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 15: "Kuwait."
- *The Middle East*, Chapter 21: "Saudi Arabia"

13.Thur. Sep 22: Social Transformation and Challenges

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 2: "Social Change in the Middle East."

Presentation:

- Salehi-Isfahani, Djavad, and Navtej Dhillon. "Stalled youth transitions in the Middle East: A framework for policy reform." *Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper* 8 (2008).

14.Tue. Sep. 27: Gender I

- Screening: Wajda

15.Thur. Sep. 29: Gender II

- Ross, Michael L. "Oil, Islam, and women." *American Political Science Review* 102.01 (2008): 107-123.
- Abu-Lughod, Lila. "Do Muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others." *American anthropologist* 104.3 (2002): 783-790.
- Al-Ali, Nadjie. "Gender and civil society in the Middle East." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 5.2 (2003): 216-232.

Presentation:

- Choose an article from al-monitor addressing a gender issue in the Middle East (www.al-monitor.com)

16.Tue. Oct 4: Take Home Midterm

17.Thur. Oct 6: The Role of the Military

- Rubin, Barry. "The military in contemporary Middle East politics." *Middle East Review of International Affairs Journal* 5.1 (2001): 47-63.

- Barany, Zoltan. "The role of the military." *Journal of Democracy* 22.4 (2011): 24-35.

Presentation:

- Choose an article from al-monitor addressing a the role of the military in the Middle East (www.al-monitor.com)

18.Tues. Oct 11: Religion

- Fish, Steven. "Islam and Authoritarianism," *World Politics* 55 (October 2002): 4-37.
- Lust, Ellen. "Missing the Third Wave: Islam, Institutions and Democracy in the Middle East," *Studies in Comparative International Development* (June 2011).

Presentation:

- Tessler, Mark. "Religion, religiosity and the place of Islam in political life: insights from the Arab barometer surveys." *Middle East Law and Governance* 2.2 (2010): 221-252.

19.Thur. Oct 13: Civil Society

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 6: "Actors, Public Opinion and Participation"

Presentation:

- Langhor, Vicky. "Too Much Civil Society, Too Little Politics: Egypt and Liberalizing Arab Regimes." *Comparative Politics* (June 2004)

20.Tues. Oct 18: Elections

- Lust, Ellen. "Competitive clientelism in the Middle East." *Journal of Democracy* 20.3 (2009): 122-135.

Presentation:

- Posusney, Marsha Pripstein. "Multi-party elections in the Arab world: Institutional engineering and oppositional strategies." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36.4 (2002)

Regional and International Conflict

21.Thur. Oct 20: International Politics

- *The Middle East*, Chapter 8: "International Politics of the Middle East"
- Anderson, Lisa. "Peace and democracy in the Middle East: The constraints of soft budgets." *Journal of International Affairs* 49 (1995).

Presentation:

- Jamal, Amaney A. *Of Empires and Citizens: Pro-American Democracy Or No Democracy at All?* Princeton University Press, 2012. Chapter 1

22.Tues. Oct 25: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict I

- The Middle East, Chapter 7: “The Israeli Palestinian Conflict”
- Screening: Five Broken Cameras

23.Thur. Oct 27: Israeli-Palestinian Conflict II

- Guest speakers

24.Tues. Nov 1: Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations

- Birnbaum and Tibon. “How the Israel-Palestine Peace Deal Died. *New Republic*, July 20, 2014
- Peace Talk Simulation

Presentation:

- Choose an article from Al-Monitor’s Israel Pulse (www.al-monitor.com)
- Choose an article from Al-Monitor’s Palestine Pulse (www.al-monitor.com)

25.Thur. Nov 3: Sectarian Conflict

- Nasr, Vali. *The Shia revival: How conflicts within Islam will shape the future*. WW Norton & Company, 2007. Introduction and Chapter 9: “The Battle for the Middle East”

Presentation:

- *The Middle East*, Chapter: “Lebanon” or “Iraq”

The Arab Uprisings and Prospects for Democracy

26.Tue. Nov 8: Explaining the “Arab Spring” and its multiple trajectories

- *Taking to the Streets*, Introduction: “Reconsidering Activism in the Arab World: Arab Uprisings and Beyond”
- Gause III, F. Gregory. "Why Middle East Studies missed the Arab spring: The myth of authoritarian stability." *Foreign Affairs*. 90 (2011): 81.

Presentation:

- Choose an article from Al-Monitor addressing the post-uprising situation in one of the countries of the “Arab Spring” (www.al-monitor.com)

27.Thur. Nov 10: The Road to Tahrir Square I

- *Taking to the Streets*, Chapter 2: “Egypt: A Decade of Ruptures”

Presentation:

- Choose an article from Al-Monitor’s Egypt Pulse (www.al-monitor.com)

28.Tue. Nov 15: The Road to Tahrir Square II

- Screening: The Square
- Due: Submit final paper topics

29. Thur. Nov. 17: Tunisia

- *Taking to the Streets*, Chapter 1: “Architecture of Resistance in Tunisia”

Presentation:

- Choose an article from Al-Monitor’s Tunisia Pulse (www.al-monitor.com)

Thanksgiving Break

30.Tue. Nov. 29: Civil War in Syria

- *Taking to the Streets*, Chapter 5: “Activism in Syria: Between Nonviolence and Armed Resistance”
- POMEPS: Syria and the Islamic State http://pomeps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/POMEPS_BriefBooklet25_Syria_web.pdf
- Rubin. Why the Islamic State Won’t Become a Normal State <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/07/09/why-the-islamic-state-wont-become-a-normal-state/>
- Due: Submit final papers bibliography

Presentation:

- Choose an article from Al-Monitor’s Syria Pulse (www.al-monitor.com)

31. Thur. Dec. 1: Possible Futures

- *Taking to the Streets*, Postscript: “From Activism to Democracy” pp.322-334
- Brownlee, Jason, Tarek Masoud, and Andrew Reynolds. "Why the Modest Harvest?" *Journal of Democracy* 24.4 (2013): 29-44.
- POMEPS: From Mobilization to Counter-Revolution (pp. 3-7, 18-19, 25-37, 63-69): http://pomeps.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/POMEPS_Studies_20_Mobilization_Web-REV.pdf

Final papers due Dec. 10, 5pm