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Course Outline

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

PO369-B: POLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

Class Time: Mondays and Wednesdays 8:30- 11:30

Term: Winter 2022

Instructor: Nima Nakhaei

E-mail: nnima@wlu.ca

Office Hours: By appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course, which is composed of three parts, provides a selective overview of the major political, economic and ideological developments in the making and remaking of the Middle East since the inauguration of the bipolar world order. In **Part I**, we will engage with the ideological representations of the Middle East and critical approaches towards them by situating them in their historical context of unfolding. In the **Part II**, we will focus on issues regarding ‘national autonomy’ in the Middle East during the Cold War. To do this, we will consider the various approaches to the study of post-colonial states in the region and proceed to examine the limitations and potentials of ‘national’ economic development in this period. Parts **I** and **II** will provide us with a basic historical understanding of the modern Middle East along with the theoretical and methodological tools to analyse a series of interrelated topics in the contemporary Middle East. We will begin **Part III** by assessing questions regarding the political

economy of oil. This is followed by a discussion of the conditions, concrete forms and limits to imposition of neoliberalism in the region. We will then assess questions regarding militarization of the region, Arab revolutions and the ‘counter-revolutions’ (military coups, international and regional military interventions) and the potential for a ‘second wave’ of revolutions. Each topic will be analysed from multiple perspectives through considering different theoretical and methodological approaches to the question at hand. Please note that the course is designed in a way to both have chronological as well as thematic logic. Hence, as the course progresses, we will also focus on the internal relations between these topics.

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COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the course, students should

- Be able to critically engage with the dominant ideological representations of the region and situate them in their historical context of unfolding
- Have a good understanding of the major contours of Middle East history since the inauguration of the bipolar world order
- Be familiar with the limits to and prospects for ‘national autonomy’ in the region through engagement with the debate on the post-colonial states and national economic development
- Be familiar with the major debates on the political economy of the oil, engage with the limits to structural adjustment policies and reflect upon the unparalleled militarization of the region
- every student should be able to formulate a concrete question for research through a critical engagement with the internal linkages between the themes and topics addressed throughout the course.

EVALUATION:

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
Attendance	10%	-
Reading Reflection	10%	Between Jan 17 to March 28
Paper Proposal	10%	March 14
Term Paper	40%	April 5
Mid-Term Exam	30%	March 01

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

Participation:

- Class Attendance (10%): Class attendance is mandatory; each absence will result in a 0.05% reduction of total course grade.

*Exceptions: legitimate and documented reason (illness, compassionate grounds) and absence in the introductory session (Jan 5th).

Reading Reflection:

- Each student will submit one reading reflections on a weekly topic of their choice, *excluding the introductory session, week 11, 12 and 13.*
- In each paper, students will critically engage with the required readings based on their strengths, weaknesses, convergences, and divergences.
- Each reflection should be approximately 500 words excluding the bibliography.

Paper Proposal

- Prior to beginning to work on the essay, a two-page outline must be submitted containing the following:
- A statement of the research question/topic.
- A hypothesis.
- A general paper structure through which the hypothesis is engaged with.
- An annotated bibliography of 5 academic sources beyond those in the course syllabus.
- Further details will be provided on the second week of classes.
- The proposals are due on March 14th.

Term Paper

- Research essays (35%) should be between 10-12 pages double spaced, excluding the bibliography.
- The papers are due on April 4th.
- Further details will be provided on the second week of classes

Mid-Term Exam

- The exam covers material discussed in lectures and readings between Week 1 to Week 7.
- Students will receive 5 questions. You will then have 24 hours to choose 4 out of 5 questions and answer them

- Each answer should approximately be 300 words
- The exam will evaluate your ability to think critically about the course material.
- Further details on evaluation criteria will be provided in class.

COURSE POLICIES:

Academic Honesty:

All students are expected to be familiar and strictly follow all the university policies on academic honesty. Please consult the following link for these policies: [**https://students.wlu.ca/academics/academic-integrity/index.html**](https://students.wlu.ca/academics/academic-integrity/index.html)

Late Assignments:

Assignments received later than the due date will be penalized **in the following manner**: one-half letter grade (1 grade point) per day of the total assignment grade will be taken out for the first 3 days. Afterwards, the assignment will only be graded at a 50% rate until 2 weeks past its due time. Exceptions to the lateness penalty: illness, compassionate grounds etc.

Email Correspondence:

- Only use your Laurier email when corresponding with the course director.
- The subject line should identify the course number and the nature of your inquiry (PO369: Essay Question)
- Include your full name and student number at the end of each email

COURSE MATERIAL

The required readings which are taken from (e-)books are available online through the Wilfrid Laurier University library's Course Reserves. The links to all other readings (journal articles, newspaper pieces, reports, etc.) will be provided on the course website.

ACCESSIBILITY

- Students with access needs are encouraged to register with Wilfrid Laurier's Accessible Learning Center ([**https://students.wlu.ca/academics/support-and-advising/accessible-learning-centre/index.html**](https://students.wlu.ca/academics/support-and-advising/accessible-learning-centre/index.html)).

- Please inform the instructor if there is something that can be done to improve your learning experience and access to learning.

TOPICS:

PART I	Week 1: <i>Jan 5</i>	Introduction
	Week 2: <i>Jan 10 & 12</i>	Orientalism and Beyond: Ideological Representations of the Middle East
PART II	Week 3: <i>Jan 17 & 19</i>	Historical Overview: Middle East and the Bipolar World Order
	Week 4: <i>Jan 24 & 26</i>	The Post-Colonial States and the Limits to National Autonomy
	Week 5: <i>Jan 31 & Feb 2</i>	Economic Development: Import Substitution Strategies and Dependency
PART III	Week 6: <i>Feb 7 & 9</i>	Oil and Energy Imperialism
	Week 7: <i>Feb 14 & 16</i>	Structural Adjustment and Popular Struggles: Neoliberalism with Middle Eastern Characteristics?
	Week 8: <i>Feb 28 & Mar 2</i>	Sanctions, Wars of Terror and Militarization
	Week	Arab Revolutions in the Making

9: <i>Mar 7 & Mar 9</i>	
Week 10: <i>Mar 14 & Mar 16</i>	One Step Forward, Two Steps Back? Counter-Revolutions and Military Interventions
Week 11: <i>Mar 21 & Mar 23</i>	'Post-Islamitic Politics'
Week 12: <i>Mar 28 & Mar 30</i>	Back to the Future
Week 13: <i>April 04</i>	Recap and Conclusion

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION

Readings: None

WEEK 2: ORIENTALISM AND BEYOND: IDEOLOGICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Required

- Said, Edward W. Orientalism. 1st Vintage Books ed., Vintage Books, 1980, Preface and Introduction.

- Mamdani, Mahmood. "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism: September 11, 2001." *American Anthropologist*, vol. 104, no. 3, American Anthropological Association, 2002, pp. 766–75.

Recommended

- Lockman, Zachary. *Contending Visions of the Middle East the History and Politics of Orientalism*. Cambridge University Press, 2004, Ch. 6 & 7
- Sadowaki, Yahya. "The New Orientalism and Democracy Debate." In: *Political Islam. Essays from Middle East Report*, edited by Joel Beinin and Joe Stork, London, 1997 pp. 33-51.
- Lewis, Bernard. *What Went Wrong?: Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response*. Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Huntington, Samuel P. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 3, Summer, 1993.
- Mitchell, Timothy. *Colonising Egypt*. University of California Press, 1988, Ch 2.
- Aijaz Ahmad. *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*. Verso, 1992, Ch. 5 & 6
- Turner, Bryan S. *Orientalism, Postmodernism, and Globalism*. Routledge, 1994.

WEEK 3: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE BIPOLAR WORLD ORDER

Required:

- Halliday, Fred. *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology*. Cambridge, 2005. Ch. 4
- Owen, Roger. *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*. 3rd ed., Routledge, 2004. Ch. 4

Recommended

- Chalcraft, John T. *Popular Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*. Cambridge University Press, 2016. Part III.
- Beinin, Joel. *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East*. Cambridge University Press, 2001. Ch. 5

- Kamrava, Mehran. *The Modern Middle East : A Political History Since the First World War*. University of California Press, 2005, Ch. 3-5.
- Hinnebusch, Raymond A. 2003, *The international politics of the Middle East*, Manchester, Ch. 6 and 7.
- Beinín, Joel. “The Working Class and Peasantry in the Middle East: From Economic Nationalism to Neoliberalism.” *Middle East Report* (New York, N.Y. 1988), no. 210, Blackwell Publishers, Inc, Apr. 1999, pp. 18–22, doi:10.2307/3012498.

WEEK 4: POST-COLONIAL STATES AND THE LIMITS TO NATIONAL AUTONOMY

Required

- Owen, Roger. *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*. 3rd ed., Routledge, 2004. Ch. 1
- Hinnebusch, Raymond A. 2003, *The international politics of the Middle East*, Manchester, Ch. 4

Recommended

- Ayubi, Nazih. *Over-Stating the Arab State: Politics and Society in the Middle East*, New York, 1995, Ch. 1
- Hinnebusch, Raymond. 2010. “Toward a Historical Sociology of State Formation in the Middle East.” *Middle East Critique* 19(3): 201–16.
- Luciani, Giacomo 1987. “Allocation vs. Production states”, In: Hazem Beblawi and Giacomo Luciani, eds., 1987, *The Rentier State*, pp. 63-82.
- Joffe’, George H. 1997: Disputes over state boundaries in the Middle East and North Africa, in: Guazzone, Laura (ed.), *The Middle East in global change*, London, pp. 58-94.
- Zubaida, Sami. 1997: “Is Iran an Islamic State?” In: *Political Islam. Essays from Middle East Report*, ed. Joel Beinín, and Joe Stork, 1997: London. pp. 33-51.
- Zartman, William 1988: Opposition as support of the state, in: Dawisha, Adees/Zartman, I. William, 1988: *Beyond coercion. The durability of the arab state*, London
- Alavi, Hamza. 1972. “The State in Post-Colonial Societies Pakistan and Bangladesh.” *New Left Review* (74): 59.

WEEK 5: NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: IMPORT SUBSTITUTION STRATEGIES AND DEPENDENCY

Required:

- Amin, Samir. *Maldevelopment: Anatomy of a Global Failure*. Zed Books, 1990. pp 11—17
Richards, Alan, and John. Waterbury. *A Political Economy of the Middle East*. 3rd ed., Westview Press, 2008, Ch. 7
- Elmusa, Sharif. “Dependency and Industrialization in the Arab World.” *Arab Studies Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 3, Association of Arab-American University Graduates, July 1986, pp. 253–67.

Recommended

- Khafājī, ‘Iṣām. *Tormented Births: Passages to Modernity in Europe and the Middle East*. I.B. Tauris, 2004, Ch. 8
- Alnasrawi, Abbas. 1991. *Arab Nationalism, Oil, and the Political Economy of Dependency*, New York, Ch. 1.
- Owen, Edward Roger John., and Şevket. Pamuk. *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century*. Harvard University Press, 1999, Part II.
- Beinín, Joel. *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East*. Cambridge University Press, 2001, Ch. 5
- Pesaran, Hashem. 1982. “The System of Dependent Capitalism in Pre- and Post- Revolutionary Iran.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 14(04): 501–22.

WEEK 6: OIL AND ENERGY IMPERIALISM

Required

- Hazem Beblawi, "The Rentier State in the Arab World," in: Hazem Beblawi and Giacomo Luciani, eds., *The Rentier State*, 49-62.
- Mitchell, Timothy. “The Resources of Economics: Making the 1973 Oil Crisis.” *Journal of Cultural Economy*, vol. 3, no. 2, Taylor & Francis Group, July 2010, pp. 189–204, doi:10.1080/17530350.2010.494123
- Labban, Mazen. “The Geopolitics of Energy Security and the War on Terror: The Case for Market Expansion and the Militarization of Global Space.” In

Global Political Ecology, edited by Richard Peet, Paul Robbins, and Michael Watts. London. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Recommended

- Mitchell, Timothy. Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil. Verso, 201, Ch. 1 and Ch. 8
- Ehsani, Kaveh. “Disappearing the Workers: How Labor in the Oil Complex Has Been Made Invisible.” In Working for Oil: Comparative Social Histories of Labor in the Global Oil Industry, edited by Kaveh Ehsani and Elisabetta Bini. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, 11–37.
- Labban, Mazen. Space, Oil and Capital. Routledge, 2008.
- Alizadeh, Parvin, and Hassan Hakimian. Iran and the Global Economy: Petro Populism, Islam and Economic Sanctions . Routledge, 2015.
- Beblawi, Hazem, and Giacomo Luciani. The Rentier State. Croom Helm, 1987.

Week 7: POPULAR STRUGGLES AND STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT: NEOLIBERALISM WITH MIDDLE EASTERN CHARACTERISTICS?

Required

- Richards, Alan, and John. Waterbury. A Political Economy of the Middle East . 3rd ed., Westview Press, 2008, Ch. 8
- Beinin, Joel. Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East. Cambridge University Press, 2001, Ch. 6.

Recommended

- Hinnebusch, Raymond A. “Globalization, the Highest Stage of Imperialism: Core- Periphery Dynamics in the Middle East.” In The Middle East and Globalization, edited by Stephan Stetter. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2012, 21–44.
- Owen, Roger. State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East. 3rd ed., Routledge, 2004. Ch. 7.
- Beinin, Joel. “The Working Class and Peasantry in the Middle East: From Economic Nationalism to Neoliberalism.” Middle East Report (New York, N.Y. 1988), no. 210, Blackwell Publishers, Inc, Apr. 1999, pp. 18–22, doi:10.2307/3012498.

- Harvey, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2007. Ch. 4
- Springer, Simon, et al. *The Handbook of Neoliberalism*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017.

WEEK 8: SANCTIONS, WARS OF TERROR AND MILITARIZATION

Required

- Ahmad, Aijaz. 2007. “Imperial Sunset?” MR Online.
<https://mronline.org/2007/04/17/imperial-sunset/> (March 21, 2020).
- Alnasseri, Sabah. 2009. “Understanding Iraq.” *Socialist Register* 44(44): 77–100. Violence

Recommended

- Owen, Roger. *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*. 3rd ed., Routledge, 2004. Ch. 6 & 10.
- Halliday, Fred. *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology*. Cambridge, 2005. Ch. 5 & 6.
- Mitchell, Timothy. *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil*. Verso, 2011. Ch. 8.
- Khalidi, Rashid. *Sowing Crisis: the Cold War and American Dominance in the Middle East*. Beacon Press, 2009, Ch.6.
- Watkins, Susan. “Vichy on the Tigris.” *New Left Review*, vol. 28, no. 28, New Left Review Ltd, July 2004, pp. 5–17.
- Cockburn, Patrick. *The Occupation: War and Resistance in Iraq*. Verso, 2007.

WEEK 9: ARAB REVOLUTIONS IN THE MAKING

Required

- The Interactive Timeline about the Arab Spring uprisings compiled by The Guardian newspaper (U.K.), available at:
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/interactive/2011/mar/22/middle-east-protestinteractive-timeline>
- Zubaida, Sami. “The ‘Arab Spring’ in the Historical Perspectives of Middle East Politics.” *Economy and Society*, vol. 41, no. 4, Taylor & Francis Group,

Nov. 2012, pp. 568–79, doi:10.1080/03085147.2012.719299.

- Bayat, Asef. *Revolution Without Revolutionaries: Making Sense of the Arab Spring*. Stanford University Press, 2017, Ch. 8.

Recommended

- Desai, Radhika. “The Geopolitical Economy of the Arab Revolutions.” In *Arab Revolutions and Beyond*, edited by Sabah Alnasseri. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2016, 13–30.
- Sabah, Alnasseri. 2016. “Class, State, and the Egyptian Revolution.” In *Arab Revolutions and Beyond*, edited by Sabah Alnasseri. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2016, 119–61.
- Sabah, Alnasseri. 2016. “Introduction.” In *Arab Revolutions and Beyond*, ed. Sabah Alnasseri. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 1–13.
- Pappé, Ilan. *The Modern Middle East: a Social and Cultural History*. Third edition., Routledge, 2014, Ch. 10.
- Smet, Brecht De. *Gramsci on Tahrir: Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Egypt*. Pluto Press, 2016, Ch. 7.
- Diwan, Ishac. *Understanding the Political Economy of the Arab Uprisings*. New Jersey: World Scientific, 2014.

WEEK 10: ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK? COUNTER-REVOLUTIONS AND MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

Required

- Prashad, Vijay. *The Death of the Nation and the Future of the Arab Revolution*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2016, Ch. 1, 4.
- Hinnebusch, Raymond A. 2019. “Thinking about the International Factor in the Syrian Crisis.” In *The War for Syria: Regional and International Dimensions of the Syrian Uprising*, eds. Raymond Hinnebusch and Adham Saouli. London: Routledge.

Etzbach, Harald. “The Unfinished ‘Arab Spring.’” Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, Dec. 2020, <https://www.rosalux.de/en/publication/id/43375/the-unfinished-arab-sprin>

Recommended

- Schmidt, Soren. 2019. "The Middle East Regional Security Complex and the Syrian War." In *The War for Syria: Regional and International Dimensions of the Syrian Uprising*, eds. Raymond Hinnebusch and Adham Saouli. London: Routledge
- Alnasseri, Sabah. "Iraq 2014: Making Sense of Sectarian Violence." *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies*, vol. 11, no. 3, Intellect, Sept. 2017, pp. 205–19, doi:10.1386/ijcis.11.3.205_1
- Iktar, Ofira, and Farhad Rezaei. *Iran, Revolution, and Proxy Wars*. 1st ed. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, Ch. 5, 6,

WEEK 11: 'POST-ISLAMITIC POLITICS' ? a

Required

- Asef, Bayat. 2013 *Post-Islamism: The Changing Faces of Political Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Recommended

- Cockburn, Patrick. *The Rise of Islamic State: ISIS and the New Sunni Revolution*. Verso Books, 2015.
- Cockburn, Patrick. *War in the Age of Trump: The Defeat of ISIS, the Fall of the Kurds, the Conflict with Iran*, Verso Books, 2020.

WEEK 12: BACK TO THE FUTURE!

Required

- Sabah, Alnasseri. 2016. "Coda." In *Arab Revolutions and Beyond*, ed. Sabah Alnasseri. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US.

Recommended

Etzbach, Harald. "The Unfinished 'Arab Spring.'" Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, Dec. 2020, <https://www.rosalux.de/en/publication/id/43375/the-unfinished-arab-sprin>

WEEK 13: RECAP AND CONCLUSION

