

**Case Western Reserve University**  
**POSC 379: Introduction to Middle East Politics**  
**(TTh 1000-1115pm)**  
Professor Pete W. Moore  
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Office Hours: TTh 12:00-2:00pm (Mather House 221)

The Middle East is a region of great diversity. An introduction to its politics is also an introduction to histories, societies, and peoples. Given the current political environment and the United States' fraught involvement in the region, it is easy to get overwhelmed by current events.

While this course will engage some of those current issues, we will also take a step back to view the region comparatively and over time. This semester we will focus on the development of states in the region and how states and societies interact. The regional issues we will investigate include the 2011 uprisings, political corruption, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, oil politics, and the Syrian civil war.

### **Grades**

Grading is comprised of four components:

Exam	30%
Quiz	10%
Literature reviews (x8)	20%
Course Paper	40%

### **Class Policies to Note:**

Computers or portable devices may only be used in class, with instructor permission, to take notes. You are allowed three excused absences (with documentation); any absences beyond three will affect the grade as well as possible failure. A key to doing well in the class is keeping pace with the readings and actively participating in class discussion.

**\*\*Please turn off mobile phones**

**\*\*Lap tops may only be used in class for note taking. Please see me for permission**

**\*\*Due dates and times for all assignments are strictly enforced. Any rescheduling and/or extensions of exams and/or papers that are not completed at the designed time must be discussed before the deadline to receive a rescheduling/extension.**

Plagiarism whether from digital or printed sources will not be tolerated. Failure to give credit in footnotes for other's ideas, failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another source, and/or failure to acknowledge another author's conclusions will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of university regulations.

### **Assigned Text**

Michele Penner Angrist, editor. *Politics and Society in the Contemporary Middle East, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (available in CWRU bookstore)

## Weekly Schedule

*All other readings can be accessed through our classroom Canvas site.*

*Readings from Middle East Report (MERIP), can be accessed thru KSL, E-Journals or catalogue search. Just look up the date of the issue and articles can be accessed electronically.*

**Week 1: Introduction: Setting diversity and identity context in the Modern Middle East**

**8/29-31** Valentine Moghadam, "Population Growth, Urbanization, and Challenges of Unemployment"  
David Patel, "Identity and Politics," in *Society and Politics in the Contemporary Middle East*  
Erika Solomon, "Syria: A Tale of Three Cities," Financial Times, August 3, 2017

**Week 2: From Islamic Empires to European Imperialism: What happened before is important for what follows and the Middle East is no different. While we cannot do justice to the complex histories of the region and its people, we will discuss the major historical and political themes leading up to the Ottoman Empire, its demise, and the modern dominance of the European powers.**

**9/5-7** James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2013), pp, 9-44.

**Week 3: End of Empires and New States: How do we understand the emergence of states in the Middle East in the aftermath of imperialism? What have been the challenges in building states and how did rulers respond?**

**9/12-14** Roger Owen, "The End of Empires" in *State, Power, and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, pp. 5-19  
Simon Bromley, "From Tributary Empires to States System," in *Rethinking Middle East Politics*, pp. 46-79; 83-85  
Ian, Lustick, "The Absence of Middle Eastern Great Power: Political 'Backwardness' in Historical Perspective" *International Organization*

Also: James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2013), pp, 71-99.

**Week 4: States and Regimes I: How do nondemocratic regimes in the region maintain power? How are those regimes opposed by its society, or conversely how and why do some people nevertheless support nondemocratic rule? We will look at the cases of Turkey and Egypt in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.**

9/19 Simon Bromley, "Comparative State Formation in the Middle East," pp. 119-135  
Roger Owen, "The Growth of State Power in the Arab World: The single-party regimes," pp. 21-38

**(MAP and DIVERSITY QUIZ)**

9/21 **NO CLASS (Watch *The Square*)**

**Week 5: States and Regimes II**

9/26-28 Mona al-Ghobashy, "Governments and Oppositions," in *Society and Politics*  
Tobias Thiel, "The Middle East Despot's 13-Point Guide to Longevity and Prosperity," *Middle East Report*, Winter 2013  
Penelope Larzilliere, "The Student Experience" in *Activism in Jordan* (Zed Books, 2016)

**Week 6: The 2011 Revolutions: What explains the popular and sustained mobilizations against authoritarian rule in 2011? What happened to these movements since?**

10/3-5 Mona Al-Ghobashy, "The Praxis of the Egyptian Revolution," *Middle East Report*, Spring 2011  
Norma Claire Moruzzi, "Gender and Revolutions: Critique Interrupted," *Middle East Report*, Fall 2003  
Hisham Bustani, "Jordan – a failed uprising and a re-emerging regime," *Your Middle East*, May 6, 2013

**Week 7: Political Economies: How have states and regimes ordered their domestic economies? What is corruption and what are the political effects? We look in particular at Lebanon, best cuisine in the region, some of the worse corruption!**

10/10-12 Pete Moore, "Political Economy" in *Society and Politics*  
Reinoud Leenders, "Assessing Corruption," in *Spoils of Truce: Corruption and State-Building in Postwar Lebanon*, pp. 18-57  
Ziad Abu Rish, "Garbage Politics," *Middle East Report*, Winter 2015  
Hugh Naylor, "In a country where outages are the norm, a Lebanese town now has power 24/7," *Washington Post* 28 August

**Week 8: Religion and Politics: To what extent is religion responsible for political and social patterns in a given country? What is political Islam?**

10/17-19 Jillian Schwedler, "Religion and Politics" in *Society and Politics*  
The Economist, "Can political Islam make it in the modern world?" August 26,

2017  
Faisal Devji, "Against Muslim Unity," *Aeon*

**Week 9: Midterm and Fall Break**

**10/24 Fall Break**

**10/26 EXAM**

**Week 10: Israel and Palestine: The creation of the state of Israel in 1948 and the resulting Palestinian refugees were foundational events in the modern Middle East. We will approach the conflict in political terms to understand its origins and consequences.**

**10/31-11/2** Avi Shlaim, "The Debate about 1948," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 27:3 (August 1995)  
Yezid Sayigh, "War as Leveler, War as Midwife: Palestinian Political Institutions, Nationalism, and Society since 1948."  
Joel Migdal, "Changing Boundaries and Social Crisis: Israel and the 1967 War" *Middle East Report*, "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict" ([www.merip.org](http://www.merip.org))

See also, *Society and Politics* chapters on Israel and Palestinian Authority

**Week 11: Israel and Palestine: What accounts for the failed peace process and what does the continuing occupation of Palestine mean for Israelis and Palestinians? Is the two-state solution dead?**

**11/7-9 Guest speaker, Lisa Hajjar, Department of Sociology, University of California at Santa Barbara**

Hussein Agha and Robert Malley, "Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors" *New York Review of Books*, August 9, 2001  
Nathan Thrall, "Israel-Palestine: The real reason there is no peace," *The Guardian* May 16, 2017.  
Oren Yiftachel, "Creeping Apartheid in Israel and Palestine," *Middle East Report*, Winter 2009  
Ilana Feldman, "Gaza as Open-Air Prison," *Middle East Report*, Summer 2015

**Week 12: The Gulf States and Monarchies: Today, absolute monarchies survive mostly in the Gulf region of the Middle East. How do these monarchies survive and what role does oil wealth play?**

**11/14-16** Pete Moore, "Rentierism and Resource Politics," in *Beyond the Arab Spring*  
Sean Yom and Gregory Gause, "Resilient Royals: How Arab Monarchies Hang On"

Rivka Azoulay and Madeleine Wells, "Contesting Welfare State Politics in Kuwait," *Middle East Report*, Fall 2014  
Kristen Diwan, "Parliamentary Boycotts in Kuwait and Bahrain Cost the Opposition"

**Week 13: THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**11/21 NO CLASS**

**11/23 THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Week 14: Iran: One of the major non-Arab countries of the region, politics in Iran intersects many of our course themes, diversity, political economy, and religion and politics.**

**11/28-30** Arang Keshaavarzian, "Iran" in *Society and Politics*, read to page 270  
Ervand Abrahamian, "Why the Islamic Republic Has Survived," *Middle East Report*, Spring 2009  
Asef Bayat, "Revolution without movement, movement without revolution: comparing Islamic activism in Iran and Egypt"

**Week 15: The Syrian Civil War: This is the most catastrophic conflict to emerge from the 2011 uprisings. It has also become a regional conflict with multiple powers, including the US, aiding various sides.**

**12/5-7** Bassam Haddad, "Syria's Stalemate: The Limits of Regime Resilience"  
Kheder Khaddour and Kevin Mazur, "The Struggle for Syria's Regions," *Middle East Report*, Winter 2013  
Mouin Rabbani, "The Un-Islamic State"

**Final Paper Due, TBA**