

Fall 2011
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST
Prof. Mehrzad Boroujerdi

IRP 600.M001/PSC 600.M002
Office: 332 Eggers Hall
Office Hours: Thursday 9:00-12:00

Class Time: Tuesdays 9:30-12:15
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COURSE DESCRIPTION: The international relations of the Middle East are generally characterized as being driven by unending conflict and political underdevelopment. Competition over natural resources, external interventions, wars, local political upheavals, and sectarian tension anchor the region's history. The competing claims of nationalist, secular, and religious movements that struggle against military-backed authoritarian regimes complicate the assessment of historical and political causes. This course's objective is to introduce some of the central issues of contemporary Middle Eastern politics while discussing the region within the larger framework of international relations theory. The course will demonstrate the interconnectedness of regional and international political forces. Students will learn the unique internal and external factors that contributed to the emergence of the Middle East state system as well as how these forces continue to influence the region's politics.

COURSE PHILOSOPHY: You should consider this seminar a collective exercise in critical thinking. My role is to steer class discussion and engender an informal participatory class environment where we can all search collectively for a broader understanding of the subject matter. The readings will introduce you to some of the more important scholarship on the subject, and they will form the springboard for class discussion. Please keep in mind that the present structure of the course reflects my interests and ideas about the key forces in Middle Eastern politics. However, I welcome a broadening of aims and interests through your input. Also, please take note that this syllabus represents the *anticipated* scheduling of lectures/readings/assignments; changes may be made to suit the actual composition and competencies of the class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Participation: In addition to being physically present, I expect you to be mentally present! Hence, you should complete all assigned readings *before* each class meeting so that you are familiar with the concepts, facts, theories, and controversies to be discussed. Furthermore, you can engage in discussion through the course page in Blackboard (<http://Blackbord.syr.edu>) and the course listserv (IRME@listserv.syr.edu). Both you and I will use these venues to (a) post interesting or informative e-mails about the subject matter of the course, and (b) respond to points and issues raised by the instructors or your peers.

Mid-term Exam: You will have an in-class midterm exam on October 25.

Oral Presentations: To ensure class participation and to spread out the work a bit, each student is required to make one oral presentation in class concerning one of the topics listed in the syllabus. Presenters will provide a critical summary of the assigned or suggested readings pertaining to the topic that interests them. They are expected to answer questions including: (a) what is the author's *thesis*?; (b) what are the primary *assumptions* the author holds (and expects

readers to accept) in arguing that thesis?; (c) what are some *useful concepts* s/he presents?; (d) how does the reading *relate to previous readings*?; (e) what are the major *strengths and weaknesses* of the argument?; and (f) what are the *implications for academic research* if the author's thesis and underlying assumptions are valid or true? Each presentation should last 20 to 30 minutes and should be accompanied by a class handout of 2-3 single-spaced pages. In order to make this a worthwhile exercise, each presenter is expected to post the handout on the class listserv at least one day before their scheduled presentations (i.e., Monday mornings before noon). You will sign up for the presentations during our first class meeting.

Research paper or journal of notes: You can choose one of the following two options for the primary assignment:

(a) Turn in a "journal of notes" (a reading log with critical commentary and opinion) on seven weekly topics (this includes books and articles) mentioned in the syllabus. In your seven entries (each of which must be 3-4 double spaced pages), you are expected to analyze, compare, and contrast works read in the seminar by entertaining the set of questions (a through f) mentioned above under "Oral Presentations." The deadline for turning in your journal of notes is *December 6*.

(b) Write one major research paper, 21-28 double-spaced pages long, focusing on a particular paradigm (i.e., post-colonialism), concept (i.e., modernity), or problem/issue (i.e., state planning) examined in class. This paper, which should have a theoretical rather than a descriptive focus, is due on *December 6*.

In writing your papers, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Choose a topic that interests you and encourages you to think deeply. Remember that you are not asked to write a book review and should develop your own thoughts and argument.
- A good paper has a clear structure with an introduction, a middle section elaborating an argument, and a conclusion. A good introduction guides your reader through the evidence which follows and informs him/her of the overriding purpose of your developed points. I strongly suggest that you have a single sentence that clearly articulates your thesis. It can be as direct as: "The argument of this paper is..." Once you have posed the underlying question and offered a thesis, the body of the essay should be used to defend the thesis.
- Defending your argument means carefully choosing and analyzing specific evidence, not simply repeating unsupported generalizations with slightly different wordings again and again. For an argument to be convincing, it is necessary to evaluate all possible sides of an issue. You cannot ignore significant contradictory evidence and counter-arguments and will need to address them specifically. The presentation of evidence should not merely be a mindless catalog of facts but rather a selective and careful analysis of details relevant to your case. To decide what evidence to use, lay out the full array of potential evidence in advance of writing your essay. Then choose that which can be best developed.
- Do not repeat entire sections from books or articles. Quotations are occasionally effective, but you should not need the quotations to do the work for you. Quote only selectively, and quote only that which is particularly valuable as evidence. When using quotations you must always indicate them by the use of quotation marks or, if the quotation is fairly

long and needs “block quotation,” by a single-spaced indentation and a specific reference with page number.

- Try to consult a variety of sources (books, periodicals, internet sources, lectures, etc.). If you need to do research on a particular country for your paper, you may wish to consult the Library of Congress Country Studies available at <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html>.

Note to Undergraduates:

Undergraduate students enrolled in the course to fulfill the senior seminar requirement for the Major in Middle Eastern Studies are expected to maintain the same attendance record, fulfill the same presentation requirements, and do the same amount of readings as the graduate students. However, their writing assignments will be somewhat less demanding. Instead of writing a 21-28 page paper, these students will be expected to turn in a 15-18 page paper or alternatively if they decide to do the “journal of notes” assignment, instead of writing 3 to 4 pages on each topic, they will be asked to write 2 pages on each assignment.

EVALUATION OF PAPERS:

Your paper will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- The strength of your basic position and its connection to the course and outside readings
- Coherence and persuasiveness of major thesis and arguments presented
- Ability to counter possible objections
- Form/style (spelling, grammar, and composition)

Papers will be graded down if they:

- Do not have a major thesis
- Are purely descriptive
- Do not show evidence that you have done the readings
- Suffer from sloppy/colloquial writing
- Are full of personal stories not related to the topic
- Rely on excessive quotations

Statement Regarding Disability-Related Accommodations

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 304 University Avenue, Room 309, (315) 443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary. For further information, see the ODS website, [Office of Disability Services, http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/](http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/).

Academic Integrity Statement

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the policy

<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>) and know that it is their responsibility to learn the instructor's expectations and the general academic rules with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort. For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>.

Students found to cheat will receive an F for that assignment. Students have a right to appeal.

Faith Tradition Observance Policy:

Syracuse University recognizes the diverse faith traditions represented among its campus community and supports the rights of faculty, staff, and students to observe according to these traditions. I am willing to accommodate for students' observance needs provided you notify me (in writing) no later than the end of the second week of classes.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Quality and degree of participation in class and listserv discussions	10%
Oral presentations with handouts	20%
Midterm exam	30%
Final paper or journal of notes	40%

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at Orange Bookstore and SU Bookstore):

Louise Fawcett (ed.), *International Relations of the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)

Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Mehran Kamrava, *International Politics of the Persian Gulf* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011)

Please note that Fawcett's text can also be "rented" from Orange Bookstore.

All of the course's articles are available through Blackboard. Please check your "MySlice" account.

"The future is under no obligation to mimic the past."

David Hume

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Aug. 30: Introduction - The Nature and Structure of the Course

- Syllabus review, questionnaire, presentation sign-up

Sep. 6: IR Theory and the Middle East: What role does the Middle East play in the field of IR theory?

- Halliday, pp. 1-40
- Morten Valbjørn, "Towards a 'Mesopotamian Turn': Disciplinarity and the Study of the International Relations of the Middle East," *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 14: 1-2 (2004), pp. 47-75 (Blackboard)
- F. Gregory Gause III, "Systemic Approaches to Middle East International Relations," *International Studies Review* 1: 1 (Spring 1999), pp. 11-31 (Blackboard)

Sept. 13: The Rise and Fall of the Ottoman Empire

- Fawcett, chapter 1
- Albert Hourani, "The Ottoman Background of the Modern Middle East," in *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East*, pp. 1-18 (Blackboard)
- Charles Issawi, "Europe, the Middle East and the Shift in Power: Reflections on a Theme by Marshall Hodgson," *Comparative Studies in Society & History* 22, no. 4 (October 1980), pp. 487-505 (Blackboard)
- Rohan D'Souza, "Crisis Before the Fall: Some Speculations on the Decline of the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals," *Social Scientist* 30: 9-10 (Sept.-Oct. 2002), pp. 3-30 (Blackboard)

Sept. 20: Nationalism and State-Formation in the Middle East

- Halliday, chapter 3
- Lisa Anderson, "The State in the Middle East and North Africa," *Comparative Politics* 20: 1 (1987), pp. 1-18 (Blackboard)
- Iliya Harik, "The Origins of the Arab State System," in Giacomo Luciani (ed.), *The Arab State* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 1-28 (Blackboard)
- Baghat Korany, "Alien and Besieged yet Here to Stay: The Contradictions of the Arab Territorial State," in Ghassan Salame (ed.), *The Foundations of the Arab State* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 47-74 (Blackboard)
- Fouad Ajami, "The End of Arab Nationalism," *The New Republic* 23 (August 12, 1991) (Blackboard)
- Aziz al-Azmeh, "Nationalism and the Arabs," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 17: 1-2 (Winter-Spring 1995), pp. 1-17 (Blackboard)

Sept. 27: Secular International Relations Theory and the Islamic Middle East

- Fawcett, chapter 8
- Mark C. Kennedy, "Dilemmas in Middle Eastern Social Sciences: Contours of the Problem of the Relevance of Western Paradigms as Guides to Research, Policy and Practice." In Earl L. Sullivan and Jacqueline S. Ismael (eds.), *The Contemporary Study of the Arab World* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1991), pp. 65-80 (Blackboard)

- Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 116-133; 147-154 (Blackboard)

Oct. 4: International Political Economy of the Middle East: Why does the Middle East continue to suffer from economic stagnation and poverty?

- Halliday, chapter 9
- Fawcett, chapters 4, 5
- Robert Vitalis, “Black Gold, White Crude: An Essay on American Exceptionalism, Hierarchy, and Hegemony in the Gulf,” *Diplomatic History* 26: 2 (Spring 2002), pp. 185-213 (Blackboard)
- Per Oskar Klevnas, “Sanctions and the ‘Moral Case’ for War,” *Middle East Report* (March 4, 2003) (Blackboard)

Oct. 11: Alliances, Enmities and Regionalism in the Middle East: If it is all Arab, why not an Arab Union? Is regional cooperation – in terms of economic free zones, security cooperation or ideological agreements – even possible at this stage? What were the causes of the Iran-Iraq War?

- Halliday, chapters 6, 7
- Fawcett, chapter 9
- Kamrava, chapters 1, 5, 7

Oct. 18: The Arab-Israeli Conflict: How do theories of international relations explain the establishment of Israel? What role did Israel’s establishment play in the rise of Arab nationalism? How did the 1967 war affect the region and change its political dynamics? Did the 1973 war and subsequent Egyptian-Israeli peace transform the Arab Regional System into a Middle Eastern System? Is the Arab-Israeli conflict an intractable conflict? Has the Peace Process failed?

- Fawcett, chapter 11
- Hussein Agha and Robert Malley, “Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors,” *The New York Review of Books*, August 9, 2001 (Blackboard)
- William Quandt, “Clinton and the Arab-Israeli Conflict,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 30: 2 (Winter 2001), pp. 27-40 (Blackboard)

Oct. 25: Mid-term Exam

Nov. 1: The Palestine Issue: Why such divergent historiographies? Why is Palestine such a central issue in the Middle East?

- Walid Khalidi, “Why Did the Palestinians Leave? Revisited,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 34: 2 (Winter 2005) (Blackboard)
- Walid Kazzuha, “The Impact of Palestine on Arab Politics,” in Giacomo Luciani and Ghassan Salame (eds.), *The Politics of Arab Integration* (London: Croom Helm, 1988), pp. 213-231 (Blackboard)
- Rashid Khalidi, “The United States and Palestine,” in *Resurrecting Empire* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004), pp. 118-150 (Blackboard)

Nov. 8: The Cold War Significance of the Middle East: Did independence eliminate “dependence?” Was a truly non-aligned movement even possible?

- Halliday, chapter 4
- Fawcett, chapter 2
- Mark Gasiorowski, “The CIA Looks Back at the 1953 Coup,” *Middle East Report*, Fall 2000 (Blackboard)

Nov. 15: The Post-Cold War Significance of the Middle East: How did the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the Islamic resurgence in regional politics affect the international relations of the Middle East? And why was the Iranian Revolution so anti-Western?

- Halliday, chapter 5
- Fawcett, chapter 3
- Kamrava, chapter 10
- Fawaz Gerges, *America and Political Islam: Clash of Civilizations or Clash of Interests?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), chapters 1 & 2, pp. 1-36 (Blackboard)

Nov. 22: No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

Nov. 29: The United States in the Middle East: What are the effects of US pressure for political change on Middle Eastern regimes? How can we understand US “democracy promotion”? Is the US support for Israel based on cold cost-benefit geopolitical considerations? How does the US-Israel relationship affect the politics of the region? Does the controversial thesis that the Israeli lobby strongly influences US policy in the Middle East have merit? How can we explain the fierce antipathy between political Islamists and the United States? Is US support for democracy contributing to better governance? Does the American political establishment really want democracy in the Middle East?

- Fawcett, chapter 15
- Kamrava, chapter 6
- Meghana Nayak and Christopher Malone, “American Orientalism and American Exceptionalism: A Critical Rethinking of US Hegemony,” *International Studies Review* 11, no. 2 (June 2009): 253-76 (Blackboard)
- John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, “The Israeli Lobby and US Foreign Policy,” <http://ksgnotes1.harvard.edu/Research/wpaper.nsf/rwp/RWP06-011> (Blackboard)
- Michael Massing, “The Storm over the Israel Lobby,” *New York Review of Books*, 53: 10 (June 8, 2006): Available at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/19062> (Blackboard)

Dec. 6: Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East: What is “identity” and does it matter in foreign policy? Can ideology affect state behavior on major issues of war, peace, and alliance formation? Does state nationalism always trump ethnic nationalism? How have Arab nationalism and political Islamism affected Middle East international relations? **(Term papers are due)**

- Halliday, chapter 2
- Fawcett, chapter 7
- Kamrava, chapters 4, 8, 9