

**POL479H/POL 2418H - Topics in Middle East Politics,
Department of Political Science, University of Toronto,
Fall 2010, UC 248, Thursdays 12-2pm.**

Course Title: *Authoritarianism and Protest Politics in the Middle East*

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Course Description: This course sets out to understand the challenges facing protest politics in the Middle East in the context of its authoritarian politics. It is divided into two parts. The first section focuses on the question of authoritarian resilience. It will begin by critiquing some of the more prevalent 'essentialist' approaches to the study of the Middle East (be they cultural, political, and/or economic), and encourage the use of approaches that incorporate insights from political economy and comparative history. This will be followed by a session examining historical processes of state formation in the region. The final three weeks of the first part of the course examine the various factors that have contributed to the resilience of authoritarian rule. Using many of the articles from the course text, Oliver Schlumberger's *Debating Arab Authoritarianism: Dynamics and Durability in Nondemocratic Regimes*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, (2007), we will examine: (i) intra-regime politics, (ii) state-society relations, and (iii) the implications of economic restructuring.

The second part of the course revolves around the findings of student research on particular **country-based** protest movements within the Middle East. The class itself will be organized around student seminars on their research – lasting anywhere between 30-40 minutes depending upon the size of the class. These seminars should act as a trail run/first draft of their final research paper and the class will be designed as a workshop, aimed at providing collective positive feedback back to the student presenter as to how their arguments for their papers can be enhanced. Ideally, depending upon your own choices of protest movements, each week will be devoted to seminars that focus on the same country or group of countries with similar regime types. Analytically, there are two main aims of this latter section of the course. First, students will be expected to apply (to the extent that it is appropriate) the framework of "social movement theory" to their seminars and research papers, a framework found within Quinton Wiktorowicz's, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (2004) and about which all students in the course will be required write a short essay. Second, students will also be required to integrate into their seminars and research papers insights from the first half of the course on the political context and/or "political opportunity structures" within which their respective protest politics case study operates.

Course Readings: There are two required texts for this course.

1. Oliver Schlumberger, *Debating Arab Authoritarianism: Dynamics and Durability in Nondemocratic Regimes*, (2007).
2. Quinton Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (2004).
3. The remainder of the course readings can be found in short-term loan in Roberts Library or, for journal articles, on-line in the Roberts electronic catalogue.

Course Requirements:

- 10% for one oral presentation of an article. It should be 10-15 minutes in length (no longer!) and follow the following format rigorously: (i) an articulation of the article's question and thesis; (ii) a presentation of the context within which the article is being written – time period, historical background, etc; (iii) a summary of the argumentation used to support the thesis (the bulk of the presentation); and (iv) a constructive critique of the article, following by one of two substantive questions around which class discussion can revolve. Depending on the size of the class and the number of graduate students, I may have undergraduates present the articles individually and have graduate students provide a 5-7 minute comparative analysis of all articles for that week before delving into class discussions.
- 10% for class participation. This evaluation will be based upon both the degree of participation in class discussions as well as the quality of participation – the latter indicated by evidence of whether students have done their readings. *Given that the formal reading for the course takes place during the first six weeks, the participation mark will be focused in particular on participation during that time.*
- 20% for article summaries, each comparing all the articles from any one of the weeks in Section One of the course. **Graduate students will be expected to do summaries for any four of the first five weeks; undergraduate students will be required to do summaries for any two of the first five weeks.** *Each summary is due one week after the material has been discussed in class.* They are worth 5% each for graduate students; and 10% each for undergraduate students. They must be no longer than 500 words. Note - *these should NOT be organized on the basis of an 'article by article' summary but around comparative cross-cutting themes that are common (or not) to all of the articles.*
- 20% for a 5-7 page/12 pt font short paper on Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (2004). The paper is due on **October 21st** in class. A note of advice. Please do not organize your essay on a chapter by chapter basis – something that would be an impossible task anyway given the short length of the paper. I am expecting students to identify and discuss some cross-cutting themes. The question is:

“There are several advantages to using social movement theory to analyze Islamic protest politics. What do you think are the main advantage, why is it an improvement over past frameworks of analysis, and what do you think are its main limitations? Please provide some examples using the case studies in text.”

- 40% for a final paper, 17-20 pages/12 pt font. Students can opt to have 10% of this mark be based upon their seminar presentation if they so choose. Due **December 2nd** in class. Please see the last paragraph of the course description above for an outline of the instructor’s expectations for the seminar and research essay.

Late Penalties: .5% of the final mark in the course per day of the assignment being late.

Plagiarism: Every year, students are caught for plagiarism. This is defined by the University of Toronto’s Code of Behavior on Academic Matters as “the wrongful appropriation and purloining, and publication as one’s own, of the ideas, or the expression of the ideas...of another” Please do not even think of doing this. The penalties are severe. See <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

Accessibility Needs: The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodation or have any accessibility concerns, please email disability.services@utoronto.ca or visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>.

Section One - Authoritarianism in the Middle East (Article Presentations):

1. Introduction (September 16th):

Schlumberger, Oliver, “Arab Authoritarianism: Debating the Dynamics and Durability of Non-Democratic Regimes” in *Debating Arab Authoritarianism*, p. 1-20.

2. Pitfalls in the Study of Middle East Politics - Avoiding ‘Essentializing’ the Analytical Importance of Culture, the State and the Market (September 23rd):

Bromley, Simon, “Rethinking Middle East Politics” in *Rethinking Middle East Politics*, 1994, p. 86-118

Migdal, Joel, “The Egyptian State Attempts to Transform Egyptian Society” in *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*, 1988, p. 181-205.

Mitchell, Timothy, "No Factories, No Problems: The Logic of Neo-Liberalism in Egypt" in *Review of African Political Economy*, 82, 1999, p. 455-468.

Zubaida, Sami, "Classes as Political Actors in the Iranian Revolution", in *Islam, the People, and the State*, 1988, p 64-82.

3. Debating State and Regime Formation - Authoritarianism in Historical Perspective (September 30th):

Waldner, David, "State-Building and the Origins of Institutional Profiles" in *State-Building and Late Development*, 1999, p. 19-52.

Chaudhry, Kiren Aziz, "The National Market Unified" in *The Price of Wealth: Economies and Institutions in the Middle East*, 1997, p. 43-100.

Gause, Gregory, Gause, G. *Oil Monarchies: Domestic and Security Challenges in the Arab Gulf States*, 1994, p. 10-41. Find at www.arts.mcgill.ca/programs/ICAS/gause/gausetoc.html.

Gerber, Haim, "The Agrarian Origins of the Modern Middle East: A Comparative Approach" in *The Social Origins of the Modern Middle East*, 1987, p. 119-178.

4. Politics within the State: Intra-Regime Dynamics (October 7thst)

Bellin, Eva, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective" in *Comparative Politics*, 36, 2, January 2004, p. 139-158.

Droz-Vincent, Philippe, "From Political to Economic Actors: The Changing Face of Middle East Armies" in *Debating Arab Authoritarianism*, p. 195-211.

Lawson, Fred, "Intraregime Dynamics, Uncertainty, and the Persistence of Authoritarianism in the Contemporary Arab World" in *Debating Arab Authoritarianism*, 109-127.

Roberts, Hugh, "Demilitarizing Algeria", *Carnegie Papers*, 86, May, 2007, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/cp_86_final1.pdf.

5. State-Society Relations and Political Opposition (October 14th):

Albrecht, Holger, "Authoritarian Opposition and the Politics of Challenge in Egypt" in *Debating Arab Authoritarianism*, p. 59-74.

Alley, April Longley, "The Rules of the Game: Unpacking Patronage Politics in Yemen" in *Middle East Journal*, 64, 3, Summer 2010, p. 385-409.

Lust-Okar, Ellen, "The Management of Opposition: Formal Structures of Contestation and Informal Political Manipulation in Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco" in *Debating Arab Authoritarianism*, p. 39-58.

Sater, James, "Parliamentary Elections and Authoritarian Rule in Morocco" in *Middle East Journal*, 63, 3, Summer 2009, p. 381-400.

6. Economic Reform, Social Pacts, and the State (October 21st):

Heydemann, Steven, "Social Pacts and the Persistence of Authoritarianism in the Middle East" in *Debating Arab Authoritarianism*, p. 21-38.

Luciani, Giacomo, "Linking Economic and Political Reform in the Middle East: The Role of the Bourgeoisie" in *Debating Arab Authoritarianism*, p. 161-176.

Sferkianakis, J., "The Whales of the Nile: Networks, Businessmen, and Bureaucrats During the Era of Privatization in Egypt" in (ed.) Heydemann, *Networks of Privilege in the Middle East: The Politics of Economic Reform Revisited*, 2004, p. 77-100.

Poppi, Daniela, "Privatization of Social Services as a Regime Strategy: The Revival of Islamic Endowments (*Awqaf*) in Egypt" in *Debating Arab Authoritarianism*, p. 129-142.

Section Two - Protest Politics in the Middle East (Student Seminar/Essay Presentations – October 28th to December 2nd): To be decided.