

**POL479/POL2418 – Selected Topics in Middle East Politics,
Department of Political Science
Fall 2019, Wednesdays 5-7pm,
Location: LA 213.**

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

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2-4 pm.

Course Description: This course sets out to understand the challenges facing protest politics in the unsettled but still resiliently authoritarian Middle East region.

The course is divided into two parts. The first section focuses on the question of authoritarian resilience or, in the language of social movement theory, the restricted, if shifting, nature of political opportunities. It will begin by critiquing some of the more prevalent 'essentialist' and/or 'orientalist' approaches to the study of the Middle East and encourage the use of approaches that incorporate 'middle-range' theoretical insights from political economy, comparative politics, and comparative history. This will be followed by an examination of several country case studies of historical processes of state formation in the region. The following three weeks then examine the factors upon which the resilience of authoritarian rule depends: regime management of the coercive apparatus, regime management of the political incorporation of economic and political elites, and regime management of the political incorporation of popular forces.

The second part of the course begins with two class workshops on 'social movement theory' as applied to the Middle East. These workshops will provide a testing ground for the short papers that you will be asked to submit the following week. The last four weeks of the course revolve around student presentation of their research paper proposals. Classes will be designed as a workshop, aimed at providing constructive feedback to the student presenter as to how their arguments and analysis 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.

Course Readings: There is one required text for undergraduate students and two required texts for graduate students. The majority of the rest of the courses readings can be found in course readings section of the Quercus course site.

Quinton Wiktorowicz (ed.), *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, Indiana University Press, 2004. (Required for both undergraduate and graduate students).

Joel Beinin and Frederick Vairel (eds.), *Social Movements, Mobilization and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*, Stanford University Press, 2013. (Required for graduate students only)

Course Requirements:

- Readings – undergraduate students are required to read at least three readings per week; graduate students, all!

This is a moderate amount of reading per week...BUT, I am expecting to hear in class discussions of either (i) evidence of a detailed and nuanced understanding of these articles; or (ii) evidence of thoughtful questions about aspects of the arguments in these articles that are not clear.

- 10% for class participation. This evaluation will be based upon both the degree of participation in class discussions (5%) as well as the quality of participation (5%) – the latter indicated by evidence of whether students have done their readings.

Although the formal reading for the course takes place during the first eight weeks of the course, the participation mark will be based on participation (and attendance!) throughout the whole course.

- 15% for up to three in-class oral presentations of articles on the reading list (the number will depend upon the size of the class). The presentation should be 10 minutes in length (no longer!) and follow the following format ***rigorously***: (i) present the analytical *question* that the article is asking; (ii) present *the thesis* that the article proposes – ***work on this to make sure you have it right!***; and (iii) provide a well-organized summary of the argumentation used to support the thesis (the bulk of the presentation).
- 15% for three thematic analytical article summaries (3 pages double spaced, 11 point font) – 5% each:
 - Undergraduate Students – are required to write three thematic analytical summaries. Each summary – to be based upon ***TWO*** articles in any given week between week 2 and week 6 - must focus on common analytical themes that cross-cut these articles. Each analytical summary assignment is due ***one week after*** the readings have been discussed in class.
 - Graduate Students – are also required write three analytical summaries. Each summary – to be based upon ***THREE*** articles in any given week between week 2 and week 6 - must focus on the common analytical themes that cross-cut these articles. Each analytical summary assignment is due ***one week after*** the readings have been discussed in class.

- 20% for a 5 page/12 pt font short paper on social movement theory, due on Wednesday, **November 6th (via email)** – yes – this is in the middle of your reading week!

Students are asked to answer the following:

“What is social movement theory, what advantages are derived from its application to the Middle East, and does it provide effective theoretical explanations for the rise and/or fall of collective action in the region?”

- Undergraduate Students – must base their answer to these question on the reading of Quinton Wiktorowicz (ed.), *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, Indiana University Press, 2004.
- Graduate Students – must base their answer to these questions on the readings of both (i) Quinton Wiktorowicz (ed.), *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, Indiana University Press, 2004, and (ii) (eds.), Joel Beinin and Frederick Vairel, *Social Movements, Mobilization and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*, Stanford University Press, 2013.
- 40% for a final paper - 5% of which will be based upon a crisp and concise 10 minute class seminar presentation of the (i) framework and (ii) main arguments of the paper. All papers are due without exception on **Monday, December 9th at 11:59pm (papers can be submitted via email to kingston@chass.utoronto.ca)**.

Paper Requirements:

1. Undergraduate papers are to be up to 20 pages/11 pt font; graduate papers are to be up to 25 pages/11 pt font.

2. By **Monday, September 30th**, I want all student to provide me with two ranked choices for their essay topic. Each choice should include two things: a country of focus, and a political actor (protest actor, social movement, social class, etc. OR a regime actor resisting protest actors). I will then assign topics – hopefully, your top choices! - and draw up a seminar roster. Graduate students should be prepared to present their seminars early in the process, even if their research papers are only in embryonic form.

3. *Students will also be expected to integrate – in a significant way - into their 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.*

5. I am expecting students to consult with me early on in the term - and often if needs be - about the exact topic of the paper, an appropriate bibliography and, once the research is underway, the precise question and thesis that the research paper will pursue. By and large, I am expecting students to apply some aspect of the 'social movement theory' framework to their seminars and research papers.

7. **Late Penalties:** .5% of the final mark in the course per day of the assignment that is 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. For more information, please see <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

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

**Section One –
Authoritarian Origins and Dynamics in the Middle East:**

1. Introduction (Wednesday, September 11th):

What have the events surrounding the various Arab Springs of 2011 taught political scientists interested in the Middle East about the nature of authoritarianism in the region? Can authoritarian regime resilience be understood without reference to the social forces that lie 'beneath' (and did political scientists interested in the region miss this!)?

Bellin, Eva; and Lust, Ellen; and Lynch, Marc; "Responses to Howard and Walters" in *Perspectives on Politics*, 12, 2, June 2014, p. 409-416.

2. Avoiding 'Essentialisms': Debating Theoretical Frameworks Used to Analyze Authoritarian Politics in the Middle East (Wednesday, September 18th).

Student Article Presentations Begin This Week!

What theoretical approaches to the study of politics in the Middle East does each of these authors critique? What theoretical approaches does each of these authors prioritize? Are all of these approaches mutually exclusive?

Bromley, Simon, "Rethinking Middle East Politics", in *Rethinking Middle East Politics*, 1994, pp. 86-114.

Brownlee, Jason, Massoud, Tareq, and Reynolds, Andrew, "Theorizing the Arab Spring" and "Lineages of Repression", in (eds.) Brownlee, Massoud, and Reynolds, *The Arab Spring: Pathways of Repression and Reform*, 2015. p. 40-64.

McMahon, Sean, "Fetishisms and Factions" in *Crisis and Class War in Egypt*, 2017, 71-110.

Wedeen, Lisa, "Practicing Piety, Summoning Groups: Disorder as Control", in *Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen*, 2008, pp. 148-185 (a constructivist approach to political analysis).

*Zubaida, Sami, "The Nation State in the Middle East" in *Islam, the People, and the State*, 1989, p. 121-145. (*I would like all students to work through this assigned reading – read it over several times if it does not make sense the first time around*).

3. State Formation and Authoritarian Regime Consolidation in Historical Perspective (Wednesday, September 25th):

What general factors have driven processes of authoritarian state formation in the Middle East? What are the key factors that have complicated these processes in the Middle East region and led to the emergence of diverse authoritarian trajectories and institutional profiles?

Anderson, Lisa, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830-1980*, 1986, p. 135-178 (case study of Tunisian state formation under the French).

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

Menoret, Pascal, "Genesis and Structure of the Modern State" in *The Saudi Enigma: A History*, 2005, p. 71-101.

Tell, Tariq, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 2013, p. 83-138.

Yom, Sean, *From Resilience to Revolution: How Foreign Interventions Destabilize the Middle East*, 2016, p. 98-155 (case study of Iran under the Shah).

Essay Topic Preferences Due on September 30th!!!

4. The Problem of Authoritarian Power-Sharing I: Regime Consolidation and the Management of the Coercive Apparatus (Wednesday, October 2nd):

Authoritarian regimes face difficult dilemmas when managing politics 'inside the state', especially with respect to the management of the state's coercive apparatus. When regimes have faltered, for example, many have done so as a result of 'revolts from within the state'. How have Middle Eastern states tried to solve these dilemmas and what have been the consequences for state and regime formation?

Akca, Ismet, "The Conglomerate of the Turkish Military (OYAK) and the Dynamics of Turkish Capitalism" in (eds.) Zeinab Abul-Magd and Elke Grawert, *Businessmen in Arms: How the Military and Other Armed Groups Profit in the MENA Region*, 2016, p. 69-98.

Albrecht, Holger and Ohl, Dorothy, "Exit, Resistance, Loyalty: Military Behavior During Unrest in Authoritarian Regimes" in *Perspectives on Politics*, 14, 1, March 2016, p. 38-52.

Santini, Ruth Hanau and Moro, Francesco, "Between Hierachy and Heterarchy: Post-Arab Uprisings Civil-Military Relations and the Arab State" in *Mediterranean Politics*, 24:2, 2019, p. 137-156.

Sassoon, Joseph, "The Ba'th Party and the Army" in *Saddam Hussein's Ba'th Party: Inside an Authoritarian Regime*, 2012, p. 129-161.

Springborg, Robert, "The Rewards of Failure: Persisting Military Rule in Egypt" in *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2017, Vol. 44, No 4, 478–496.

5. The Problem of Authoritarian Power-Sharing II: Regime Management of the Politics of Elite Incorporation (Wednesday, October 9th):

Authoritarian regimes face an acute dilemma in managing their relationships with powerful elite networks. On the one hand, their power is directly linked to the degree to which these elite networks are incorporated into their regime networks; on the other hand, regime power can also be directly threatened by these processes of elite political incorporation. How have authoritarian regimes in the Middle East managed these dilemmas?

Blaydes, Lisa, "Elections and Elite Management", in *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*, 2010, p. 48-64.

Donati, Caroline, "The Economics of Authoritarian Upgrading in Syria: Liberalization and the Reconfiguration of Economic Networks" in (eds.) Steven Hydemann and Reinoud Leenders, *Middle East Authoritarianisms: Governance, Contestation, and Regime Resilience in Syria and Iran*, 2013, p. 35-60.

Donker, Teije Hidde, "Islamic Social Movements and the Syrian Authoritarian Regime: Shifting Patterns of Control and Accommodation" in (eds.) Steven Hydemann and Reinoud Leenders, *Middle East Authoritarianisms: Governance, Contestation, and Regime Resilience in Syria and Iran*, 2013, pp. 107-124.

Martinez, José Ciro, "Jordan's Self-Fulfilling Prophecy: The Production of Feeble Political Parties and the Perceived Perils of Democracy", in *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2017, 44:3, 356-372.

Massoud, Tarek, "Clientelism and Class: The Tragedy of Leftists" in *Counting Islam: Religion, Class, and Elections in Egypt*, 2014, p. 45-73.

6. A Third Problem of Authoritarian Control: Regimes and the Management of Popular Forces (Wednesday, October 16th):

Are popular forces always in opposition to authoritarian regimes? What factors help to determine the relationship between regimes and popular forces and how has the management of popular social forces and classes changed over time?

Harris, Kevan, "A Martyrs' Welfare State and its Contradictions: Regime Resilience and Limits through the Lens of Social Policy in Iran" in (eds.) Steven Hydemann and Reinoud Leenders, *Middle East Authoritarianisms: Governance, Contestation, and Regime Resilience in Syria and Iran*, 2013, p. 61-82.

Ketchely, Neil, "Manufacturing Dissent" in *Egypt in a Time of Revolution: Contentious Politics and the Arab Spring*, 2017, p. 103-129 (on the Tamarud Movement in Egypt, 2013).

Watts, Nicole, "Characteristics of Coercion: Obstructing Access to Resources" in *Activists in Office: Kurdish Politics and Protests in Turkey*, 2010, p. 94-121.

Wedeen, Lisa, "Killing Politics: Official Rhetoric and Permissible Speech" in *Ambiguities of Domination: The Cult of Personality in Ba'athist Syria*, 1999, p. 32-66.

Wimmen, Heiko, "The Sectarianism of the Syrian War" in (ed.) F. Wehrey, *Beyond Sunni and Shia: The Roots of Sectarianism in a Changing Middle East*, 2017, p. 61-85.

7. Social Movements in the Middle East – A Workshop on Social Movement Theory. (Wednesday, October 23rd):

This class will begin with an analysis of the theoretical roots of classical social movement theory (found in the Wiktorowicz article) before moving on to a critique of some of its concepts (found in the Beinin and Vareil article).

Beinin, J., and Vareil, F., "Introduction: The Middle East and North Africa Beyond Classical Social Movement Theory" in (eds.) Beinin and Vareil, *Social Movements, Mobilization, and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*, 2nd Edition, 2013, p. 1-32.

Wiktorowicz, Q., "Introduction: Islamic Activism and Social Movement Theory" in (ed.) Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, 2004, p. 1-36.

8. Social Movements in the Middle East – A Workshop on Case Studies of Social Movements from the Wiktorowicz Book (Wednesday, October 30th).

In this class, we will listen to a select number of student delivered case studies/chapters found in the Wiktorowicz volume before moving on to a class discussion geared towards answering some of the questions for the short essay assignment.

Reading Week - Wiktorowicz Book Review Due *Wednesday November 6th at 11:59pm!*

9. Student Paper Presentations (Wednesday, November 13th):

10. Student Paper Presentations (Wednesday, November 20th):

11. Student Paper Presentations (Wednesday, November 27th):

12. Student Paper Presentations (Wednesday, December 4th):

All Research Papers are to be handed (electronically) by Monday, December 9th at 11:59pm to my email address: kingston@chass.utoronto.ca