Revolution in the Middle East

ASH 3931 Section 02A6

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University of Florida
Spring 2016
MWF Period 5 (11:45-12:35)
Flint 119

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The “Arab Spring” of 2011 that spread rapidly across the region and featured movements for democratization, social justice, and minority rights has, four short years later, collapsed into authoritarian military rule, struggles over the role of political Islam, sectarian and civil violence, massive refugee flight and urban destruction, and outside intervention. This course places the 21st century Middle Eastern revolutions and their aftermath in a broader historical perspective. What were the political, economic, religious, social, and geopolitical factors that contributed to the outbreak of revolution throughout the region? In which ways were these revolutions new, and in which ways were they extensions of earlier, unresolved struggles? How can we understand the distinct trajectories of revolution and counter-revolution across the region? We will focus on several country case studies framed against their late 19th and 20th century histories. The class integrates extensive interdisciplinary and multi-media sources, including novels and memoirs, movies and songs, websites and twitter feeds.

Readings:

Assia Djebar, Fantasia
Khaled al-Khamissi, Taxi
Samar Yazbeck, A Woman in the Crossfire
Jeannie and Chris Toensig, Journey to Tabrir

*Please note that there are many journal articles and book chapters that are required reading as well, denoted with an asterisk (*). They will be available on ARES course reserves (electronic and/or physical copies) or on the course website [CW].

Useful reference works:

William E. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, History of the Modern Middle East (5th edition)
Weekly Schedule:

Week 1

1/6 Introduction

1/8 Discussion: What is a Revolution?


Part I: Constitutional Revolutions: Iran and the Ottoman Empire

Week 2

1/11 Revolutionary Times

1/13 Religious and Secular Ideas

1/15 Discussion: The Press


*Michelle U. Campos, Ottoman Brothers, chapter 4 (“Mouthpiece of the People”)


Week 3

1/18 (MLK Day)

1/20 Economic Forces

1/22 Discussion: Religious and Ethnic Diversity


*Michelle U. Campos, Ottoman Brothers, chapter 2 “Brotherhood and Equality”
Part II: Anticolonial Revolutions: Egypt & Algeria

Week 4
1/25    The ‘Wilsonian Moment’ in 1919
1/27    The Free Officers Revolution of 1952
1/29    Discussion: “Nasser 56”

Week 5
2/1    French Rule in Algeria
2/3    Decolonization
2/5    Discussion: Literature as Memory

Assia Djebar, Fantasia

Please note that the detailed schedule and readings for Part III and IV of the syllabus will be posted later.

Part III: Islamic Revolution: Iran 1979

Week 6    2/8, 2/10, 2/12
Week 7    2/15, 2/17, 2/19 (UNC) MIDTERM

Part IV: The Arab Spring

Week 8    Egypt I: The Mubarak Era
          2/22, 2/24, 2/26    Discussion: Taxi

Week 9    Spring Break – Have fun!

Week 10   Egypt II: Tahrir
          3/7    Discussion: Journey to Tahrir
3/9—(UF conference) FILM

3/11 Discussion: *Journey to Tahrir*

Week 11 Egypt III: The New-Old Egypt
3/14, 3/16, 3/18

Week 12 Syria I
3/21 Colonial Origins – Nationalism & Sectarianism
3/23 Ba’thism
3/25 Discussion: The Cult of Assad

Lisa Wedeen

Week 13 Syria II
3/28
3/30 Discussion: Samar Yazbeck
4/1 Discussion: Samar Yazbeck

Week 14 Syria III
4/4, 4/6, 4/8

Week 15 The Revolution that Wasn’t – the Persian Gulf
4/11, 4/13, 4/15 (Brown) FILM

Week 16 Presentations
4/18, 4/20

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**
Midterm 2/19

Portfolio of assignments: digital history portfolio [omeka/neatline]

- 1) primary source analysis + annotation; (250-500 words)
- 2) secondary source report; (500-1000 words)
- 3) film report; (500-1000 words)
- 4) website link and report; (100-250 words)
- 5) map/timeline additions

GRADES:

Class participation** 25%
Midterm 25%
Final Portfolio 50%

**This is based on your regular and active attendance in class and the level of your preparedness in class discussions.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

- **Plagiarism:** Students are expected to abide by the university academic honesty policy, which includes properly citing all sources used in your course assignments. When in doubt, cite! For more information, see [http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php)
- **Special needs:** Should you have special medical needs, please discuss this with the course instructor at the beginning of the semester. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office ([www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.
- **Confidentiality:** Student records are confidential. UF views each student, not their parent(s), as the primary contact for all communication. For more information, see: [www.registrar.ufl.edu/ferpahub.html](http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/ferpahub.html)