

# Revolutions in the Middle East

## ASH 3931 Section 02A6

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University of Florida  
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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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 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* (5<sup>th</sup> edition)

## Weekly Schedule:

### Week 1

1/6            **Introduction**

1/8            **Discussion: What is a Revolution?**

\*Jack Goldstone, "Rethinking Revolutions: Integrating Origins, Processes, and Outcomes," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 29/1 (2009) [CW]

\*Jack Goldstone, "Understanding the Revolutions of 2011: Weakness and Resilience in Middle Eastern Autocracies," *Foreign Affairs* [CW]

## 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**

\*Negin Nabavi, "Spreading the Word: Iran's First Constitutional Press and the Shaping of a New Era," *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies* 14/3 (Fall 2005): 307-321.

\*Mohamed Tavakoli-Targhi, "Refashioning Iran: Language and Culture during the Constitutional Revolution," *Iranian Studies* 23:1-4 (1992), 77-101.

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

\*Palmira Brummett, "Dogs, Women, Cholera, and Other Menaces in the Streets: Cartoon Satires in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908-1911," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 27/4 (Nov., 1995), pp. 433-460

### Week 3

~~1/18~~ (MLK Day)

1/20           **Economic Forces**

1/22           **Discussion: Religious and Ethnic Diversity**

\*Hourii Berberian, "Traversing Boundaries and Selves: Iranian-Armenian Identities during the Iranian Constitutional Revolution," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 25/2 (2005).

\*Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*, chapter 2 "Brotherhood and Equality"

\*Vangelis Kechriotis, TBA

**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 Djébar, *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>
- **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)