

**COMPARATIVE POLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST**  
**GVPT459E**  
**FALL 2019**

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**BASICS**

Course Meeting: MW 3-4:15, TYD 1101

ELMS Site: <https://myelms.umd.edu> (login required)

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:30-3:30 pm, 2116 Chincoteague

Prerequisites: Must be GVPT major.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

The Middle East is a fascinating and complex part of the world, important to understand on its own terms but also a flashpoint of international relations. It raises many headline-grabbing questions. For example, is the region doomed to “persistent authoritarianism,” or is it on the cusp of a system-wide democratic breakthrough? Are women oppressed, or more empowered than we realize? Should the United States be promoting democracy in the region, or keeping its distance? Does the region’s skyrocketing youth population—the Arab Millennials—represent a powerful new force in politics, or is it fundamentally too disorganized to make a difference?

The purpose of this course is to help you build a more nuanced understanding of Middle Eastern politics. We take a thematic, social science-based approach, exploring key trends, themes, and issues shaping politics in the region. The course is divided into three parts. Part 1 examines the history of the Middle East, with emphasis on the rise and fall of empires and divergent paths of state formation. Part 2 focuses on issues in domestic politics, such as the implications of oil wealth, religion and politics, and political culture. Part 3 delves into contemporary challenges, examining the prospects for peace, democracy, and economic development in comparative perspective. The course focuses primarily on the Arab states of the Middle East.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the course, I expect you will have gained: (1) a more complete knowledge of some of the key historical factors shaping the political trajectory of the Middle East; (2) a deeper understanding of the central principles guiding comparative politics in the region, with emphasis on what recent and cutting-edge political science research can teach us; (3) more productive ways of understanding contemporary challenges, including the headline-grabbing questions above; (4) in-depth knowledge of a single Middle Eastern country; and (5) a stronger analytical and empirical framework with which to further and develop your own thoughts on the nature of politics in the Middle East. To put it in a more down-to-earth manner, when a friend or family member asks you, “Can you help me understand what’s going on in the Middle East?” you will have a more confident, thoughtful, and evidence-based answer than you would have had, if you hadn’t taken the course. It is also my hope that the course will inspire a lifelong interest in this exciting and evolving region.

## REQUIRED READINGS

There are no required textbooks for this course; all readings will be available online or in PDF form via ELMS. I have worked hard to select engaging and informative readings and to allow students to be able to learn as cost-effectively as possible. In return, I expect students to read the required materials noted for each class session *before* the class session in question. **Please keep in mind that this course, as a 400-level course in GVPT, contains a significant amount of reading, so you need to plan ahead.** To assist you with that, I've included the number of pages for each reading, so you can manage your time wisely. Of course, since all readings are readily available to you on ELMS, there is no need for you to spend time hunting them down every week. You can focus on actually reading and enjoying them.

Note that any readings labeled as “recommended” will not be formally tested on midterms and exams, but may increase your learning and assist your thinking when participating in discussions, working on papers, and constructing essay responses.

Although there are no textbooks assigned in this course that you need to buy, I do recommend several survey books, should you wish to purchase or check out any books for additional background and insight, including:

- Lust, Ellen, *The Middle East*;
- Cleveland, William L. and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*;
- Gelvin, James L., *The Modern Middle East: A History*;
- Owen, Roger, *State, Power, and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*;
- Cammett, Melani, Diwan, Ishac, Richards, Alan, and John Waterbury, *A Political Economy of the Middle East*;
- Clark, Janine A. and Francesco Cavatorta, *Political Science Research in the Middle East and North Africa*;
- Yom, Sean, *Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa: Development, Democracy, and Dictatorship*.

## COURSE MECHANICS

The course is conducted as a mixture of lecture and discussion. Although it will vary, I will typically lecture for about 40-45 minutes, and then we will use the last portion of class for discussion. To preserve time for discussion, I will not typically take questions during lectures.

The use of laptops, tablets, and smartphones is generally not allowed in class. I understand and have considered arguments for permitting laptop and tablet computers in the classroom. However, in my experience (and based on the research evidence) the reality is that they present an irresistible distraction and detract from the cooperative learning environment. Researchers have found that these distractions do in fact interfere with learning and active participation. For that reason, the use of computers and phones will not be permitted during class meetings (except when required for ADS accommodations). My advice is to take notes by hand, and then type up your notes after class, so that you can read and word-search them easily later on. Note that PowerPoint lecture slides will not be posted on ELMS.

Outside of class, the best way to get in touch with me is to email me at [cwjones@umd.edu](mailto:cwjones@umd.edu). I will be emailing you via ELMS to make important announcements, such as schedule changes or class cancellations. In the case of inclement weather or another kind of emergency closing the University, I will also be communicating with you via email. It is your responsibility to check your email so that you receive these updates.

#### **EXPECTATIONS AND GRADE BREAKDOWN**

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Assessment Date</b>	<b>Percentage of Final Grade</b>
Midterm 1 (and Map Quiz)	Sep 25, in-class	15%
Midterm 2	Oct 30, in-class	15%
In-Class Participation	Ongoing	25%
Country report (8-10 page paper)	Due Dec 6 at 5pm (Online submission via ELMS)	25%
Final Exam (cumulative)	Dec 13, 1:30-3:30pm	20%

Grades are not given, but earned. Your grade is determined by your performance on the learning assessments in the course and is assigned individually. The course offers a variety of forms of assessment. Both midterms will feature short-answer or “ID-style” questions, with no essays. The Final Exam will be cumulative, albeit emphasizing the last third of the course, and it will combine short-answer questions as well as an essay question. The country report will allow you to choose a Middle Eastern country of interest to you, research it independently, and analyze an important question regarding its future. Further information about these forms of assessment will be provided as the course progresses.

Note that regular attendance and participation in this class is the best way to grasp the concepts and principles being discussed. In-class participation is included in your grade as described above. You are expected to come to class having read the material for the assigned day, and prepared to participate meaningfully in structured classroom discussions demonstrating that you:

- (1) Have read and comprehended the course material assigned for the class session.
- (2) Have absorbed the material in the lectures.
- (3) Have thought critically about questions posed by readings and lectures.

Examples of high-quality participation include: summarizing the reading for other students; pointing out additional reasons why arguments might be correct; pointing out reasons why arguments may be incorrect; identifying flaws in question formation, logic, or research design; posing questions about how arguments might apply in a different context, or not; proposing alternative hypotheses to research questions at hand; and responding productively to other students doing any of the above. Further information on how to engage meaningfully and productively can be found in the hand-out “Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking” (Browne and Keeley, 2010), attached to this syllabus and available on ELMS under “Assistance and Tips.” See also the student participation rubric posted on the course website, and the rubric I will use for the assessment of your country report.

Note that our aim in discussion is less to “find the right answer” and/or “illustrate our smarts” and more to (1) confirm understanding of readings and lecture material and (2) explore alternative perspectives on the questions asked, playing them out in a friendly, collaborative process that, ideally, will be intellectually exciting and help you develop and refine your own thinking.

Here is the percentage to letter grade conversion chart that we use:

97 or above	A+
93 to 96	A
90 to 92	A-
87 to 89	B+
83 to 86	B
80 to 82	B-
77 to 79	C+
73 to 76	C
70 to 72	C-
67 to 69	D+
63 to 66	D
60 to 62	D-
59 or below	F

### **TIPS FOR SUCCESS**

In order to succeed, and I want you to succeed in this course, here are some guidelines.

- First, come to lecture and take good notes. Practice the art of self-control by challenging yourself to stay focused and open-minded. Mindfulness and the ability to focus without distraction are fundamental skills in this age of information, and they will serve you well beyond this particular course.
- Second, keep up with the reading. Learning how to read actively and efficiently is an important skill for you to learn and cultivate, and it will get easier. When reading, take notes, highlight, write comments in the margins, summarize key points in your own words, and ask yourself the “Ten Critical Thinking Questions” provided with this syllabus and under “Assistance and Tips” on ELMS.
- Third, engage with the material: stay up to date on ELMS; keep in mind the exam and due dates, and plan accordingly; talk to your friends and family about the Middle East; tell them what you’re learning; and play devil’s advocate. Be in touch with me. I am delighted to talk with you during my office hours, and you can email me any time with questions or comments. You will typically be rewarded with a quick response.
- Be polite, civil, and honorable. During discussion, you are here to learn, try on different analytic hats, experiment with various perspectives, and advance your own knowledge and thinking on these important issues. When you are in this class, you are a social scientist and an intellectual, and not a lobbyist, pundit, or activist.

- Please do not use cell phones during lectures, don't walk in and out frequently, don't eat breakfast or lunch, and don't whisper to your neighbor. Of course, you may bring water, soda, coffee, etc. Caffeine is very welcome.

### **COPYRIGHT**

Course materials that exist in a tangible medium, such as written or recorded lectures, PowerPoint presentations, handouts and tests, are copyright protected. This means that class lectures are copyrighted. You may not copy and distribute such materials except for personal use, and with my express permission. This means you may not audio-record or video-record class sessions without my permission, and you may not sell course materials or post them on a website. Be aware that copyright infringements may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

### **ABSENCE POLICY**

Students are expected to attend classes regularly. Students claiming *excused absence* must notify the course instructor in a timely manner, preferably prior to the excused absence, and provide appropriate documentation. For an excused absence, students are responsible for information and material missed on the day of excused absence, and within reason are entitled to receive materials provided to the class during the excused absence. University Policy defines an excused absence as follows:

“Events that justify an excused absence include religious observances; mandatory military obligation; illness of the student or illness of an immediate family member; participation in university activities at the request of university authorities; and compelling circumstances beyond the student's control (e.g., death in the family, required court appearance). Absences stemming from work duties other than military obligation (e.g., unexpected changes in shift assignments) and traffic/transit problems do not typically qualify for excused absence.”

In the case of religious observances, athletic events, and planned absences known at the beginning of the semester, the student should inform the instructor during the schedule adjustment period. See below for more information on excused absences based on religious observance and medical necessary absences. For all other absences, students must provide verifiable documentation upon request (e.g., court summons, death announcement, etc.).

### **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES**

You should notify your instructor within the first 10 days of classes (the schedule adjustment period) if you will miss a class or an examination date due to religious observance. You will be allowed to make up academic assignments or exams for such absences in keeping with university policy. Note that it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance. This notification is especially important if the missed class involves the final examination because of the need to schedule a make-up exam **before** the official final exam date.

### **MEDICALLY NECESSARY ABSENCES**

For every medically necessary absence from class (lecture, recitation, or lab), a reasonable effort should be made to notify your instructor in advance of the class. When returning to class after the first such absence, students may bring a note identifying the date of and reason for the absence, and acknowledging that the information in the note is accurate. After the second such absence, or if the absence occurs on the date of a Major Scheduled Grading Event (identified on the syllabus), documentation by a health care professional is required. Students must provide documentation from a physician or the University Health Center for the absence to be recorded as an excused one and to receive accommodation. In cases where students are asked to provide verification, the course instructor may request the dates of treatment or the time frame that the student was unable to meet academic responsibilities, but may not request diagnostic information.

### **MAKE-UP EXAMS**

For excused absences that involve a Major Scheduled Grading Event, a make-up exam will be arranged. In the case of closure for inclement weather or other cause, I will reschedule the examination or assignment due date as needed. Note that a self-signed note attesting to illness will not be accepted as the basis for an excused absence on a day during which there is a Major Scheduled Grading Event, in keeping with university policy.

### **POLICY FOR LATE PAPERS**

Due dates for assigned papers are listed on the syllabus. Papers that are submitted late, without arranging with the instructor for an extension based on a university-approved excuse, will be penalized a third of a grade per day.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The University has an active Student Honor Council. The Honor Council sets high standards for academic integrity, and I support its efforts. It has a nationally recognized Honor Code, involving the Honor Pledge. The Honor Pledge prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures. On every examination, paper, or other academic exercise not specifically exempted by the instructor, students should write by hand and sign the following pledge:

*I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).*

Compliance with the code is administered by the Student Honor Council, which strives to promote a community of trust on the College Park campus. Allegations of academic dishonesty should be reported directly to the Honor Council by any member of the campus community. For additional information, consult the Office of Student Conduct.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities who will need accommodations must contact the Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS) to discuss accommodations and obtain documentation applicable to the current semester. (For updated policies, see <https://counseling.umd.edu/ads/>.) Students are

responsible for presenting this documentation to the instructor in a timely fashion to discuss and obtain signed approval for accommodations, so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. Please note that students with testing accommodations are required to reserve their seat with the ADS Testing Office at least three business days in advance of their testing session. (Business days do not include Saturdays and Sundays.) If students miss this deadline, they will be unable to book a test. See <https://www.counseling.umd.edu/ads/start/testtaking/>.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

**\*\* Denotes a “Major Scheduled Grading Event”**

### PART 1: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### **Week 1      The Early Period**

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**Aug 26      Course Introduction**

**Aug 28      What is the “Middle East”? Beginnings of an Idea**

- Read Hourani, “The Formation of an Empire” (Ch. 2) in *A History of the Arab Peoples*, pp. 22-37.
- Read Rumi (short excerpt from poems originally composed by Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī in the 13<sup>th</sup> century).
- Read Ali, “The Erasure of Islam from the Poetry of Rumi,” *The New Yorker* (~7 pages).
- *Recommended:* Hourani, “A New Power in an Old World” in *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Ch. 1), pp. 1-12; Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), pp. 1-12.

#### **Week 2      Empires and their Discontents**

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**Sep 2      Labor Day – NO CLASS**

**Sep 4      Empires, Imperialism, and Anti-Imperialism**

- Read Ibn Khaldun, “On Dynasties” from *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History* originally published in 1377 (~3 pages).
- Read Gelvin, “Defensive Developmentalism” (Ch. 5) in *The Modern Middle East: A History*, pp. 72-89.
- *Recommended:* Hourani, “The Ottoman Empire” (Ch. 13) in *A History of the Arab Peoples*, pp. 207-230.

#### **Week 3      The Rise of the Contemporary State System**

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**Sep 9      State Formation in the Wake of WW1**

- Read Adelson, “British and US Use and Misuse of the Term ‘Middle East’” (Ch. 2) in *Is There a Middle East? The Evolution of a Geopolitical Concept*, pp. 36-55.

- Read short historical documents: Theodor Herzl, 1896, “A Solution of the Jewish Question” (~ 1.5 pages); Excerpt from Husayn-McMahon correspondence, 1915-6 (~ 2 pages); “The Balfour Declaration,” 2 November 1917 (~ a paragraph); and “Resolution of the Syrian General Congress at Damascus,” 2 July 1919 (~ 2 pages).
- *Recommended:* Hourani, “The Climax of European Power” (Ch. 19) in *A History of the Arab Peoples*, pp. 315-332.

### **Sep 11 Nationalism and the Struggle for Independence: Focus on Algeria**

- Read Carnegie Council, “Ethics on Film: Discussion of ‘The Battle of Algiers’” (~4 pages).
- Read Briley, “Terrorism on Screen: Lessons from the Battle of Algiers,” *Perspectives on History* (~4 pages).
- *Recommended:* Hourani, “The End of the Empires” and “The Climax of Arabism” in *A History of the Arab Peoples*, pp. 351-372, 401-415.

## **PART 2: ISSUES IN DOMESTIC POLITICS**

### **Week 4 Institutions and Political Economy**

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#### **Sep 16 Economic Trajectories and the Question of Underdevelopment**

- Read Kuran, “Economic Underdevelopment in the Middle East: The Historical Role of Culture, Institutions, and Religion” (~32 pages).

#### **Sep 18 Demystifying Regime Types**

- Read Herb, *All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution, and Democracy in the Middle Eastern Monarchies* (Chapter 1), pp.1-16.
- Read short contributions in “The Arab Monarchy Debate” by Lynch, “Do Arab Monarchies Matter?” (~2 pages) and Herb, “Monarchism Matters.” (~2 pages).

### **Week 5 Explaining Authoritarianism**

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#### **Sep 23 The Puzzle of Persistent Authoritarianism**

- Read excerpt (pp. 1-9) from *The Queue* published in 2013, an Arab dystopian novel by Basma Abdel Aziz.
- Read Aziz, “Basma Abdel Aziz on Writing ‘The Queue’” (~3 pages) and Hendawi, “For an Egyptian author, examining torture is her mission” (~3 pages).
- Read Kamrava, “The Middle East’s Democracy Deficit in Comparative Perspective,” *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, pp. 189-213.

#### **Sep 25 \*\*Midterm 1**



## **Week 6      Explaining Authoritarianism (Cont'd)**

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### **Sep 30      Oil, Politics, and the Rentier State: Focus on the UAE**

- Read Ross, “Will Oil Drown the Arab Spring?” *Foreign Affairs* (~8 pages).
- Read Okruhlik, “Rentier Wealth, Unruly Law, and the Rise of Opposition: The Political Economy of Oil States,” *Comparative Politics* (read only pp. 295-300 for the key critiques).
- *Recommended*: Jones, “Seeing Like an Autocrat: Liberal Social Engineering in an Illiberal State,” *Perspectives on Politics*, pp. 24-41.

### **Oct 2      Coercion, Propaganda, and Cults of Personality**

- Read al-Qaddafi, “The Green Book” (ONLY pp. 1-16) for an example of a product from a famous cult of personality in the Arab world.
- Read Wedeen, “Acting ‘As If’: Symbolic Politics and Social Control in Syria,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, pp. 503-523.

## **Week 7      Politics of Social Change**

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### **Oct 7      Authoritarian Upgrading**

- Read Wiktorowicz, “Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan.” *Comparative Politics*, pp. 43-61.
- Read Brumberg, “Sustaining Mechanics of Arab Autocracies” (~4 pages).
- *Recommended*: Lust, “The Management of Opposition: Formal Structures of Contestation and Informal Political Manipulation in Egypt, Jordan and Morocco” in *Debating Arab Authoritarianism: Dynamics and Durability*, pp. 39-49; Bellin, *Stalled Democracy*, pp. 1-8.

### **Oct 9      Politics of Gender I**

- Read Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others,” *American Anthropologist*, pp. 783-790.
- Read Eltahawy, “Why Do They Hate Us?” *Foreign Policy* (~10 pages).
- Read Good, “Debating the War on Women” (a response to Eltahawy), *Foreign Policy* (~12 pages).

## **Week 8      Political Participation**

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### **Oct 14      Politics of Gender II**

- Read Masoud, Jamal, and Nugent, “Using the Quran to Empower Arab Women? Theory and Experimental Evidence from Egypt,” *Comparative Political Studies*, pp. 1-36.

### **Oct 16      Rethinking Political Participation: Focus on Yemen**

- Read Wedeen, “The Politics of Deliberation: Qat Chews as Public Spheres in Yemen,” pp. 59-84.

## **Week 9 Religion and Politics**

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### **Oct 21 Background on Political Islam**

- Read Hamzaway. 2005. *The Key to Arab Reform: Moderate Islamists*, Carnegie Endowment (~7 pages).
- Read Tibi, “Why They Can’t Be Democratic,” *Journal of Democracy*, pp. 43-48.

### **Oct 23 Moderation, Extremism, and the Muslim Brotherhood**

- Read Schwedler, “Can Islamists Become Moderates?” *World Politics*, pp. 347-376.

## **Week 10 Politics of Education**

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### **Oct 28 The Politics of Education**

- Read Buckner, “Cheating or Cheated? Surviving Secondary Exit Exams in a Neoliberal Era,” *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, pp. 603-623.
- Read Prokop, “Saudi Arabia: The Politics of Education,” *International Affairs*, pp. 77-89.
- *Recommended*: Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum (the Ruler of Dubai as of 2019), *My Vision*, “The Lion and the Gazelle” (Ch. 1), pp. 6-27; Jones, “New Approaches to Citizen-Building: Shifting Needs, Goals, and Outcomes,” *Comparative Political Studies*, pp. 165-196.

### **Oct 30 \*\*Midterm 2**

## **Week 11 Film: “Wadjda”**

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### **Nov 4 Film**

- Read Al-Rasheed, “Caught Between Religion and State: Women in Saudi Arabia” in *Saudi Arabia in Transition: Insights on Social, Political, Economic, and Religious Change*, pp. 292-313.

### **Nov 6 Film (cont’d)**

- Read Al Hadar, “Haifaa Al Mansour’s Wadjda: Revolutionary Art or Pro-State Propaganda?” *Jadaliyya* (~2 pages).

## **PART 3: CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES**

## **Week 12      Terrorism and Political Violence**

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### **Nov 11      Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Roots of Terror**

- Read excerpts from Qutb, “The America I Have Seen” and “The Great Replacement” (allegedly by Tarrant), both radical treatises that provide insight into terrorist thinking<sup>1</sup>
- Read Said, “Islam Through Western Eyes,” *The Nation* (~17 pages)
- *Recommended:* If interested in Said and *Orientalism* (though Said is not a political scientist), be sure to read critiques as well, such as al-‘Azm, “Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse.” If interested in the political effects of cross-cultural contact more generally, read Jones, “The Surprising Effects of Study Abroad,” *Washington Post* (or full article in ISQ). For background on terrorism in the Middle East, read Cronin, “How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups,” *International Security*, pp. 7-48; Clarke, “How ISIS Is Transforming,” *Foreign Affairs*, pp. 1-3.

### **Nov 13      Library Information Day (REQUIRED – MEET IN MCK 6107)**

#### **\*\* Deadline to have selected country and research question**

- Meet in McKeldin Library, Room 6107 with country and paper topic in mind, and *at least one question* about sources, databases, and other library resources with respect to researching your specific topic.

## **Week 13      Reform, Conflict, and Intervention**

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### **Nov 18      Challenges of Reform**

- Read Bellin, “The Political-Economic Conundrum: The Affinity of Economic and Political Reform in the Middle East and North Africa.” *Carnegie Endowment* (~11 pages).
- Read Jones, “All the King’s Consultants: The Perils of Advising Authoritarians,” *Foreign Affairs*, pp. 145-154.
- Read Hamid and Mandaville, “The U.S. Is Giving Up on Middle East Democracy—and That’s a Mistake.” *The Atlantic* (~4 pages).
- Read Walt, “The United States Should Admit It No Longer Has a Middle East Policy,” *Foreign Policy* (~5 pages).
- *Recommended:* Jones, “Adviser to the King: Experts, Rationalization, and Legitimacy,” *World Politics*, pp. 1-43 (research article on which WashPo piece is based).

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<sup>1</sup> *Trigger warning:* The readings for this day include primary sources (e.g., manifestos) by those connected with political violence, both radical Islamist (Qutb) as well as Islamophobic/white supremacist (Tarrant). These readings may be disturbing to some students. If you feel the need to step outside the classroom, you are welcome to do so without academic penalty, and you may also request a different reading/assignment.

**Nov 20      Civil War: Focus on Syria and Libya**

- Read short excerpt from Pearlman, *We Crossed a Bridge and It Trembled: Voices from Syria* about the Syrian civil war.
- Read Heydemann, “Tracking the ‘Arab Spring’: Syria and the Future of Authoritarianism,” *Journal of Democracy*, pp. 59-73.
- Read Boduszyński and Pickard, “Tracking the ‘Arab Spring’: Libya Starts from Scratch,” *Journal of Democracy*, pp. 86-96.

**Week 14      Thanksgiving**

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**Nov 25      CLASS CANCELLED (catch up on reading)**

**Nov 27      Thanksgiving – NO CLASS**

**Week 15      Navigating the “Arab Spring”**

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**\*\* Country Report Due on Friday, December 6, at 5pm – Submit Online via ELMS**

**Dec 2      An Arab Spring? Origins and Background**

- Read Bellin, “Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring,” *Comparative Politics*, pp. 127-149.
- Read Dahi, “Understanding the Political Economy of the Arab Revolts,” *Middle East Report*, pp. 1-6.

**Dec 4      Documentary Film, “The Square”**

- Read Brown, “Tracking the ‘Arab Spring’: Egypt’s Failed Transition,” *Journal of Democracy*, pp. 45-58.
- Read Lynch, “Twitter Devolutions: How Social Media is Hurting the Arab Spring.” *Foreign Policy* (~7 pages).

**Week 16**

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**Dec 9      Documentary and Discussion**

- Read Fisher, “‘The Square’ is a beautiful documentary. But its politics are dangerous,” *The Washington Post* (~6 pages).
- Read Aziz (author of *The Queue*), “A Case of State Insanity” (~2 pages).
- *Recommended*: Hinnebusch, “Introduction: understanding the consequences of the Arab uprisings—starting points and divergent trajectories,” *Democratization*, pp. 205-218

**FINAL EXAM DATE: Friday, December 13, 1:30-3:30pm, TYD 1101**