

Government and Politics of the Middle East
INTS 243-1 CRN 19539

Rhodes College, Fall 2008

Prof. David Romano
Office: 111 Buckman Hall
Office Hours: Tuesdays 3-5 p.m. Wed 11-12 p.m.
Tel.: (901) 843-3572
E-mail: romanod@rhodes.edu

Course Description

This is an introductory course on the politics of the Middle East; it presupposes no previous knowledge of the region. The course surveys the historical and political trajectories of selected states and dynamics in the Middle East, paying special attention to the politics, societies, and ideological currents of the Eastern (*Mashreq*) Arab world, Turkey, Iran and Israel-Palestine. It opens with an examination of early Islam, the region's history, and different ideological trends in the Middle East. The role of ethnic and religious minorities, state building, economic and political liberalization, authoritarian rule, conflict, gender questions and case studies of several states are then analyzed. The final week of lectures then addresses questions relating to the future of the region as well as the Middle East in international politics.

This course provides students with basic background knowledge, analytical tools, and familiarity with key issues necessary to better understand today's Middle East and current events there. Course exams and written assignments are designed to encourage students to arrive at their own analyses and conclusions regarding key issues in the region. A core textbook provides a structured basis for the course, with class lectures and additional readings designed to further elucidate material not covered in the textbook.

This syllabus is subject to change during the course of the semester. Please check your e-mail regularly for any announcements to this effect.

Course Objectives

1. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations and theories relating to the Middle East.
2. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view about the region.
3. Acquiring an interest in learning more about the area by asking appropriate questions and seeking answers.
4. Moving beyond stereotypes.

Required Texts:

- Roskin, Michael G. and James J. Coyle, *Politics of the Middle East: Cultures and Conflicts* 2nd Edition, (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008). Available in the Rhodes bookstore.
- Anderson, Roy R., Robert F. Seibert and Jon G. Wagner, *Politics and Change in the Middle East*, 9th edition (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009). Available in the Rhodes bookstore.
- Makiya, Kanan, *Cruelty and Silence: War, Tyranny, Uprising, and the Arab World* (New York and London, W.W. Norton & Company, 1993). Available in the Rhodes bookstore. This book serves as the basis for one of the course’s critical book review assignment.
- PDFs of additional readings available in the professor’s public folder on the Rhodes fileservers system, and marked with an asterix (*) in this syllabus.
- Additional readings not listed in this syllabus may be assigned as the course progresses, as the professor deems necessary.
- Readings should be completed before the first lecture for the week they are assigned.

Evaluation:

Attendance and Participation --	10%
Map Quiz –	5%
Mid-Term --	20%
Research Paper --	20%
Book Review Paper --	20%
Final Examination --	25%

The mid-term and final exam consist of identifications and essays questions.

Papers

The research paper *must not exceed 10 pages or 2500 words*. Research paper topics are included below, after the syllabus schedule. The book review assignment should also be *no more than 10 pages or 2500 words*, and the topic (based on Makiya’s book) is included below after the syllabus schedule. Please make sure that the paper is double-spaced with 1" margins and a 12 pt font in Times New Roman or Aerial. Please refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style* <http://www.libs.uga.edu/ref/chicago.html> for guidelines on footnote and bibliography styles – please use footnotes as per the “documentary-note” style (make sure to include page numbers in

each footnote) and use only this style consistently throughout your paper. Include a bibliography of sources you cited in the paper. The bibliography does not count towards your word/page limit for the paper. To be fair to students who successfully limit their papers to the length specified above, your professor will not read beyond page 10 of any essay.

A late penalty of 2% per weekday will be levied on papers turned in after the due date, and no paper shall be accepted after the last day of class. *For every typo, grammar, spelling, or punctuation error that I notice, 1% will be deducted from the paper's mark. E-mailed, faxed or on-line submissions of assignments will not be accepted.*

Other Course Requirements

News media: Students must keep abreast of current events in the Middle East. Print media such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Economist*, *The Guardian*, *Ha'aretz* (Israeli paper available in English – <http://www.haaretz.com/>), and *Al-Ahram Weekly* (Egyptian paper available in English – www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/) are all useful sources. BBC World News or CNN International (more so than North American CNN) also provide useful broadcast media information. Various news radio sources, especially NPR, may also prove informative. Especially regarding the Middle East, every news media provides only a partial picture of complex issues, however, and students are encouraged to remain wary of sometimes very subtle bias (particularly when viewing documentaries or various web sites). One of the objectives of this course is to help students gain valuable information on the Middle East from a variety of news sources while remaining alert to various editorial biases.

Films: Several films will be shown outside of class time during the semester (details on showing time and location will be announced as soon as they are available). Some of these films will be required for the course, while others will simply be recommended. Some films will be major Hollywood productions available in video stores (such as *Syriana*), while others will be harder to find documentaries (such as *Promises*) or foreign films (such as, *Yol* from Turkey). If you plan to view a required film on your own, you should first check to see if it will be available from the video store.

Academic Integrity: All provisions of the *Rhodes Honor Code* will be vigorously enforced. Definitions of *plagiarism* will be reviewed in class, and any students having additional questions (such as proper citation practice in essays) are encouraged to see me during office hours or by appointment.

Classroom Etiquette: Active student participation is essential and greatly encouraged. At the same time, everyone (including the course's professor) must try to remain humble about their opinions, courteous to their fellows, curious, and eager to engage in polite debate. Uncivil discourse, personal attacks, or disruptions to the classroom atmosphere (cell phones, consistent tardiness or leaving early, etc.) will not be tolerated.

Attendance: 5% of the course mark will be based on class attendance, with another 5% based on in-class participation. Any student who receives below a 'C' in any of the class assignments must thereafter attend all classes without exception; failure to do so will provoke referral to the Dean of Students and may lead to a failing mark in the course. Unexcused absences from an examination will lead to a failing mark for that examination (no make-ups). Excused absences (illness, death in the family, and jury duty, for example, but not personal travel arrangements, participation in athletic events, and other extra-curricular activities) are subject to approval from the course instructor. At the course instructor's discretion, students who miss too many classes may also be asked to follow the same attendance policy as those with a grade below 'C' on an assignment.

Students With Disabilities: If you have a disability recognized by Rhodes College, I encourage you to register with Student Disability Services (843-3994) to help me accommodate your needs as well as possible.

Schedule M/W/F 10:00-10:50 Buckman 325

Readings should be completed for the 1st class on the week they are assigned, except for 'Week 1', in which case they should be completed by Friday of that week.

Week 1 The Middle East as a geographic, political and conceptual entity; Pre-Islamic civilizations of the region

Readings: Politics of the Middle East textbook, Chapter 1.

8/27 Introduction

8/29 Introduction (Cont'd)

Week 2 The Birth of Islam and Arab Culture

Readings: Politics and Change in the Middle East textbook, Chapter 2.
*Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, 1991, pp.1-37.
Current events – students' choice of newspapers and magazines.

9/1 *Labour Day – no class*

9/3 Lecture

9/5 Lecture

Week 3 The Spread of Islam, Muslim Empires and their Legacies

Readings: *Politics of the Middle East* textbook, Chapter 2.
Politics and Change in the Middle East textbook, Chapter 3.
Current events – students’ choice of newspapers and magazines.

9/8 Lecture

9/10 Lecture

9/12 *Map Quiz.* Discussion.

Week 4 European Penetration, Colonization and its Legacies

Readings: *Politics and Change in the Middle East* textbook, Chapters 4 and 5.
**The Encyclopedia of the Developing World*, 2006, entry on “Ethnicity: Impact on Politics and Society,” pp.629-634.
*Ellen Knickmeyer, “The Woman Who Put Iraq on the Map: Gertrude Bell, Resting in Relative Peace,” *Washington Post Foreign Service*, March 5, 2006; D01.
Current events – students’ choice of newspapers and magazines

9/15 Lecture

9/17 Lecture

9/19 Discussion

Week 5 The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Readings: *Politics of the Middle East* textbook, Chapters 4-6.
*Arthur Koestler, *Promise and Fulfillment*, Chapters 1-3.
Current events – students’ choice of newspapers and magazines.

9/22 Lecture

9/24 Lecture

9/26 Lecture

Week 6 The Arab-Israeli Conflict (cont’d); Nationalism and Pan-Arabism

Readings: *Beverly-Milton Edwards, *Contemporary Politics in the Middle East*, 2000, pp.41-67.
*Don Peretz, *The Middle East Today*, Chapter 6 (1988:131-155).
Current events – students’ choice of newspapers and magazines.
If not begun already, begin reading Kanan Makiya’s *Cruelty and Silence*.

9/29 Lecture

10/1 Lecture

10/3 Discussion

Week 7 Nationalism & Pan-Arabism (cont'd); Political Authority and The Nation-State in the Middle East

Readings: *Sami Zubaida, *Islam: The People and the State*, 1993, pp.121-182.
Politics and Change in the Middle East textbook, Chapters 5 and 6.
Current events – students' choice of newspapers and magazines.

10/6 Lecture

10/8 Lecture

10/10 Discussion

Week 8 Review and Discussion

Readings: Makiya book and current events, refresh all material covered in class up to this point.

10/13 Catch-up, Review and Discussion

10/15 **Mid-Term Exam**

10/17 Discussion

Fall Recess begins Oct.17 5 p.m. until Oct.22 8 a.m.

Week 9 Case Studies – Revolutionary Republics vs. Traditional Monarchies (focus on Saudi Arabia and Syria)

Readings: *Politics of the Middle East* Textbook Chapter 10.
*Michael C. Hudson, *Arab Politics*, 1977, pp.251-267.
Politics and Change in the Middle East textbook, Chapter 8.

10/20 **No class (Fall Recess)**

10/22 Lecture

10/24 Lecture

Week 10 **Case Studies – Democratization and Liberalization (focus on Egypt and Turkey)**

Readings: *Politics of the Middle East* textbook Chapter 7.
 Politics and Change in the Middle East textbook Chapter 8.
 *Korany, Brynen and Noble, eds., *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World*, 1998 (Volume 1), pp.1-27 [skim].
 *Selected *Eurasia Daily Monitor* articles on Turkey.

10/27 Lecture

10/29 Lecture

10/31 *Halloween – Professor promises to scare the class. Research paper due in class* (scared now?).

Week 11 **Case studies – Politicized Islam (focus on Iran)**

Readings: *Politics of the Middle East* textbook Chapter 16.
 *Mir Zohair Husain, *Global Islamic Politics*, 2003, (2nd Edition), pp.38-61.
 *Roger Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, 2004 (3rd Edition), pp.154-177.
 *Gordon Nickel, “Islam: A religion of Peace?” *National Post*, June 13, 2006.
 Current events – students’ choice of newspapers and magazines.
 *Amir Taheri, “Book Review of *Islamic Imperialism: A History*,” *Asharq Alawsat*.
 Frontline PBS documentary, “Showdown with Iran”
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/showdown/>.

11/3 Lecture

11/5 Lecture

11/7 Lecture

Week 12 **Case studies – Questions of Authority and Gender in the Middle East (focus on Iraq)**

Readings: *Lucy Brown and David Romano, “Women in post-Saddam Iraq: One step forward or two steps back?” *NWSA Journal*, (Forthcoming in Fall 2006).
 Politics and Change in the Middle East textbook, pp.149-155.
 Current events – students’ choice of newspapers and magazines.

11/10 Lecture

11/12 Lecture

11/14 Lecture

Week 13 Case studies – Minorities in the Middle East (focus on the Kurds)

Readings: *Politics of the Middle East* textbook, Chapter 8.
*Iliya F. Harik, “The Ethnic Revolution and Political Integration in the Middle East,”
International Journal of Middle East Studies, 3:3, pp. 303-323.
*David Romano, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement*, 2006, pp.183-221.
Current events – students’ choice of newspapers and magazines.

11/17 Lecture

11/19 Lecture

11/21 Discussion

Week 14 A Changing Middle East

Readings: *Politics of the Middle East* textbook, Chapters 14 and 15.

11/24 *Film (may be viewed on your own via Moodle)*

Thanksgiving Recess begins Nov. 25 10 p.m. until Dec.1 8 a.m.

11/26 *No class (Thanksgiving)*

11/28 *No class (Thanksgiving)*

Week 15 The Post 9/11 Middle East

Readings: *Politics of the Middle East* textbook, Chapter 17.
Politics and Change in the Middle East textbook, Chapter 15.
Current events – students’ choice of newspapers and magazines.

12/1 ***Book review due by 5 p.m. in my office.*** In class viewing and discussion of documentary on Edward Said’s *Orientalism*.

12/3 In class viewing and discussion of documentary on Edward Said’s *Orientalism*.

12/5 Discussion

Week 16 Conclusion and Review

Readings: Current events.

12/8 Discussion

12/10 *Last day of class, course review – exam period Dec.12-17*

Final exam Tuesday December 16, 17:30

Research Paper Topics

The research essay must be double spaced and *may not exceed 10 pages or 2500 words, double spaced* with a 12 pt font and a minimum 1" margins (not including bibliography). Please refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style* <http://www.libs.uga.edu/ref/chicago.html> for guidelines on footnote and bibliography styles – please use footnotes as per the “documentary-note” style (make sure to include page numbers in each footnote) and use only this style consistently throughout your paper. Include a bibliography of sources you cited in the paper. The bibliography does not count towards your word/page limit for the paper. You may choose from the following list of topics (for each topic, do your best to provide a fair appraisal of the main opposing viewpoints on highly contentious issues):

1) *Political Authority*: Choose a Middle Eastern state and discuss how political authority in that country is maintained, as well as the most important factors challenging the state in question. Will the current regime endure for long in your opinion, or is change looming?

2) *Colonialism’s Impact*: Choose a Middle Eastern state or region (such as Kurdistan, Palestine, Western Sahara, or the Gulf), and discuss how the legacy of colonialism has affected the current state or region and society. Consider if other factors can also explain the current situation, or if colonialism provides the best explanation.

3) *Ideologies of the Middle East*: Choose an ideology (nationalism, pan-Arabism, political Islam, communism, socialism, liberalism, or others) and discuss its importance in the Middle East. Has the ideology in question recently experienced a decline, a resurgence, or no change? Why?

4) *Questions of Gender*: Choose a state or region in the Middle East, and discuss the status and importance of gender relations there. Should the West take an interest in gender relations in this state or region? If so, why and how?

5) *Democracy and Liberalism*: The Middle East is currently described as the least democratic region on earth. Why is this? Can democracy ever thrive in the region? Discuss.

6) *Conflict in the Middle East*: Choose a violent conflict in the Post-World War Two Middle East, and discuss the main reasons why this conflict arose and its impact on the politics of the region as a whole.

7) *The 2003 Iraq War*: Why did Coalition Forces and the new Iraqi government find it difficult to maintain security after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime? Was security a problem in all of Iraq, or just specific areas? Why?

8) *The Surge*: What do you think accounts for the post-2007 improvements of the security situation in Iraq? Did "the surge" work? As part of your analysis, you will have to include some accounting of the issues addressed in topic #7.

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Book Review

The book review must be *double spaced* and *may not exceed 10 pages or 2500 words, double spaced* with a 12 pt font and a minimum 1" margins (not including bibliography). Please refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style* <http://www.libs.uga.edu/ref/chicago.html> for guidelines on footnote and bibliography styles – please use footnotes as per the "documentary-note" style (make sure to include page numbers in each footnote) and use only this style consistently throughout your paper. Include a bibliography of sources you cited in the paper. The bibliography does not count towards your word/page limit for the paper.

The first half of your book review should contain a description, analysis and evaluation of the main arguments in Kanan Makiya's book, *Cruelty and Silence*. The second half of the book review should then move on to address the following question: Have the 2003 invasion of Iraq and subsequent events there and in the Middle East as a whole weakened Makiya's polemic, or strengthened it?

This book review will require you to refer to additional sources, particularly sources with viewpoints contrary to those of Makiya. English or translated articles in the Arab press, Edward Said's writings (including *Orientalism*), and much of the recent anti-Iraq war literature should provide you with ample material. Include with your paper a bibliography of every source you cite. The bibliography and endnotes do not count towards your word/page limit for the paper.

If you have a much greater interest in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, you may also opt to write a review of David W. Lesch, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). You will have to make your own arrangements to borrow or order this book for purchase. Please speak with me about this if you would like to make this choice instead.

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that I notice, 1% will be deducted from the paper's mark. E-mailed, faxed or on-line submissions of assignments will not be accepted.