

Syllabus for:**Comparative Politics:****o8-26-M12-3: Politics of North Africa: *El Maghreb*
April 14, 2021****Course Breakdown:** 2 h. per week online
teaching 180 h. total
workload**Instructor:** Dr. Mabruk Derbesh **Weekly class time:** Wednesdays 12 pm (EST) / 2 pm (CET)**Language:** English **ECTS:** 3 ECTS / 6 ECTS**Contact:** Dr. Mabruk Derbesh
Institut für
Interkulturelle
und Internationale
Studien (InIIS):
UNICOM, Mary-
Somerville-Str. 7
Office: 7.2050
T: +49 421 218-67477**Office Hours:** Wednesdays from 14-15**Description of the course**

This course is designed to provide an overview of the cultures, religions, and politics of the region of North Africa. The course will shed light on the People of the region and their common practices and dynamics. Concepts such as religion, identity, politics and conflicts will be discussed. The historical diversity of the region has been overlooked in the work of many Western orientalists whose approach was, in many instances, superficial, politically motivated, or based on prior experiences within western cultures. It will also explore topics such as radicalism, securities, western intervention, colonialism, secularization, social movements and the prospect of democracy. The course will touch on the gender construct of the people of North Africa as well.

Learning Aims

- Develop an understanding of what North Africa entails conceptually, religiously, culturally and politically;
- Bring about epistemological questions regarding the study of the North Africa in relation to Middle Eastern studies;
- Identify the main contexts and complexities behind the North African region;
- Identify the basic concepts and political forces that have shaped the modern North Africa, including the Arab Spring;
- Discuss the prospect of democracy;
- Discuss the relationship between the MENA and Europe.

Course evaluation

Students are required to attend the sessions and to contribute to the discussions in the online class according to their ability. Students will be given a choice between taking the 3 ECTS or the 6 ECTS format.

The 3 ECTS option will consist of three assignments:

- Assignment 1 (Two position papers: 25% each: 500 - 700 words)
- Assignment 2 (Presentations: 30%)
- Assignment 3: Participation (20%)

The 6 ECTS option will consist of four assignments:

- Assignment 1 (Two position papers: 25% for both; 12.5% each: 400 - 600 words)
- Assignment 2 (Presentations: 25%)
- Assignment 3: Participation (20%)
- Assignment 4: Final (Essay: 30 %: 1000 - 1300 words)

Deadlines and rules

- Position papers are due on Tuesdays, at 10am. *The first paper is due before the 7th week class. The second paper is due before the 14th week class.* Grades will be deducted for late submissions.
- The final paper and other papers must be handed in an electronic form. Late submission of the electronic copy of the paper will result in a reduction of the grade as specified by the general rules of the program.
- In order to pass the course, a learner must pass all the assignments of the chosen version (3 ECTS /6 ECTS workload), i.e. failed partial grades cannot be compensated for by other grades.
- Main presentations will commence on the 3rd week and they will be on the subject of the different lessons of every week.

Outline of the Course Schedule:

- 1. Week 1 (April 14, 2021): Introduction to the Course.**
 - Organization,
 - Assignments, presentations and schedule.
- 2. Week 2: People of North Africa and the Middle East (NAME)**
 - Briefs: (Arabs, Berber(s), Toubou and Tuareg),
 - Muslims, Christians, Jews and 'cloaked Atheism',
 - Occupied territories: Palestine, Ceuta, Melilla, Golan heights and 'Canary Islands'?
- 3. Week 3: North Africa's People: The Arabs.**
 - Sematic origins,
 - Arabs relation to Paganism, Islam and the Arabic tongue,
 - Arab Identity and Arab Nationalism,
 - Arabs in Europe and around the world.
- 4. Week 4: North Africa's People: The Berber(s)/Amazigh.**
 - Origins,
 - Brief history of North Africa,

- The many different Arabs and many different Berber(s) in Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, 'Sahara', Tunisia, Egypt and Libya.
- 5. Week 5: North Africa's People: The least known: Tuareg and Toubou (Tebu).**
 - Origins and cultures,
 - Relation to Amazigh
 - Locations and tribes,
 - Conflicts.
 - 6. Week 6: Feminism in Muslim societies: North African Perspective.**
 - Islamic Feminism, Muslim Feminism and secular feminism,
 - Andalusia impact,
 - History of feminism: Tunisia, Morocco and Libya's cases.
 - 7. Week 7: (Short Presentations: Topic of the student's choice)**
 - These are short presentations of 5-7 minutes about any subject related to any aspect of North Africa.
 - Every student has to ask 2 questions at least.
 - 8. Week 8: Governance and Islam: Secularism vs. Islamism.**
 - History of secularism in Islam,
 - Islamic movements between radicalism and moderation,
 - Islam beyond traditional borders and the impact of non-Arab Muslims,
 - Islam and Eastern and Western secularism(s),
 - Islamic finance: Myths and conceptual thoughts.
 - 9. Week 9: Muslims, Jews and Christians in Palestine.**
 - History of Arab Jews in Arabian Peninsula and North Africa,
 - Jews under Arab rule including Andalusia (Spain and Portugal today),
 - Brief overview of recent developments and current politics around the region: "Peace without Palestinians."
 - 10. Week 10: Activism: The Rise of an 'active' civil society in the MENA.**
 - The relationship between the changing nature of state power and patterns of culturally constructed activism,
 - The rise of religious activism among Arab young intellectuals,
 - Role and effectiveness.
 - 11. Week 11: Regime-change and foreign intervention: Concepts and beliefs on the political right and the left.**
 - The understanding of political enlightenment and world order,
 - Political theories of interventions,
 - Corporate interests and financial corruption,
 - International and local political corruption: An arranged marriage.
 - 12. Week 12: 'Arab Spring': "Let them eat cake."**
 - Spring or Autumn? The question of stolen grievances,
 - The Arab Spring and regional transitions: Case studies,
 - What happened? Libya, Syria, Egypt, Bahrain, and Tunisia
 - Current conditions.
 - 13. Week 13: Prospects for democracy in the MENA, in general.**
 - The uprising of youth: The end of authoritarianism & beginning of true democracy?

- Libya, Tunisia & Egypt: Qaddafi's assassination, Ben Ali's ousting and the fall of Mubarak's regime,
- Morocco: Constitutional reforms and its geopolitical issues,
- The specificity of Gulf states,
- Iran's self-preservation and the political standoff with ex colonial powers.

14. Week 14: Review (Discussions.)

The last meeting is reserved to arrive at some conclusions as a class and to see what you have gathered and if there are any lingering questions remain unanswered or unfathomed.

Suggested reading List:

Week 1:

No reading assigned

Week 2:

Tétreault, Mary A. (2008): International Relations. In: Schwedler, Julian/ Gerner, Deborah J. (Hrsg.), *Understanding the Middle East*. 3rd ed. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 137-176.

Gelvin, James. *The Modern Middle East: A History*. Second Edition. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Roger Adelson, "British and U.S. Use and Misuse of the Term, 'Middle East,'" in *Is There a Middle East? The Evolution of a Geopolitical Concept*, edited by Michael E. Bonine, Michael Gasper, and Abbas Amanat (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011): pgs 36-55

Michael Gasper, "The Making of the Modern Middle East." In Ellen Lust (Ed.) *The Middle East* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2011): *Read* 1-25

Week 3:

https://books.google.pl/books?hl=en&lr=&id=CusnBQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PT21&dq=arabs&ots=Gew7m9NxrD&sig=aIeW6YjXBDLVOTjjewks1872ryg&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=arabs&f=false

https://books.google.pl/books?hl=en&lr=&id=fKVee8DwbzOC&oi=fnd&pg=PP2&dq=arabs&ots=XIHxBTvIHh&sig=zYwgTHAHu HNinHZCgbs1sL5eOE&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=arabs&f=false

Week 4:

Burke, E. (1992). *Struggle and Survival in the Modern Middle East*.

Goodman, J (2005) *Berber Culture on the World Stage*.. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 256 pages. ISBN: 0253346290

Maddy-Weitzman, B. (2011). *The Berber Identity Movement and the Challenge to North African States*. University of Texas Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7560/725874>

Week 5:

Heath, E. (2006, December 01). Toubou. *Oxford African American Studies Center*.
<https://oxfordaasc.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195301731.001.0001/acref-9780195301731-e-43645>.

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Morgan, A. (2014). What do the Tuareg want?. Available at:
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/01/what-do-tuareg-want-20141913923498438.html>

National Geographic (2011). The Sahara's Tuareg. Available at:
<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2011/09/sahara-tuareg/gwin-text/2>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3131511/Sex-Sahara-Striking-photographs-mysterious-Islamic-tribe-women-embrace-sexual-freedoms-dictate-gets-divorce-don-t-wear-veil-men-want-beautiful-faces.html>

Week 6:

Rinaldo, R. (2014). Pious and Critical: Muslim Women Activists and the Question of Agency. *Gender & Society*, 28(6), 824–846. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243214549352>

Mahmood, S. (2006). Feminist theory, agency, and the liberatory subject: Some reflections on the Islamic revival in Egypt. *Temenos-Nordic Journal of Comparative Religion*, 42(1), pp. 31-63

Llewellyn, D. (2015). Chapter 1. *In Reading, Feminism, and Spirituality: Troubling the Waves*, pp. 9-29. Springer.

Gross, R. (2009). Chapter 13. Feminist Theology as Theology of Religions In *A Garland of Feminist Reflections: Forty Years of Religious Exploration*, pp. 211 – 230. University of California Press.

Ahmed, L. (2011). *Chapter 9. Backlash*. In *Quiet Revolution: The Veil's Resurgence*, pp. 199-232. Yale University Press.

Ghazal Read J., & Bartkowski J.P. (2000). To Veil or Not to Veil? A Case Study of Identity Negotiation among Muslim Women in Austin, Texas. *Gender & Society*, 14(3), 395–417

Clive Irving, “Gertrude of Arabia, the Woman who invented Iraq.” In *The Daily Beast* (June 17, 2014): 1-6.

Schüssler Fiorenza, E. (2016). Introduction. *In Congress of Women: Religion, Gender, and Kyriarchal Power*, pp. 1-29. Cambridge: Feminist Studies in Religion Books

Week 7: Presentations**Week 8:**

Scott, J. W. (2019). Introduction. *In Sex and Secularism*, pp. 1-29. Princeton University Press.

Week 9:

Carter, Jimmy (2006): *Palestine - Peace Not Apartheid*. Simon & Schuster; NY.

Week 10:

<https://www.mei.edu/publications/womens-rights-organizations-and-democratic-transitions-north-africa-and-southeast-asia>

Antje Daniel & Dieter Neubert (2019) Civil society and social movements: conceptual insights and challenges in African contexts, *Critical African Studies*, 11:2, 176-192, DOI: 10.1080/21681392.2019.1613902

Week 11:

Wiktorowicz, Quintan ed. 2004. *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press

Wickham, Carrie. *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2002, chapter 7

Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan," *Comparative Politics*, 33 (1) (2000): 43-61.

Christopher Alexander, "Authoritarianism and Civil Society in Tunisia: Back from the Democratic Brink." In *Middle East Report* no. 205 (1997): 4 pgs

Norton, Augustus Richard ed. *Civil Society in the Middle East*. Vol. 1, Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1995

Norton, Augustus Richard ed. *Civil Society in the Middle East*. Vol. 2, Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1996

Sater, James. 2007. *Civil Society and Political Change in Morocco*. Civil Society and Political Change in Morocco, London and New York: Routledge

Yom, Sean L., 2015: *The Arab Spring: One Region, Several Puzzles, and Many Explanations*. In: *Government and Opposition*.

Week 12:

Derbesh, M. (2020) *The impact of political change on the state of academia including academic freedom in the Arab World: Libya as a case study*. *Global Society Journal*: Vol. 33, No. 4, doi: 10.1080/13600826.2019.1667753: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13600826.2019.1667753>

Lisa Anderson, "Rogue Libya's Long Road." In *Middle East Report*, no. 241, (Summer 2014): 4 pgs.

Nadia Marzouki, "Tunisia's Wall Has Fallen." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, (Jan 19, 2011): 3 pgs

Hesham Sallam, "Striking Back at Egyptian Workers." In *Middle East Report* no. 259 (Summer 2011)

Gause III, F. G. (2011). Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring: The Myth of Authoritarian Stability. *Foreign Affairs* 90(4): 81-90

Melani Cammett and Ishac Diwan, “Toward a Political Economy of the Arab Uprisings”, *Jadaliyya*, (2013): Read part 1 + part 2, 12 pgs.

Tobias Thiel, “The Middle East Despot’s 13-Point Guide to Longevity and Prosperity.” In *Middle East Report*, no. 269, (Winter 2013): 1 pg.

Dodge et al. “Iraq between Maliki and the Islamic State” *Project on Middle East Politics Briefing* (July 9, 2014): 1-38 : https://pomeps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/POMEPS_BriefBooklet24_Iraq_Web.pdf

Week 13:

(1995). The Inevitability of Future Revolutionary Surprises. *American Journal of Sociology* 100(6): 1528–51.

Rikke Hostrup Haugholle and Francesco Cavatorta. “Beyond Ghannouchi: Islamism and Social Change in Tunisia.” In *Middle East Report* no. 262 (Spring 2012): 20-25.

Gregory F. Gause. “Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring: The Myth of Authoritarian Stability.” In *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2011): 7 pgs

Week 14: Lecture notes.

- Discussion

Good Luck.