

PO398-15 Politics and Culture in the Middle East

20/21

Department

Politics & International Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Nicola Pratt

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module explores the relationship between politics and culture in the Middle East. It considers the racial-cultural dimensions of imperialism; legacies of colonialism and orientalism in shaping anti-colonial nationalism and post-colonial nation-state building; the gendered dimensions of nationalism; the heteronormativity of post-colonial nationalist imaginaries; the mobilization of nationalism in support of authoritarian and exclusivist politics; the subcultural practices of young men; the sexual politics of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the role of (popular) culture in resistance. Whilst the module is concerned with the Middle East and North Africa, a large number of readings focus on Egypt, as the most populous and one of the most significant geopolitical actors in the region, which, therefore, has attracted the lion's share of scholarly attention.

You will be briefly introduced to different approaches to understanding the relationship between politics and culture, borrowing heavily from postcolonial studies, cultural studies, anthropology, gender studies and queer studies. In particular, the module highlights a number of debates within postcolonial studies with regards to the paradoxes of nationalism and legacies of colonialism: whilst anticolonial nationalism enabled the colonized to unite against the colonizer, in the process it created new social hierarchies with lasting implications for postcolonial nation-state building.

Module aims

- To provide a discussion of the different ways in which politics and culture are interrelated in the Middle East, with a focus on the ongoing legacies of colonialism.
- To introduce the notion of culture in the study of politics and how it can be conceptualized in non-essentialist ways in the study of the Middle East.
- To demonstrate the importance of race, gender, sexuality and class in understanding politics in the Middle East and relations between the Middle East and the West.

-To provide an introduction to some scholarly debates in postcolonial studies and how they are relevant to the politics of the Middle East.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Weekly topics (indicative)

1. Imagining the Middle East
2. Anti-colonial nationalism, gender and modernity
3. Women's Rights in Postcolonial States
4. National Culture, Human Rights, Authoritarianism and the Postcolonial State
5. Sexual Panics and the Nation
6. Reading Week
7. The Politics of Sexual Identities in the Israel-Palestine Conflict
8. Young Men, Music and Identity
9. (Popular) Culture and Resistance: the Case of the Arab Uprisings
10. Revision and Essay Writing Advice

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- - Demonstrate significant empirical and theoretical knowledge of the ways in which politics and culture intersect in the Middle East.
- -Use relevant theories from cultural studies, postcolonial studies and anthropology (amongst others) to analyse contemporary political dynamics in the Middle East.
- - Demonstrate an understanding of how race, gender, sexuality and class intersect and are constitutive of political processes and dynamics in the politics and International Relations of the Middle East.
- -Critically assess the notion of culture as a site of resistance or domination.

Indicative reading list

- Roger Owen (2004), *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Middle East*
- Nicola Pratt (2007), *Democracy and Authoritarianism in the Arab World*
- John Chalcraft (2016) *Popular Politics in the Making of the Middle East*
- Andrew Hammond (2007). *Popular Culture in the Arab World: Arts, Politics, and the Media*. New York: The American University in Cairo Press.
- John Storey (2015) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction*
- John Street (1997) *Politics and Popular Culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Research element

Independent research for essay writing

Interdisciplinary

Engages with theories from anthropology, cultural studies, postcolonial studies, feminist studies, queer studies

International

Introduces students to the Middle East and North Africa region

Subject specific skills

- empirical and theoretical knowledge of the ways in which politics and culture intersect in the Middle East.
-knowledge of relevant theories from cultural studies, postcolonial studies and anthropology (amongst others)
- understanding of how race, gender, sexuality and class intersect and are constitutive of political processes and dynamics in the politics and International Relations of the Middle East.

Transferable skills

communication (verbal and written), analytical, time management,

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Students are expected to spend 8-10 hours per week reading the core readings and preparing the relevant seminar questions for each week's seminar class.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
3000 word essay	100%		Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			

Feedback on assessment

tbc

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 4 of UECA-4 Undergraduate Economics 4 Year Variants

- Year 3 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 4 of UPOA-M101 Undergraduate Politics (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M168 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese
- Year 3 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3 year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 4 of UPOA-M165 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Italian
- Year 3 of UPOA-M162 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods
- Year 4 of UPOA-M167 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 3 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 4 of UPOA-M16B Undergraduate Politics and International Studies (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- Year 4 of UPOA-ML14 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M163 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and French
- Year 4 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 4 of UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
- Year 3 of UPOA-M16H Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies (3 year degree)

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 3 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 4 of UHIA-VM12 Undergraduate History and Politics (with Year Abroad)