HI114-30 History and Politics of the Modern Middle East

23/24

Department
> History

Level
> Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader
> Katayoun Shafiee

Credit value
> 30

Module duration
> 22 weeks

Assessment
> 100% coursework

Study location
> University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This first-year undergraduate option module examines the history and politics of the modern Middle East through a series of questions and problems that have shaped its development. We will use a wide range of materials including diplomatic documents, short stories, scholarly texts, and photographs and videos, to explore the many different ways people in the Middle East have come to define and shape their world and also how outsiders have attempted to control and shape this world.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This module examines the history and politics of the modern Middle East through a series of questions and problems that have shaped its development. The module is divided into four sections. The first part of the module briefly questions the usefulness and origins of the term Middle East as a geographical area and unit of analysis. It raises questions about how historical and anthropological knowledge, western media, and academic scholarship in the social sciences have helped define the modern Middle East. The next section of the module offers a historical

overview of the Ottoman past through the colonial and postcolonial periods, i.e., the period from the sixteenth century through the colonial period in the nineteenth century and to the present post-colonial period in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The course will then move to address more specifically some of the most important contemporary issues that have historically affected modern Middle Eastern politics along with the role of outside forces such as Britain and the United States. These include: the Arab-Israeli conflict; the history of oil in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Iran; the role of political Islam; questions of democracy, development, and human rights; the Gulf War, and the 2003 U.S. invasion/occupation of Iraq; the Arab Spring and the current war on terrorism.

The module is designed to be attractive to students interested in the histories, cultures, and societies of the Middle East, the history of empire, state formation, community and nation, and questions of democracy. It encourages students to rethink historical and political analysis.

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.

Part I:
Week 1: Introduction: What, When, Where is the Middle East?
Week 2: Representing the Middle East
Week 3: Islam: dogma, faith and practice
Week 4: Ottoman Heritage
Week 5: European Colonialism and its Impact
Week 6: Reading Week

Part II:
Week 7: World War I and Redrawing the Map of the Middle East
Week 8: The Middle East in the Interwar Period
Week 9: Women and Gender in the Middle East
Week 10: Palestine, Zionism, and Israel (I)

Part III:
Week 11: Palestine, Zionism, and Israel (II)
Week 12: Carbon Democracy and Global Climate Change
Week 13: Petroleum Politics (I)
Week 14: Petroleum Politics (II)

Part IV:
Week 15: Problems of Democracy and Human Rights - Iraq
Week 16: Reading Week
Week 17: Politics of Development (I)
Week 18: Politics of Development (II)

Part V:
Week 19: Islam and Politics
Week 20: The Arab Spring and Iran's Green Movement

Part VI:
Week 21: Future Challenges

Week 22: Revision Session of themes, questions, and scholarship

Learning outcomes

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

- Gain a broad understanding of the history and politics of the modern Middle East, the kinds of modern state that have emerged in the region, and the struggles that people have fought to gain political freedoms and economic rights.
- Become aware of a range of related conceptual approaches and historiographical debates.
- Identify and engage with a range of primary materials including diplomatic documents, short stories, scholarly texts, and photographs.
- Gain interpersonal and communication skills through the delivery of a presentation.
- Devise well-defined essay topics for investigation, collect relevant data from a variety of sources and present results in an effective fashion.

Indicative reading list

- Bernard Lewis, "What went wrong?" Atlantic Monthly, (January 2002): 43-45.
- Thomas Friedman, "One Country, Two worlds," New York Times, (January 28, 2000)
- Alasdair Drysdale and Gerald Blake, The Middle East and North Africa: A Political Geography (1985): 10-30.
- Richard Critchfield, Shahhat an Egyptian (1982): 3-24.
- Timothy Mitchell, "The invention and reinvention of the Egyptian peasant," International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, v. 22, (1990): 129-150.
- Richard Critchfield, and Timothy Mitchell, "Response" and Reply," IJMES, v. 23, (1991): 277-80.
- Lila Abu-Lughod, Do Muslim Women Need Saving? (Harvard University Press, 2013).
- John Esposito, Islam: The Straight Path, pp. 1-114.
- Kristina Nelson, "The sound of the Divine in daily life," and Anne Betteridge, "Muslim Women and Shrines in Shiraz," in Donna Lee Bowen and Evelyn Early, eds., Everyday Life in the Muslim Middle East (2002): 257-61, 276-89.
- Leila Ahmed, Women and Gender in Islam, (1993): 144-168.
- William Cleveland, A History of the Modern Middle East (2008): 37-51, 57-102.
- Donald Quataert, The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922, (2005): 89-109, 140-171.
- Albert Hourani, The Ottoman Background of the Modern Middle East (1970). -William Cleveland, A History of the Modern Middle East, pp. 149-170.
- Charles Smith, Palestine and the Arab Israeli Conflict, 7th Rev. Ed. (2009). For detailed maps see http://www.fmep.org/maps
- John Duggard, "Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967" United Nations A/HRC/4/17 (January 29, 2007)
- George Monbiot, "Sleepwalking to Extinction," available at www.monbiot.com/archives/2003/08/12/sleepwalking-to-extinction
- Timothy Mitchell, Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).
- Timothy Mitchell, "Carbon Democracy," Economy and Society (2009): 399-432.
- Timothy Mitchell, "McJihad," Social Text, no. 73 (Winter 2003): 1-18.

- Ervand Abrahamian, "The 1953 Coup in Iran," Science and Society, 65 no. 2 (Summer 2001), 185-215.
- Nikkie Keddie, Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution, (2003).
- Robert Vitalis, America's Kingdom (Stanford University Press, 2006)
- Marjane Sartrapi, Persepolis (2004); in film format (2007)
- Charles Tripp, A History of Iraq, (2002)
- Douglas Little, "Mission Impossible: The CIA and the Cult of Covert Action in the Middle East," Diplomatic History, vol. 28 (2004): 663-701.
- Naomi Klein, "Baghdad Year Zero," Harper's Magazine, (Sept. 2004): 1-17.
- Sami Baroudi, "The 2002 Arab Human Development Report: Implications for Democracy," Middle East Policy, v. 11, Spring 2004, pp. 132-141
- Patrick Heller, "Degrees of Democracy: Some Comparative Lessons from India," World Politics 52 (July 2000), 484–519
- United Nations Development Program, The Arab Human Development Report, chap 7, "Liberating Human Capabilities" 105-120
- William Cleveland, A History of the Modern Middle East: 519-539.
- Niall Ferguson, Colossus: The Price of America's Empire, chap 6, "Going Home or Organizing Hypocrisy,": 200-226.
- Issandr El Amrani, "Controlled Reform in Egypt: Neither Reformist nor Controlled," Middle East Report Online, December 15, 2005. Accessed at http://www.merip.org/mero/mero121505.html
- "People Power," MER 258, Middle East Report Onliine (2011): selections. Accessed at http://www.merip.org/mer/mer258
- "Iran: Looking Ahead," MER 241, Middle East Report Online (2006): selections. Accessed at http://www.merip.org/mer/mer241
- Fawaz Gerges, Isis: A History (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).
- Ramin Jahanbegloo, "Pressures from Below," Journal of Democracy 14, no.1 (Jan. 2003): 126-131.
- Mehrangiz Kar, "The Deadlock in Iran: Constitutional Constraints," Journal of Democracy 14 no.1 (Jan. 2003): 132-136.
- Madawi al-Rasheed, A History of Saudi Arabia (Cambridge University Press, 2010).
- Faleh A. Jabar, "The worldly roots of religiosity in Post-Saddam Iraq," Middle East Report, Summer 2003, pp. 12-18.
- Sinan Antoon, "Of graves and grievances, "Middle East Report, Summer 2003, pp. pp. 34-37.
- Sarah Graham-Brown, "Multiplier Effect: War, occupation and humanitarian needs in Iraq," Middle East Report, Summer 2003, pp. 12-23.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

See learning outcomes.

Transferable skills

See learning outcomes.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	20 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Seminars	20 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Tutorials	2 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Private study	258 hours (86%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

History modules require students to undertake extensive independent research and reading to prepare for seminars and assessments. As a rough guide, students will be expected to read and prepare to comment on three substantial texts (articles or book chapters) for each seminar taking approximately 3 hours. Each assessment requires independent research, reading around 6-10 texts and writing and presenting the outcomes of this preparation in an essay, review, presentation or other related task.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A4

	Weighting	Study time
1000-word piece of introductory writing (essay plan or assignment of tutor's choice)	10%	
Seminar Contribution/presentation Seminar participation/presentation	10%	
2000 word essay or equivalent 2000 word essay	30%	

	Weighting	Study time
3000-word essay or equivalent	50%	

Feedback on assessment

Written comments and oral feedback will be provided for non-assessed assignments. Written feedback will be provided for performance in the final examination.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 1 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
- UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
  - Year 1 of VM11 History and Politics
  - Year 1 of VM11 History and Politics
  - Year 1 of VM11 History and Politics

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
  - Year 1 of V100 History
  - Year 1 of V100 History
- UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
  - Year 1 of VM11 History and Politics
  - Year 1 of VM11 History and Politics
  - Year 1 of VM11 History and Politics
- Year 1 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy

This module is Option list G for:

- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
  - Year 1 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
  - Year 1 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
  - Year 1 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)