This course examines how citizenries and state leaders in the Middle East over the last 150 years used a host of media venues to define their national identities, gain supporters for their political positions, garner attention from the international community and mobilize attention for their many coups and rebellions. Intellectuals of the 19th century constructed their national and personal identities through the pages of magazines and newspapers; with the formation of the modern nation-states after WWI, radio, music and movies became the new forum for articulating identity. After WWII, and the rise of authoritarian states throughout the Middle East, textbooks and radio broadcasts set the parameters for obedience to state rule; the proliferation of statues and posters of state leaders provided the imagery for the personality cults surrounding such leaders as Saddam Hussein. In the last two decades, state leaders and newly rebellious populations have competed through social media, cable television stations and even tourism campaigns to gain supporters for their visions of the national future. In all these eras, the class will analyze how the producers of all kinds used the media of the day to define their projects, entice supporters to follow their message and, when necessary, enforce obedience from those resisting them.

The students are required to complete all the readings assigned. Critical reading exercises will require students to analyze a written text, an image or a film clip for historical context, authorship, and intended audience. For two of them, students will be put into teams and will present their own critical reading exercises to the class.

The students will also write 2 five-page papers and 1 ten-page final analyzing aspects of the course covered in the readings and lectures. The papers must be turned in on the dates specified below; otherwise each will lose 1/3 a grade for each day it is late. Plagiarism will be handled per the guidelines set out in the CAS Academic Conduct Code (http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/).

In addition to the written work, discussions will take place every week concerning the assigned readings. On these days, the students must arrive in class prepared to analyze and contribute to the topics proposed in order to receive full credit for participation.
Books:

(All other articles are on the Blackboard site)

Requirements:

4 critical reading exercises worth 20% of the grade (5% each) (Students will be put into teams to present 2 of these critical reading exercises)
2 five-page papers worth 40% of the grade (20% each)
1 ten-page take-home final exam worth 25% of the grade
Class participation worth 15% of the grade

Week 1 (January 23 and 25)

Anderson, Chapters 2 and 3

Week 2 (January 28 and 30 and February 1)

Jürgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society (The MIT Press, 1991), pp. TBA


Week 3 (February 4, 6, and 8)


First Critical Reading Exercise, in Class, February 6

Week 4 (February 11 and 13 (No Class on February 15 – a film to be assigned))

Anderson, Chapter 4


Second Critical Reading Exercise, in Class, February 13

Week 5 (Tuesday, February 19, 20, and 22)

Anderson, Chapter 5


Third (Student-led) Critical Reading Exercises throughout the Week

Week 6 (February 25 and 27 and March 1)

Anderson, Chapter 6


Third (Student-led) Critical Reading Exercises throughout the Week

Week 7 (March 4 and 6 (No Class on March 8))

Anderson, Chapter 7

Zeina Maasri, Off the Wall: Political Posters of the Lebanese Civil War (I.B. Tauris, 2008), 15-70.


SPRING BREAK, March 9-17
Week 8 (March 18, 20, and 22)


First Five-Page Paper Due, Friday, March 22, 5:00pm

Week 9 (March 25, 27, and 29)

Armbrust, Mass Mediations, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, and 13

Week 10 (April 1 and 3 (No Class on April 5 – a film to be assigned))

Anderson, Chapter 8

Eickelman and Anderson, New Media in the Muslim World, Chapters 1-5 and 7.


Week 11 (April 8, 10, and 12)


Second Five-Page Paper Due, Friday, April 12 5:00pm

Week 12 (April 17 and 19)

Anderson, Chapter 9


Week 13 (April 22, 24, and 26)

Anderson, Chapter 10 and Epilogue


Week 14 (April 29 and May 1)

Fourth (Student-led) Critical Reading Exercises throughout the Week

Due Date for the Ten-Page Take-Home Final: Tuesday, May 7, 12:30-2:30 pm