

Political Reform in the Middle East  
IR 707 / PO 750  
Semester I--2004-2005  
Professor Augustus Richard Norton  
Monday, 1:00-4:00 p.m.  
Office hours: Monday, 4:00-5:00 p.m.; Tuesday/Thursday, 1:30-3:00 p.m.  
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Course overview: This seminar is designed to foster a rethinking of Middle East politics, and, especially, to explore the strategies of political reform available to governments. If crises of governance are a general phenomenon of the political condition in the contemporary world, these crises are especially acute in the Middle East where the legitimacy of authoritarian regimes is shrinking palpably. Moreover, since September 11, 2001, the theme of reform has suddenly become very au courant in policy circles, especially in the U.S. Indeed, erstwhile skeptics have been known to positively embrace the notion of reform, although sometimes it seems more for punitive than reasons rather than genuine commitment to the idea.

In any case, scholars have not established a reputation for prescience in predicting radical political change, such as revolution, but assessing the prospects and dynamics of political reform may be susceptible to more productive analysis. Thus, in this seminar, we shall examine the origins of the contemporary state system in the Middle East, analyze the changing dimensions of state-society relations, weigh the claims and goals of oppositional forces, and assess the prospects for reform. In addition to Islamists, we shall focus on civil society, both to gauge its political relevance or irrelevance in the Middle East as well as to achieve a fuller appreciation of the state's relationship with society.

Rather than focusing on individual cases, we shall look at intriguing case sets in order to gain a clearer picture of regime dilemmas and strategies. Although some regimes will experiment not only with liberalization but with democratization, it would be illogical to predict that democracy will be the outcome of reform strategies. Indeed, it is reasonable to expect that authoritarian regimes will seek avenues for buttressing autocratic rule rather than democratizing. Nonetheless, in some instances governments may purposefully or unintentionally pursue democratization. In such instances, it is particularly important to assess the strength and durability of social forces (secular or Islamist) that may sustain or undermine open political systems. Although the seminar is focused on the Middle East, we shall have occasion to examine seminal writings from other regions with a view to testing hypotheses that have proved robust or, at least, intriguing elsewhere.

Requirements: The major seminar requirement is an original research paper due not later than the last scheduled seminar session (December 13, 2004). The paper must be deal with the seminar theme of political reform in the Middle East, though the methodologies to be adopted will vary from one paper to another, as will the conceptual approaches. Whether adopting the perspective of political culture, political economy, class analysis, normative theory, group analysis or the framework of civil society, the writer should be sensitive to the merits as well as the shortcomings of the approach. At the graduate level of study it would be superfluous to set a minimal page length, but the body of the papers should not exceed 6,000 words. Appendices may

be used for additional material, as well as supplementary tables, and charts. No later than the fourth class meeting (September 27, 2004), each seminar member must submit a statement of his or her research topic, along with an annotated bibliography of scholarly references. All submissions are to be in typescript, double-spaced, carefully proofread and should conform to accepted scholarly standards. Footnotes, which are more convenient to the reader than endnotes, are required. (The basic guide is the Chicago Style Manual, or the more accessible handbook by Kate Turabian.) Late submissions, except under exigent circumstances, will be docked one third of a letter grade per day.

In addition to the writing of the research paper, each seminar participant will make two presentations. The first presentation is an analytical summary and critical evaluation of a recommended course reading, accompanied by a two to three page handout summarizing the salient points of the reading. The presentation will be no more than fifteen or twenty minutes in length, to be followed by questions and discussion. The second presentation is a summary of the research paper.

**Academic integrity:** Please read the Boston University Academic Conduct Code. Handing in someone else's work or ideas as your own (even if you worked on it together as a group) constitutes plagiarism, as does using someone's ideas without attribution. You must give a citation when you use an author's ideas in your paper, even if you do not quote the text word-for-word. I will go over in class the correct procedures for quoting and referencing the work of other authors. If you miss that class or if you have any questions, please ask. Any infraction **MUST** be reported to the Dean for resolution by the Academic Conduct Committee. Be informed and be careful. Since plagiarized work is the work of another, any paper determined by the Academic Conduct panel to be will normally receive a grade of zero.

Finally, the professor preserves 10% of the course grade for participation. Since there are only fourteen class meetings, attendance is essential. Unexplained and unjustified absences will result in a deduction of point (out of 100 points) per absence. Thus, the course grading will be distributed as follows:

**Seminar Paper:**

Topic statement and annotated bibliography	10%,
Paper	35%
Presentations (2 @20 % each)	40%
Participation	15%

**Required Texts** (available at BU bookstore, or on-line, which may be cheaper):

- Brown, Nathan, Palestinian Politics: After the Oslo Accords: Resuming Arab Palestine (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003).
- Brynen, Rex, Bahgat Korany and Paul Noble, eds, Political Liberalization & Democratization in the Arab World: Volume I, Theoretical Perspectives (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995).
- George, Alan, Syria: Neither Bread nor Freedom (London: Zed Press, 2003).
- Kassem, Maye, Egyptian politics: the dynamics of authoritarian rule (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004).

- Kurzman, Charles, The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).
- Norton, Augustus Richard, ed., Civil Society in the Middle East, vol. II (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996).
  - United Nations Development Programme, Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Arab Development Report 2002: Creating Opportunities for Future Generations, 2002. There is a \$10 download at <http://www.undp.org/rbas/ahdr/english2002.html> Also downloadable from courseinfo page for free.

**Recommended:**

Norton, Augustus Richard, ed., Civil Society in the Middle East, vol. I (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996).  
 UNDP, Building a Knowledge Society, 2003, <http://www.undp.org/rbas/ahdr/english2003.html>  
 UNDP, volume on gender issues, forthcoming 2004,

Context: UNDP reports

Topics and Schedule:

**Week 1** First scheduled class meeting is in week 2

**Week 2** (September 13): Course introduction

Read: Hudson article distributed by Courseinfo page and email.

**Week 3**(September 20): The Modern Origins of the Middle Eastern State: The State and Society in the Post-World II Period

Read: UNDP report; Norton introduction in CSME II; Nazih Ayubi, Over-Stating the Arab State (London: I.B. Taurus, 1995) [Reserve]; Alan Richards and John Waterbury, A Political Economy of the Middle East (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), chap. 10-11 [HC415.15.r53, 1990; also available in course readings packet under IR 382 reserve list].

Recommended: George Antonius, The Arab Awakening (New York: Capricorn Books, 1946); Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939 (London: Oxford University Press, 1962); Simon Bromley, Rethinking Middle East Politics (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994); Manfred Halpern, The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and the Arab World (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962); Michael C. Hudson, Arab Politics: The Search for Legitimacy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), chaps. 1-5.

**Week 4** (September 27): Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Democracy as Compromise and Rational Choice Perspectives

Read: Adam Przeworski, Democracy and Markets: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) [reserveHC244.P8.1991]; Brynen, et. al.; John Waterbury, "Democracy without Democrats?: the potential for political liberalization in the Middle East," in Ghassan Salame, Democracy without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World (London and New York: I. B. Taurus, 1994), chap. 1 [reserve].

Recommended: Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Dankwart Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy," Comparative Politics 2,

no. 3 (1970): 337-63. [Reserve] Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," American Political Science Review 64, no. 4 (December 1970): 1033-1053. [Reserve]; Adam Przeworski, "Democracy as a Contingent Outcome of Conflicts," in Constitutionalism and Democracy, Jon Elster and Rune Slagstad, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). [Reserve].

**Week 5** (October 4): The Persistence of Authoritarianism

Read: Halim Barakat, The Arab World: Society, Culture, and State (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1993), chap. 8. [Reserve] Jill Crystal, "Authoritarianism and Its Adversaries in the Arab World," World Politics 46, no. 2 (January 1994): 262-289. [Reserve] Phillippe Fargues, "Demographic Explosion or Social Upheaval, in Ghassan Salame, ed., Democracy without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World (London and New York: I. B. Taurus, 1994), chap. 6. Hisham Sharabi, Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

Recommended: Samir al-Khalil [Kanaan Makiya], The Republic of Fear (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989). Michael C. Hudson, "Democratization and the Problem of Legitimacy in Middle East Politics," 1987 MESA Presidential Address, Middle East Studies Association Bulletin 22, no. 2 (December 1988): 157-171. [Reserve] \_\_\_\_\_, "Democracy and Foreign Policy in the Arab World," The Beirut Review, no. 4 (Fall 1992), pp. 3-28. [Reserve] \_\_\_\_\_, "After the Gulf War: Prospects for Democratization in the Arab World," Middle East Journal 45, no. 3 (Summer 1991): 407-427. [Reserve] \_\_\_\_\_, "State, Society and Legitimacy: An Essay on Arab Political Prospects in the 1990's," in Hisham Sharabi, ed., The Next Decade: Alternative Futures (Boulder: CO: Westview Press, 1988): 22-37. [Reserve] Muhammad Muslih and Augustus Richard Norton, "The Need for Arab Democracy," Foreign Policy 83 (Summer 1991): 3 - 19. [Reserve] Augustus Richard Norton, "Breaking Through the Wall of Fear in the Arab World," Current History 91, no. 561 (January 1992): 37-41. [Reserve] Mustapha Kamel al-Sayyid, "Slow Thaw in the Arab World," World Policy Journal 8, no. 4 (Fall 1991): 711-738. [Reserve]; Augustus Richard Norton, "The Quest for Inclusion in the Middle East," Current History, January 1995, pp. 1-6.

**Week 6** (October 11): Holiday—Veteran's Day

**Week 7** (October 18): The Rentier State: entitlements, co-optation and depoliticization?

El-Ghonemy, M. Riad, Affluence and Poverty in the Middle East (London: Routledge, 1998); Hazem Beblawi and Giancomo Luciani, eds., The Rentier State (New York: Croom Helm, 1987). [Reserve--HC415.3.B43.1984] Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany and Paul Noble, eds., Political Liberalization & Democratization in the Arab World: Volume 1, Theoretical Perspectives (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), chaps. 11 (Luciani) or Giancomo Luciani, "The Oil Rent, the Fiscal Crisis of the State and Democratization," in Ghassan Salame, ed., chap. 5. F. Gregory Gause III, Oil Monarchies: Domestic and Security Challenges in the Arab Gulf States (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1994), chaps. 3-4. [Reserve] Hootan Shambayati, "The Rentier State, Interest Groups, and the Paradox of Autonomy: State and Business in Turkey and Iran," Comparative Politics 26, no. 3 (April 1994): 307-331. [Reserve]

Recommended: Jill Crystal, Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). [Reserve] Peter Evans and John D. Stephens, "Studying Development since the Sixties: The Emergence of a new Comparative Political Economy," Theory and Society 17 (1988):713-45. [Reserve] Saad Eddin

Ibrahim, The New Arab Social Order: A Study of the Social Impact of Oil Wealth (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982). [Reserve]; Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, The Politics of Economic Adjustment (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). [Reserve] Przeworski, Democracy and the Market; Shafeeq Ghabra, "Voluntary Associations in Kuwait: The Foundations of a New System?" Middle East Journal 45, no. 2 (Spring 1991): 199-215 [Reserve]; Jerrold D. Green., "Political Reform and Regime Stability in the Post-War Gulf," Studies in Conflict and Terrorism 16 (1993): 9-23 [Reserve] ; Neil Hicks and Ghanim al-Najjar, "The Utility of Tradition: Civil Society in Kuwait," in CSME I, pp. 186-213. Joseph A. Kechichian, Political Dynamics and Security in the Arabian Peninsula Through the 1990s (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1993) [Reserve].

Also note the comprehensive six-volume collection: Timothy Niblock and Rodney Wilson, eds., The Political Economy of the Middle East (Cheltenham, UK ; Northampton, Mass : Edward Elgar, 1999) [reserve].

### **Week 8** (October 25): The Islamist Opposition

Kurzman, Charles, Liberal Islam: A Sourcebook (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Rex Brynen et. al., chaps. 5 (Ismail), and 9 (Clark); Gole in CSME II; Dale F. Eickelman, "Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies," American Ethnologist 19, no. 4 (1992): 643-655. [Reserve] Gudrun Krämer, "Islamist Democracy," Middle East Report, no. 183 (July-August 1993), pp. 2-8 [reserve]; Jean Leca, "Democratization in the Arab World: uncertainty, vulnerability and legitimacy. A tentative conceptualization and some hypotheses," in Ghassan Salame, ed., chap. 2 [reserve]; Ahmad Moussalli, "Modern Islamic Fundamentalist Discourses on Civil Society, Pluralism and Democracy," in Augustus Richard Norton, ed. Civil Society in the Middle East, vol. 1 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), pp. 79-119; S. V. R. Nasr, "Democracy and Islamic Revivalism," Political Science Quarterly 110, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 261-85. [Reserve]; Jenny B. White, "Islam and Democracy: The Turkish Experience," Current History, January 1995, pp. 7-12. [Reserve] Carrie Rosefsky-Wickham, "Incorporating Dissent: The Rise of the Islamic Trend in Egypt's Professional Unions," unpublished paper, April 1993 [Reserve].

Recommended: Aziz al-Azmeh, "Populism contra Democracy: recent democratist discourse in the Arab world," in Ghassan Salame, ed., chap. 4. Leonard Binder, Islamic Liberalism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). [Reserve] Gudrun Krämer in Brynen, Korany and Noble, eds. Mark Juergensmeyer, The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993). Ghassan Salame, "Islam and the West," Foreign Policy 90 (Spring 1993): 22-37. [Reserve] Denis J. Sullivan, Private Voluntary Organizations in Egypt: Islamic Development, Private Initiative, and State Control (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1994). [Reserve]

### **Week 9** (November 1): Civil Society in the Middle East

Read: CSME II; Rex Brynen et. al, chap. 7 (al-Sayyid). Ernest Gellner, "Civil Society in Historical Context," International Social Science Journal 43 (August, 1991): 495 – 510; Ellis Goldberg, "Private Goods, Public Wrongs, and Civil Society in Some Medieval Arab Theory and Practice," in Rules and Rights in the Middle East: Democracy, Law and Society, Ellis Goldberg, Resat Kasaba and Joel Migdal, eds.(Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1993), pp. 248-271. [Reserve] Saad Eddin Ibrahim, "Civil Society and Prospects for Democratization in the Arab World," in Augustus Richard Norton, ed., pp. 27-54; Yahya Sadowski, "The New Orientalism and the Democracy Debate," Middle East Report, no. 183 (July-August 1993): 14-21

& 40. Jillian Schwedler, ed., Toward Civil Society in the Middle East? A Primer (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), introduction.

Recommended: Robert Bianchi, "Interest Group Politics in the Third World," Third World Quarterly 8, no. 2 (April 1986): 507-539. Larry Diamond, "Rethinking Civil Society: Toward Democratic Consolidation," Journal of Democracy 5, no. 3 (July 1994): 3-17. James Turner Johnson, "Does Democracy 'Travel'? Some Thoughts on Democracy and Its Cultural Context," Ethics & International Affairs 6 (1992): 41-55; Nathan J. Brown, Constitutions in a Nonconstitutional World: Arab Basic Laws and the Prospects for Accountable Government (Albany: SUNY Press, 2001).

Recommended general readings (covered in IR 711) on the construct of civil society

Robert Putnam, Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Timothy Mitchell, "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics," American Political Science Review 85, no. 1 (March 1991): 77-96. Also see: John Bendix, Bertell Ollman, Bartholomew H. Sparrow, and Timothy P. Mitchell, "Controversy: Going Beyond the State," APSR 86, no. 4 (December 1992): 1007-1021. Edward Shils, "The Virtue of Civil Society," Government and Opposition 26, no. 1 (Winter 1992): 3-20. [Reserve]; Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, Civil Society and Political Theory (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992). Giuseppe Di Palma, "Legitimation from the Top to Civil Society: Politico-Cultural Change in Eastern Europe," World Politics 44, no. 1 (October 1991): 49-80.

**Week 10** (November 8): Egypt, with additional discussion of Algeria and Tunisia

Egypt

Read: Kassem; 9-27. Iliya Harik, "Subsidization Policies in Egypt: Neither Economic Growth nor Distribution," International Journal of Middle East Studies 24, no. 3 (August 1992): 481-99. [Reserve] Caryle Murphy, "The Business of Political Change in Egypt," Current History, January 1995, pp. 18-22. Roger Owen, "Socio-Economic Change and Political Mobilization: the Case of Egypt," in Ghassan Salame, ed., chap. 7. Mustapha Kamel al-Sayyid, "A Civil Society in Egypt?" in Augustus Richard Norton, ed. CSME I, pp. 269-93.

Recommended: [Cassandra], "The Impending Crisis in Egypt," Middle East Journal 49, no. 1 (Winter 1995); Eberhard Kienle, A Grand Delusion: Democracy and Reform in Egypt (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001); Fouad Ajami, The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice Since 1967 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), chap. 2. Raymond Baker, Sadat and After: Struggles for Egypt's Political Soul (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990). Robert Bianchi, Unruly Corporatism: Associational Life in Twentieth-Century Egypt (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). [Reserve] Diane Singerman, Avenues of Participation: Family, Politics, and Networks in Urban Quarters of Cairo (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995). [Reserve] Robert Springborg, Mubarak's Egypt: Fragmentation of the Political Order (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989). Mary Anne Weaver, "A Reporter at Large: The Trail of the Sheikh," The New Yorker, April 12, 1993, pp. 71-89. [Reserve]

Algeria and Tunisia

Lisa Anderson, "The Tunisian National Pact of 1988," Government and Opposition 26, no. 2 (Spring 1991): 244-60. [Reserve] Eva Bellin, "Civil Society in Formation: Tunisia," in CSME I, pp. 120-47; John Entelis, "Algeria," in CSME II; Susan Waltz, Human Rights and Reform: Changing the Face of North African Politics (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), chaps. 3-5 [Reserve].

Recommended: Robert Mortimer, "Islam and Multiparty Politics in Algeria," *Middle East Journal* 45 (Autumn 1991): 575-93. [Reserve]

**Week 11** (November 15): Palestine, with additional discussion of Jordan

Read: Brown; Lisa Anderson, "Absolutism and the Resilience of Monarchy in the Middle East," *Political Science Quarterly* 106, no. 1 (1991): 1-15 [Reserve] ; Laurie Brand, "In the beginning was the State...': The Quest for Civil Society in Jordan," in *CSME I*, pp.148-85. Gudrun Krämer, "The Integration of the Integrist: a comparative study of Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia," Ghassan Salame, ed., chap. 10; Muhammad Muslih, "Palestinian Civil Society," in *CSME I*, chap. 8 [Reserve]; Glenn E. Robinson, "The Role of the Professional Middle Class in the Mobilization of Palestinian Society: The Medical and Agricultural Committees," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 25, no. 2 (May 1993): 301-326 [Reserve]; Sara Roy, "Civil Society in Gaza," in Norton, *CSME II*. [Reserve]

Recommended: Rebecca Miles Doan, , "Class Differentiation and the Informal Sector in Amman, Jordan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 24, no. 1 (February 1992): 27-38. Kathrine Rath, "The Process of Democratization in Jordan," *Middle Eastern Studies* 30, no. 3 (July 1994): 530-537. John Roberts, "Prospects for Democracy in Jordan," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 13, nos. 3 & 4 (Summer/Fall 1991): 119-138. [Reserve] Glenn E. Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997). Lawrence Tal, "Dealing with Radical Islam: The Case of Jordan," *Survival* 37, no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 139-56.

**Week 12** (November 22-WILL BE RESCHEDULED): Iran, Lebanon and Syria

Iran

Read: Kurzman; Farhad Kazemi in *CSME II*; and Fariba Adelkhah, *Being Modern in Iran* (Columbia UP, 2000).

Lebanon and Syria

George; Norton, "Lebanon's Malaise," *Survival* 42, no. 4 (Winter 2000-01): 35-50 [reserve and course info page]; Deirdre Collings, ed. *Peace for Lebanon? From War to Reconstruction*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), parts 1 & 4 [Reserve]; Steven Heydemann, "Taxation without Representation: Authoritarianism and Economic Liberalization in Syria," in Goldberg, Kasaba and Migdal, eds., *Rules and Rights in the Middle East: Democracy, Law and Society* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1993), pp. 69-101. Raymond Hinnebusch, "State, Civil Society, and Political Change in Syria," in *CSME I*, 214-42. Volker Perthes, "The Private Sector, Economic Liberalization, and the Prospects of Democratization: the case of Syria and some other Arab countries," Ghassan Salame, ed., chap. 8.

Recommended: Heydemann, Steven, "Liberalization from Above and the Limits of Private Sector Autonomy in Syria: The Role of Business Associations" (unpublished paper presented at the Middle East Studies Association annual meeting, San Antonio, TX, 1990) [Reserve].

**Week 13** (November 29): Paper presentations

**Week 14** (December 6): Paper presentations.

**Week 15** (December 13): Paper presentations.