Modern Arab Renaissance: An Inquiry

Fall 2011

Yoav Di-Capua

HIS 388K
MES 381

Classes: M 12:00 - 3:00  GAR 1.122
Office Hours: by appointment
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Course Description
The aim of this seminar is to introduce advanced graduate students on a PhD level to the professional study of the Middle East. It is designed to aid prospective researchers in this field in gaining an understanding of the history of their craft, of current professional debates and of ongoing historiographical trends and fashions. Though the field of Middle Eastern Studies is a home for multiple disciplines including Anthropology, Political Science, Sociology, Art History, Archeology and Literature, this seminar focuses only on the discipline of History. In doing so, we will critically review various historiographical traditions such as Modernization Theory, Post-Colonialism, Cultural Studies, the Linguistic Turn, Deconstruction (and Post-Modernity in general). We will also review important debates such as the case for or against regional studies, “the theory debate” and debate over the “mission of Middle East Studies.” Though the field includes sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists and many more, the seminar is mainly being taught from the perspective of the discipline of history.

Attendance: (One grade down for every three classes skipped).

Accommodations: At the beginning of the semester, students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify me by presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSD tel. 471-6259)

Academic Integrity: Students should maintain a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholarly work. All work handed in by students should be their own work, prepared without unauthorized assistance. All cases of academic dishonesty will be treated with due severity. For further information visit the Student Judicial Services website at http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs or call 471-2841
Mandatory Books

Course Packet: Course packet is available at *Jenn’s Copy and Binding* 2200 Guadalupe
• jenns@io.com • 512-473-8669

Assignments and deadlines:

I. Students are required to write a standard 20 pages double spaced research paper using Arabic sources in accordance with their level of Arabic.

II. Each week two students would lead seminar discussion and submit a short reaction paper.

October 3rd First research proposal and bibliography.

October 31st Outline and bibliography

November 26th and December 1st 10-15 minutes presentation of research topic.

December 2nd papers are due.

PART I: PRELUDE to the NAHĒA

Week 1: On the Structure of Modern Arab Thought

August 29th

• Peter Gordon, ‘What is Intellectual History?’


• Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab, *Contemporary Arab Thought: Cultural Critique in Comparative Perspective* (CUP, 2010), Introduction.

Week 2: Local Modernity or Islamic Reform?
Sept. 12th


Primary Text:


Advanced Arabic


Week 3: Defensive Enlightenment

Sept. 19th


• Sawaie, Mohammed, “Rifa’a Rafi’ Al-Tahtawi and His Contributions to the Lexical Development of Modern Literary Arabic” International Journal of Middle East Studies, August 2000, vol. 32, no.3, p. 395. JSTOR.

**Primary Text:**

**Advanced Arabic**


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**PART II: A NEW MODERN SENSABILITY**

**Week 4: Why Beirut?**

Sept. 26th

• Donald Ciota, “Ottoman Censorship in Lebanon and Syria, 1876-1908” *IJMES* 10 (1979), pp. 167-186.

**Primary Text:**


**Advanced Arabic**


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**Week 5: The Nabīa in Motion**

Oct. 3rd

****Research proposal and bibliography are due****


**Primary Text:**

• Qasim Amin, *The Liberation Of Women; and, the New Woman: Two Documents in the History of Egyptian Feminism* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, trans. by Samiha Sidhom Peterson, 2000). pp. 1-34, 82-87, 101-106.
Week 6: Islamic Reform and the Nabèa Part I

October 10th

- Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, pp. 103-129.

Primary Text:


Week 7: Islamic Reform and the Nabèa Part II

October 17th

- Wael Hallaq, “Was the Gate of Ijtihad Closed?” *IJMES* 1984 No. 16., pp. 3-41


**Primary Text:**


**Advanced Arabic**


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**PART III: A Second Nabèa?**

**Week 8: Opinion Makers and Opinion Takers**

October 24th


**Primary Text**

• Roger Allen, *A Period of Time: A Study and Translation of *Iad¥th >1s ibn Hish m by Muhammad al-Muwaylihi* (Oxford: The Middle East Center St Anthony’s College by Ithaca Press, 1992), selections.

**Week 9: Taha Husayn and His Generation**

Oct. 31st

**Outline and bibliography**


**Primary Text:**

• Taha Husayn, *The Days*, selections
PART IV: TWO ALTERNATIVES TO THE NAHDA

Week 10: Authoritarianism and the Nabda’s: the 1930s

Nov. 7th


• Adeed Dawisha, Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: from Triumph to Despair (Princeton, N.J. 2003), pp. 49-74.


Primary source:

• Sati al-Husri, “Muslim Unity and Arab Unity,” in Sylvia Haim, Arab Nationalism an Anthology, pp. 147-153.
Week 11: Islamic Authenticity and the *Nabda*

Nov. 14th


**Primary Text:**

  
  **A. “Our Mission”, pp. 40-69**


**Week 12: 1967**

Nov. 21st

- **Specific agenda will follow in accordance with progress in Class (this material is not in packet).**

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TOWARDS PRODUCTIVE INTERCOMMUNICATION FOR KNOWLEDGE.” Available at: [http://www.arab-hdr.org/](http://www.arab-hdr.org/)

**Week 13: Presentations**  
Nov. 28th

**Week 14: Presentations**  
Dec. 3rd