In 2011, a 26-year-old Tunisian produce vendor named Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire, inadvertently sparking waves of digitally-powered popular uprisings against despotic regimes throughout the Arab world. For the first time, the internet and social media empowered, indeed enabled mass protest and freedom of expression in a part of the world that for decades had seen neither. Activists organized on Facebook and Twitter; actors, musicians and poets risked their lives to perform satire and song before thousands, and in turn inspired thousands more via Youtube; aspiring creative voices produced an outpouring of comics, graphic novels, film, street art, memoir and literary fiction that bravely dispensed with longstanding codes of political self-censorship. This course will thus trace the contours of the cultural production of the Arab Spring, contextualizing it within a broader framework of culturally-engaged protest movements, from the Civil Rights Movement to Occupy Wall Street. We will focus primarily on Syria, Tunisia, and Egypt while addressing concomitant reverberations in protest culture throughout the greater Arab world, Turkey, and Iran.

This course will be conducted in English; no knowledge of Arabic is required. However, students at the advanced level of Arabic may elect to participate in additional meetings with the instructor in order to engage materials not available in English.

TEXTS / READINGS:

**Primary Sources**

Attasi, Mohammed, dir. *Our Terrible Country* (2014) [film]

Emara, Hussein and Priscille Lafitte, dir. "Egypt: The Songs of Tahrir Square" (2012) [musical documentary]


al-Shabbi, abu al-Qasim, "The Will to Life" and "To the Tyrants of the World" [poetry]

al-Saleh, Asad. *Voices of the Arab Spring: Personal Stories of the Arab Revolutions* (2015) [memoir]

Selected Youtube videos, blogs, websites, podcasts and Facebook posts

**Secondary Sources**

DeLaure, Marilyn and Moritz Fink, ed. *Culture Jamming: Activism and the Art of Cultural Resistance*. New York:


**GRADING POLICY:**

1. Attendance and Participation 20%
2. New Media Report (2-3 pages) 15%
3. Analytical paper + peer review, revision (4-5 pages) 20%
4. Midterm essay exam 20%
5. Final essay exam 25%

Chair Signature

Date

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Associate Dean Signature

Date