

Fall 2012

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT**  
Department of Political Studies and Public Administration  
&  
Center for American Studies and Research

**PSPA 293 D: Senior Seminar on the US in the Middle East**

**AMST 275V: Special Topics: US in the Middle East**

**Professor Waleed Hazbun**

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Meeting Time:  
Wednesday, 3 pm-5:30 pm  
Nicely 318

Office hours:  
Tuesday 2:00pm - 4:00pm  
Jesup 201

This seminar explores the political, economic, and cultural relations between the United States and the Middle East. It seeks to explain the nature of American policy and the role of American non-state actors through an examination of changing strategic assessments, cultural attitudes, political struggles, and ideological trends within both the US and Middle East.

While there are no prerequisites for this course, it is offered as a complement to PSPA 237 *The Middle East in International Politics*, which offers a chronological survey of US policy towards the Middle East framed by how American policy makers defined and pursued US strategic interests and sought to counter regional challenges to those policies. In short, this seminar recognizes the limits of mainstream international relations scholarship to fully explain the nature of US policy and US-Middle East relations or even address many aspects of these complex relationships. Thus this course seeks to explore the multidimensional nature of political, economic, and cultural relations between the United States and the Middle East. In particular, it suggests that the definition of strategic interests and assessment about how best to pursue them are, in practice, shaped by cultural and ideological constructions, domestic political factors, and the actions of transnational non-state actors such as private firms, NGOs, and the media. Through readings, discussions, and varied writing assignments the seminar seeks to engage students to critically think about the changing nature of the American presence in the Middle East and its possible future course.

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**Course Requirements:**

Class participation and occasional quizzes: (20% of course grade)  
Weekly writing assignments: (50%)  
Final paper (due Jan. 7): (30%)  
[Draft due Dec. 5]

**This is a Writing Intensive course:** Almost every week you will be assigned a short writing task. These assignments will be passed out in class or via email. These will include, for example, responding to discussion questions, writing an op-ed or blog post, telling a story

about yourself. These are exercises in the process of writing as a means to understand the material. Some will be group project and lead to a presentation. Part of each session we will be devoted to your written texts. Sometimes you will read out to class parts of your text, other times you will edit or comment on your paper or a colleague's paper.

**Final paper:** Towards the end of the course you will write a 10-15 page paper drawing from, extending, synthesizing, material produced over the weeks. You will submit a draft, then edit it, and rewrite the draft based on feedback from the instructor and your colleagues.

A **course reader** will be available at the AUB Book Store. **Additional Readings** will be posted on AUB's online course management system, Moodle. You can log in at: <http://moodle.aub.edu.lb>

\*Please note: *Schedule is likely to change.* These changes will be noted in red on Moodle.\*

Sept 19

### **1. Introduction: What does "America" represent in the Middle East?**

Michael Oren, "Apple pie and the Middle East," *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 2007.  
Ted Widmer, "The challenge of imperialism," *Boston Globe*, July 15, 2007.

Sept 26

### **2. An Overview: Rethinking the Roots of "Anti-Americanism"**

Ussama Makdisi "Anti-Americanism" in the Arab World: An Interpretation of a Brief History," *Journal of American History*, (September, 2002), pp. 538-557.  
Fawaz Gerges, *Obama and the Middle East: End of America's Moment?* (Palgrave, 2012), pp. 28-68.

Oct 3

### **3. Culture, Politics, Interests: Explaining US Foreign Policy in the Middle East**

Douglas Little, "Orientalism, American Style," in *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945*, (North Carolina, 2002), pp. 9-42.  
William Quandt, *Decade of Decisions: American Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-76* (California, 1977), pp. 1-36.  
McAlister, "Middle East Interests" in *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, & U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945*, (California 2005), pp. 1-12.  
Michael C. Hudson, "The United States and the Middle East," in Fawcett (ed.) *The International Relations of the Middle East* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford, 2009), pp. 308-330.

## **GEOPOLITICAL INTERESTS AND ENGAGEMENT**

Oct 10

### **4. The Cold War in the Middle East: Doctrines, propaganda, covert action**

- Peter Sluglett, "The Cold War in the Middle East," in Fawcett (ed.) *The International Relations of the Middle East* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (Oxford, 2009), pp. 44-60.
- McAlister, "Benevolent Supremacy," in *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, & U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945*, (California 2005), pp. 43-55.
- Douglas Little, "Mission Impossible: The CIA and the Cult of Covert Action in the Middle East" *Diplomatic History*, (November 2004), pp. 663-701.
- "U.S. Propaganda in the Middle East - The Early Cold War Version" *National Security Archive*, Electronic Briefing Book No. 78 Edited by Joyce Battle, selections.

Oct 17

### **5. Modernizing the Middle East: Remaking in the American image**

- Richard Bulliet, "Looking for Love in all the Wrong Places," in *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization* (Columbia, 2006) pp. 95-133.
- Matthew Jacobs, *Imagining the Middle East* (UNC Press, 2011), pp. 151-186.
- Michael Hirsh, "Bernard Lewis Revisited," *The Washington Quarterly*, (November 2004): 13-19.

Oct 24

### **6. Contrasting view of the US role in Lebanon, 1958**

- Erika Alin, "U.S. Policy and Military Intervention in the 1958 Lebanon Crisis," in Lesch (ed.) *Middle East and the United States*, 4th ed. (Westview, 2007), pp. 122-140.
- Richard J. McAlexander, "Couscous Mussolini: US perceptions of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the 1958 Intervention in Lebanon and the origins of the US-Israeli special relationship," *Cold War History* Vol. 11, No. 3, (August 2011), pp. 363-385.
- Maurice M. Labelle Jr. "A New Age of Empire? Arab 'Anti-Americanism,' U.S. Intervention, and the Lebanon Crisis of 1958," *International History Review*, forthcoming.

See also: Malik Mufti, "The United States and Nasserist Pan-Arabism," in David W. Lesch (ed.) *The Middle East and the United States*, 4th ed. (Westview, 2007), pp. 141-160

Oct 31

### **7. Americans in the Middle East: Expats as agents**

- James A. Bill, "The United States in Iran: Diplomats, Intelligence Agents, and Policy Making," in *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations* (Yale, 1988), pp. 379-424.
- Robert Vitalis, "Aramco World: Business and Culture on the Arabian Oil Frontier," in *Counter-Narratives: History, Society and Politics in Saudi Arabia and Yemen* (Palgrave, 2004), pp. 151-181.
- Peter L. Hahn, *Crisis and Crossfire: The US and the Middle East Since 1945* (Potomac, 2005), pp. 144-146 (Khomeini)

Nov 7

### **8. In class, Film: Syria**

## **DOMESTIC SOURCES OF US INTERESTS**

Nov 14

### **9. Oil and the geopolitics of interdependence**

McAlister, "King Tut, Commodity Nationalism, and the Politics of Oil, 1973-79" in *Epic Encounters* (California 2005), pp. 125-40.

J. B. Kelly, "Oil Imperialism," *The New Republic*, July 26, 1980, p. 18-20.

Robert Vitalis, "Gun Belt in the Beltway," *Middle East Report* (Nov-Dec, 1995), p. 6.

Jean-Francois Seznec, "Business as Usual," *Harvard International Review* (Winter 2005): 56-60.

Benjamin Smith, "The Great Ports Panic of 2006," *Middle East Report* (Fall, 2008), pp. 40-44.

Toby Craig Jones, "Don't Stop at Iraq: Why the U.S. Should Withdraw from the Entire Persian Gulf," *The Atlantic*, December 22, 2011.

See also:

David Painter, "Oil and the American Century," *Journal of American History* (June 2012): 24-39.

Brian C. Black, "Oil for Living: Petroleum and American Conspicuous Consumption," *Journal of American History* (June 2012): 40-50

Simon Bromley, "The United States and the Control of World Oil," *Government and Opposition* 40:2 (2005): 225-255

Nov 21

### **10. Guest Lecture/Workshop on writing**

Nathan Deuel, Writer/Editor/Instructor

Nov 28

### **11. American and Israel: Identity, Culture, and the 'Special Relationship'**

Melani McAlister, "The Good Fight: Israel after Vietnam, 1972-1980," in *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945* (California, 2005), pp. 155-197.

Melani McAlister, "An Empire of Their Own," *The Nation*, Sept 22, 2003.

Kiera Feldman "The Romance of Birthright Israel," *The Nation* July 4, 2011, (plus Letters)

Michael Barnett, "Identity and Alliances in the Middle East" in Katzenstein (ed.) *The Culture of National Security*, (Columbia 1996), READ ONLY pp. 432-447.

Martin Kramer, "The American Interest," *Azure*, (Autumn 2006): 21-33.

See also: AIPAC Website and *Briefing Book*

Dec 5

### **12. USA as Empire? 9/11, American Exceptionalism, and the Iraq War**

"Reasons"

Kenneth M. Pollack, "Next Stop Baghdad?" *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2002): 32-46

Michael Ignatieff, "The Burden," *New York Times*, January 5, 2003, pp. 22-27, 50-54.

Thomas Friedman, "Four Reasons To Invade Iraq," *Slate.com*, January 12, 2004.

Gearóid Ó Tuathail (Gerard Toal), "Just out looking for a fight': American affect and the invasion of Iraq," *Antipode*, 35, 5 (2003): 856-870.

Changes?

John J. Mearsheimer "Imperial by Design" *The National Interest*, Jan/Feb 2011.

Zalmay Khalilzad, "Follow the Leader," *The National Interest*, February 2, 2011.

See also:

Fouad Ajami, "Iraq and the Arabs' Future," *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2003): 2-18.

**\*draft of project due Dec 5\***

## **ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT**

Dec 12

### **13. American education abroad: Soft power?**

Joseph Nye, "Soft power and Higher education"

Excerpt from Leila Khaled, *My People Shall Live* in John Munro, *A Mutual Concern: The Story of AUB* (Caravan, 1977) pp. 145-147.

John Waterbury, "Hate Your Policies, Love Your Institutions," *Foreign Affairs* (Jan-Feb 2003): 58-68.

Betty S. Anderson, "Voices of Protest: The Struggle over Freedom at the American University of Beirut," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 28 (2008): 390-403.

R. Bertelsen, "Private Foreign-Affiliated Universities, the State, and Soft Power: The American University of Beirut and the American University in Cairo," *Foreign Policy Analysis* (2012), pp. 1-19.

Brian VanDeMark, *American Sheikhs: Two families, four generations, and the story of America's influence in the Middle East*, (Prometheus, 2012). pp. 173-191.

## **THE FUTURE OF THE US IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

Dec 19

### **14. A "New Beginning" or the end of the American era?**

Ryan Lizza, "How the Arab Spring remade Obama's foreign policy," *New Yorker*, 5/2/2011.

Marc Lynch, *The Arab Uprisings* (Public Affairs, 2012) pp. 161-235.

Aaron David Miller, "For America, An Arab Winter," *Wilson Quarterly* (Summer 2011): 36-42.

Toby Jones, "Embracing Crisis in the Gulf," *Middle East Report* (Fall 2012), pp. 26-29.

Adam Hinds, "Six ways for US to reset relations in the Middle East," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 23, 2011.

**\*review/comments on drafts due Dec 19\***

See also:

Barak Obama, "Moment of Opportunity: American Diplomacy in the Middle East & North Africa" State Department, May 19, 2011.

**\*Final paper due Jan 7\***