

Syllabus

Title of the Course:	The Arab Spring: Its Makings, Transitions and Political Arts in Perspective	Course Breakdown:	28 hours online course and 152 hours individual study
Name of the Instructor:	Dr. Hassan Almohammed	Weekly class time:	Wednesdays 16:00 – 18:00 CET 10:00 – 12:00 EST
Language:	English		
Hosted by:	Marburg University	Certificate issued by:	Marburg University 6 ECTS
min. number of participants:	5	max. number of participants	30

This Seminar is funded by the New University in In Exile Consortium based at the New School

Description of the course

The Arab Spring- the Arab World's largest mass mobilization protests since its 1950s-1960s national liberation movements - has swept most of the Arab Middle East and North Africa since 2011. How can we understand the eruption and the development of such large-scale mass protests and mobilization movement/s in the Arab world? What trajectories and transitions did the Arab Spring take in the various Arab countries and why? What role did political art and digital mass media play in this mobilization?

This online course/seminar will analyze the Arab Spring in light of these questions. The course will be divided into two parts. The first will focus on the Arab world's politics, neoliberal economics, demographics that preceded the Arab Spring and which had contributed to its making and transitions. The second focuses on the agency of the political art of the Arab Spring, such as graffiti, mural and digital street art. It will analyze such arts in Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, Yemen, and Libya. The course will conclude with a reflection on the making, the transitions and the "modest harvest" of Arab Spring, as well as on the overall claims of the Arab Spring in comparison with those of the 1950s-1960s revolutions.

Learning Aims

The course aims to provide an understanding and an analysis of:

- the sociopolitical conditions/contexts that animated the Arab Spring
- the roles various social classes and social groups such as women and youth played in the making of the Arab Spring
- the various transitions and trajectories the Arab Spring made in various Arab countries.
- the particular requests/demands/claims of the Arab Spring
- the role of political arts in the making of the Arab Spring...

Upon the successful completion of the course students will be able to understand:

- the sociopolitical conditions/contexts that animated the Arab Spring.
- the roles various social classes and groups such as women and youth played in the making of the Arab Spring.
- the role of political arts in the Arab Spring
- the various trajectories and transitions the Arab Spring made in the various Arab countries.

Course requirements

Course components include:

- Lectures
- Readings
- Films
- Images (photographs, graffiti, visual media, banners, etc)

The final grade for the course will be based on the following:

- Reading Reflections (20%): Brief text about weekly readings for 200-500 words
- Short Essay (30%): 500-1000 words essay on a topic the participant will decide on with the support of the instructors.
- Long Essay (50%): 1000-2000 words essay on a topic the participant will decide on with the support of the instructors.

Outline of the Course Schedule

Week 1	Should Start Submitting Reading Reflections and Focus on Short Essay	Introduction
Week 2		
Week 3		Submission of Reading Reflections Start
Week 4		Short Essay Topic to be determined
Week 5		
Week 6		Long Essay Topic to be determined
Week 7		
Week 8		Short Essay Due
Week 9	Should focus on the long essay	
Week 10		
Week 11		
Week 12		
Week 13		
Week 14		Wrap-up and Conclusion – Long Essay

Organization of the course

Below you will find weekly course materials. The reading material will be provided on the Off-University platform and the visual material will be given as links. We expect you to come to classes prepared so we can have interactive discussions.

The course is divided into two parts focused on theory and practice of politics and arts.

Syllabus / Reading List

PART ONE

Theory and practice of politics and arts of the Arab spring

Week 1: The Arab Spring in historical perspective.

Readings:

- Zubaida, S., 2012. The 'Arab Spring' in the historical perspectives of Middle East politics. *Economy and Society*, 41(4), pp.568-579. **(11pages)**
- Goldstein, E., 2012. Before the Arab Spring, the unseen thaw. Human Rights Watch World Report, pp.23-29. Online. Available at <https://www.hrw.org/node/259729> [Accessed July 22, 2022]. **(6 pages)**

Week 2: Politics and Political Art in the Arab World: When Art is the Weapon

Reading:

- LeVine, M. (2015) When Art Is the Weapon: Culture and Resistance Confronting Violence in the Post-Uprisings Arab World, *Religions* (Basel, Switzerland Volume 6, Issue 4, pp. 1277-1302. **(25 Pages)**

Week 3: The Arab Spring, A Visual Scope

Film:

- The Square 2013, a Documentary, Director Jihan Noujaim (104 minutes). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2a6SLuVtiVU&t=612s>

Week 3: The Arab Spring, the Arts and Neoliberalism

- Murphy, Emma, C. 2013. Under the Emperor's Neoliberal Clothes! Why the International Financial Institutions Got it Wrong in Tunisia? In Gana, Nouri, 2013. *The Making of the Tunisian Revolution: Contexts, Architects, Prospects*. Ed. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh, pp.35-56. **(21 pages)**
- Khattab, L.W., 2022. The genealogy of social and political mobilization in Lebanon under a neoliberal sectarian regime (2009–2019). *Globalizations*, pp.1-18. **(17 pages).**

Week 4: I. The Arab Spring and social classes: The Youth

Readings:

- LaGrafte, D., 2012. The youth bulge in Egypt: An intersection of demographics, security, and the Arab Spring. *Journal of Strategic Security*, 5(2), pp.65-80. **(15 pages)**
- Bayat, Assef., 2015. Plebeians of the Arab spring. *Current Anthropology*, 56(S11), pp. S33-S43. **(10 pages)**

Film

- No More Fear 2011, Murad Ben Sheikh. Trailer only, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omqtE2jn10U??>

Week 5: II, The Arab Spring and social classes: Women

Readings:

- Marks, Monica 2013, Women's Rights before and after the Revolution. In Gana, Nouri, 2013. *The Making of the Tunisian Revolution: Contexts, Architects, Prospects*. Ed. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh, pp. 224-251. **(27 pages)**.
- Johansson-Nogués, E., 2013. Gendering the Arab Spring? Rights and (in) security of Tunisian, Egyptian and Libyan women. *Security Dialogue*, 44(5-6), pp.393-409. **(16 pages)**

Film:

- A Revolution in Four Seasons, 74 minutes, 2016, Jessie Deeter. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sf-afAFDq1c>

Week 6: The Arab Spring, Art and Religion

Readings:

- Egypt's "Passive Revolution": The state and the Fragmentation of Islamism, 1992-2005, in Bayat, Asef, 2007. *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*. Stanford University Press, pp. 136-187. **(51 pages)**
- Korotayev, Andrey 2019. Where Will the Revolutions Go? Why Did Islamists Rise? In Korotayev, Andrey 2019. *Islamism, Arab Spring, and the Future of Democracy. World System and World Values Perspectives*, Springer, pp. 159-164. **(5 pages)**.

Week 7: The Claims/Demands of the Arab Spring and the artistic climate before and after 2010

Reading:

- Dabashi, H., 2012. The Arab Spring: the end of post-colonialism. Bloomsbury Publishing. Online, Available at: <https://stealthishijab.com/2013/01/08/the-arab-spring-the-end-of-postcolonialism/> [Accessed July 23, 2022].

PART TWO

Visual analysis of the political and revolutionary Art

Week 8: Graffiti, Mural and art street as a weapon

Reading:

- Mulder, S. The Arts of Satire in the Syrian Uprising (2018). Special Issue: Creative Dissent: Visual Arts of the Arab World Uprisings. Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication, pp. 174-195. **(21 Pages)**

Week 10: Graffiti: Street Art in Tunisia

Reading:

- Georgeon, D. (2012). Revolutionary Graffiti: Street Art and Revolution in Tunisia. Wasafir, pp.70–75. **(5 pages)**
- Shilton, S. (2016). Digital Art and the Tunisian Revolution. Wasafiri: The Magazine of International Contemporary Literature, 31, 4 (Special issue: Print Activism Twenty-First Century Africa, guest edited by Ruth Bush and Madhu Krishnan), pp. 69–75; **(6 pages)**
at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02690055.2016.1218114>.CrossRefGoogle Scholar

Week 11: Graffiti in Egypt

Reading:

- Abaza, M. (2014). Post January Revolution Cairo: Urban Wars and the Reshaping of Public Space. Theory, Culture & Society, 31(7–8), 163–183. **(20 pages)**
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276414549264>

Week 12: Murals and banners in Syria

Reading:

- Khatib, L. (2013). Image Politics in the Middle East: The Role of the Visual in Political Struggle. London: I.B. Tauris. pp. 182-208 **(26 pages)**

Week 13: Digital and street Art in Libya and Yemen and Untold stories of artist women

Reading:

- Oruc, Nurgul. (2021). Digitally Mediated Art in the War Zone: The Aesthetics of Resilience in Yemen. CyberOrient. 14. 10.1002/j.1804-3194.2020.tb00001.x.
- Gruber, Ch., King of King of Africa: Racializing Qaddafi in the Visual Output of the 2011 Libyan Revolution, (2018). Special Issue: Creative Dissent: Visual Arts of the Arab World Uprisings. Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication, pp. 196-224 **(28 pages)**

Week 14: Conclusions: The Current Arab World and reflection on its political arts

Reading:

- Shilton, S. 2021. Performing Revolution: Constraint and Liberation in Tunisia, (2021) Art and the Arab Spring, Aesthetics of Revolution and Resistance in Tunisia and Beyond, Cambridge University Press, pp. 186- 202 **(16 pages)**

Extra readings:

Additional journal articles and websites dedicated to the political art of the Arab Spring will be mentioned during the online seminar.