POLITICS OF MIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND DIASPORAS
IN THE MIDDLE EAST

University of Birmingham
Department of Political Science & International Studies
POLS 353

COURSE CONVENOR: Dr. Gerasimos Tsourapas
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OFFICE HOURS: Mondays, 4pm to 5pm & Tuesdays, 9am to 10am (and by appointment)
OFFICE LOCATION: 336 Muirhead Tower

COURSE AIMS & OBJECTIVES
This course offers students the opportunity to engage with a range of debates surrounding the politics of population mobility in a variety of manifestations prevalent across Middle Eastern states. It aims to understand and compare migratory movements in a cross-disciplinary context — historical, socio-economic, and political — while also incorporating topic-specific literatures from international relations, comparative politics, political economy, as well as migration and diaspora studies. The course examines the broader Middle East as a migration subsystem, and traces its development from the end of World War I until today. This approach analyses the origins, workings, and consequences of migration interdependence across sending, transit, and host states located in the Middle East and North Africa. It exposes students to methodologically-rigorous research of both qualitative and quantitative nature on a number of key issues: the determinants of labour emigration; national and transnational citizenship; the drivers of immigration policy; the interplay between migration and security, as well as between security and development; the impact of diaspora politics on the Arab Spring and the Eurozone crisis; policies of cooperation and coercion across the Mediterranean; and the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis.

TEACHING
Lecture: There will be one lecture per week for the entire class, on Tuesdays (11am-noon) at Gisbert Kapp N224. The lecture will present the themes listed below, outlining key concepts and arguments. Students are expected to attend all lectures.

Seminars: Seminars will take place on Tuesdays (3pm–4pm & 4pm–5pm) at Learning Centre UG06. Students are expected to attend all seminars, do the required readings, and be prepared to discuss each week’s questions.

COURSE ASSESSMENT
- All students are required to produce two essays (3,000 words each), to be submitted on Friday, 15 December 2017 and Monday, 23 April 2018. The essays are worth 35% and 50% of the final grade, respectively. Essay topics will be distributed in Week 6. There will be a lecture dedicated to questions of writing an essay on Middle East migration politics, at the end of Term 1.

- All students are required to give a presentation (8-10 minutes long) at the last three weeks of Term 2. Students (alone or in pairs) will choose one country currently hosting Syrian refugees, and will be asked to track relevant news over the academic year and present their findings. Host countries will be allocated on the first seminar of Term 2 (Tuesday, 9 January 2017).
INTRODUCTORY READINGS & BOOK COMPANIONS

ON THE POLITICS OF CROSS-BORDER POPULATION MOBILITY


ON THE POLITICS & POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE MIDDLE EAST


ON MIGRATION, DIASPORA & REFUGEE POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST


- Individual migration policy profiles and fact sheets for Middle East states available at the European University Institute’s [website](#).

**VISUAL WORK ON MIGRATION, DIASPORA & REFUGEE POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**


Evelyn, Directed by Reut Vraneski, DVD (The Hebrew Reali School, 2010), 13 minutes.

Exodus: Our Journey to Europe, DVD (BBC, 2015), 3 60-minute episodes.

Persepolis, Directed by Marjane Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud, DVD (Optimum Home Entertainment, 2008), 91 minutes.

Sea Prayer, Created by Khaled Hosseini (Online, 2015), 7 minutes.

Sir Alfred of Charles de Gaulle Airport, Directed by Hamid Rahmanian and Melissa Hibbard, DVD (Seattle: Arab Film Distribution, 2008), 29 minutes.

They Were Promised The Sea, Directed by Kathy Wazana, DVD (BiCom Productions, 2013), 74 minutes.
Readings marked with (*) are mandatory. Please use the recommended readings to prepare for, and enhance, your seminar discussions.

TERM 1

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION – HOW TO STUDY MOBILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

Discussion Questions
(Q1) How do social sciences approach the study of migration?
(Q2) Identify the historical background of contemporary migrations in the Middle East.


WEEK 2: THE MIDDLE EAST AS A REGIONAL MIGRATION SUB-SYSTEM

Discussion Questions
(Q1) What do migration systems and subsystems consist of?
(Q2) What are the challenges in examining the Middle East as a migration subsystem?


WEEK 3: MIGRATION & NATION-BUILDING PROCESSES IN THE POST-WW1 ERA

Discussion Questions
(Q1) How is migration linked to nation-building processes in the Middle East?
(Q2) Can we link recent refugee flows in the region (Afghanistan; Iraq; Syria) to Zolberg’s argument about the formation of new states?

WEEK 4: CITIZENSHIP, NATIONAL NARRATIVES, AND MIDDLE EAST MOBILITY

Discussion Questions
(Q1) In your opinion, what particular definition of ‘citizenship’ would be most useful with regard to the Arab Gulf Monarchies?
(Q2) Do Jordan and Lebanon approach emigration in different ways through national narratives? Why?


WEEK 5: A LIBERAL PARADOX - EUROPEAN POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION AND THE MIGRATION-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS

Discussion Questions
(Q1) What is meant by ‘development,’ and what do win-win-win strategies involve?
(Q2) How can the ‘liberal paradox’ or the ‘migration-development nexus’ help us understand the politics of Turkish migration to Western Europe?


WEEK 6: OIL-POLITICS AND MIGRATION I: ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING, MIGRATION, AND CITIZENSHIP IN POST-1973 EUROPE

Discussion Questions
(Q1) “We asked for workers. We got people instead,” Max Frisch once stated. What does he mean, and how is the concept of ‘security’ useful in understanding this issue, if at all?
(Q2) What are the ways through which the securitisation of migration has taken place in the European context?


WEEK 7: OIL-POLITICS AND MIGRATION II:
LABOUR RECRUITMENT IN OIL-PRODUCING STATES OF THE ARAB WORLD

Discussion Questions
(Q1) Did oil-producing states of the Arab world approach immigration policy in a similar or different manner than Western European states? Why?
(Q2) To what extent does the citizen/non-citizen binary allow us to understand the domestic politics of Arab Gulf states?

* HALLIDAY, FRED. Labor Migration in the Middle East. Middle East Research and Information Project Report.


WEEK 8: AN ILLIBERAL PARADOX: EMIGRATION, DEMOCRATISATION, AND THE POLITICS OF EXIT IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Discussion Questions
(Q1) Does Hirschman’s ‘exit’ versus ‘voice’ framework allow us to understand emigration politics in the Middle East, and how?
(Q2) Discuss the key aspects of Tunisian and Moroccan emigration policies.


WEEK 9: THE RISE OF DIASPORAS AND TRANSNATIONAL IDENTITY POLITICS IN THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST

Discussion Questions

(Q1) What are the defining characteristics of a ‘diaspora’ community?

(Q2) In the case of Palestine, does the concept of a ‘diaspora’ allow us to understand transnational politics better? Why, or why not?


* Persepolis, Directed by Marjane Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud, DVD (Optimum Home Entertainment, 2008), 91 minutes.


WEEK 10: WORKSHOP ON RESEARCHING & WRITING ON MIGRATION POLITICS

Discussion Questions
No Discussion Questions this week – seminars to focus on essay-writing
TERM 2

WEEK 1: PROBLEMATISING THE STATE IN MIDDLE EAST MIGRATION POLITICS

Discussion Questions
(Q1) Identify the factors that have undermined the role of the state in managing cross-border mobility?
(Q2) Is the state still relevant in understanding Middle East migration politics, and why?


WEEK 2: STATE-DIASPORA RELATIONS AND LONG-DISTANCE CITIZENSHIP

Discussion Questions
(Q1) Discuss the different ways states engage with their migrant and diaspora populations abroad.
(Q2) Does the concept of long-distance citizenship apply to the Middle East?


**WEEK 3: NEW MIGRATION STATES: LIBYA, TURKEY, AND THE RISE OF LINKAGE POLITICS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN**

**Discussion Questions**

(Q1) Discuss how the Mediterranean migration subsystem has evolved in the post-1981 era.

(Q2) How does population mobility feature in linkage diplomacy across the Mediterranean?


WEEK 4: MIGRATION, DIASPORAS, AND THE ARAB SPRING

Discussion Questions
(Q1) Identify the role of diasporas at times of economic and political crisis.
(Q2) What is the extent of diasporic involvement in the events of the Arab Spring?


**WEEK 5: SYRIA, REFUGEES & NARRATIVES OF “MIGRATION CRISES”**

*Discussion Questions*
(Q1) Discuss major forced migration flows across the Mediterranean before 2011.
(Q2) In what ways does the Syrian case differ from previous regional refugee movements?


* HAMILTON, OMAAR ROBERT. (2017). *Refugee Stasis – Hamilton*. Available at: https://nplusonemag.com/online-only/online-only/refugee-stasis/


Week 6: Migration and Coercion in the Middle East

Discussion Questions

(Q1) What forms of interstate coercion exist in Middle East migration management?

(Q2) How successful is the use of population mobility in states’ coercive strategies? Why?


**WEEK 7: MIGRATION & COOPERATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

**Discussion Questions**
(Q1) What are the factors that impede Middle East attempts at cooperation on migration flows?
(Q2) Identify and elaborate upon successful examples of regional governance of migration.


WEEK 8: THE INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE REGIME

Discussion Questions
No Discussion Questions – Student Presentations (1)


WEEK 9: GUEST LECTURE – THE CHALLENGES OF SYRIAN REFUGEES’ INTEGRATION IN EUROPE

Discussion Questions
No Discussion Questions – Student Presentations (2)

WEEK 10: WRAPPING UP THE POLITICS OF MIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND DIASPORAS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Discussion Questions
No Discussion Questions – Student Presentations (3)


