
TOPICS: POLITICS OF MODERN MIDDLE EASTERN ART in Fall 2020 (PO2091B)

Course Code	PO2091B	Professor(s)	Sultan Al Qassemi
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	N/A
Class Schedule	MR: 14:30-16:05 in C-505 R: 16:20-17:55 in V-1	Office Hours	By appointment on Zoom
Credits	4	Email	salqassemi@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2020	Office Tel. Ext.	N/A

Course Description

In this course, we shall survey the political underpinnings of Arab art in the 20th century, and the socio-political conditions that shaped cultural production in the region. Whether it is under the Baathist regimes of Syria and Iraq or under Egypt's pan-Arabism championed by Gamal Abdel Nasser, painting and sculpture in addition to film and performance have been employed by various governments as a tool of soft power to propagate their policies to the public not only in their respective states but throughout the region and beyond. Despite this widespread government patronage of the arts, many artists have chosen to challenge their authorities through subversive movements and practices, which we will address at different moments in the semester. This course, through its focus on creative practices and strategic use of the arts, will attempt to shed light on an often neglected dimension of the modern history of the Arab World and other parts of the Middle East.

Some of the topics the class will address are:

- Overview of how pre-modern and modern art has been exploited by Arab governments and colonial regimes.
- Artists' reactions, artistic resistance and subversion of power & the post-colonial era.
- Discussion on Middle Eastern art in non-Arab Countries: Iran, Turkey, and Israel.
- Contemporary context: 2000 and beyond. (Arab Spring, destruction of heritage in conflict zones, establishment of new art institutions).

Course Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to identify theory and use it to recognize and compare policies between European states (assessed via classroom participation and discussion)

Students will be able to formulate arguments within policy areas (assessed via two written assignments)

Students will be able to summarize complex arguments in their own words, and discuss their significance (assessed via blackboard assignments and the final exam)

General Education

Course Outline

CLASS 1 - Introduction/Context

CLASS 2 - Introduction to Modern Arab Art; Art in the service of Nation Building

CLASS 3 - Authoritarian Art in the Arab World

CLASS 4 - Art as a Subversion of Power

CLASS 5 - Art and the Politics of Gender

CLASS 6 - Art Production in the Wider Middle East

CLASS 7 - US Government, Corporate and NGO Cultural Policy in the Middle East

CLASS 8 - Art in the Age of Uprisings

CLASS 9 - The Old versus the New: Art Institutions in the Arab World

CLASS 10 - Film and Sound

CLASS 11 - Destruction of Cultural Heritage in the Present Day

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled

classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

Class participation: 25% of the course grade.

Midterm Assignment: 25% of the course grade.

One Oral Presentation: 25% of the course grade.

Final Paper: 25% of the course grade.

Other
