

January 18, 2018; subject to change

Political Mayhem: Varieties of Political Violence in the Middle East

Department of Politics
University of Virginia

PLCP 4500

M 3:30-6:00 p.m., New Cabell 132

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The Islamic State's swift rise to power a few years ago was but one example of a broad phenomenon of turmoil that has shaken the Middle East since the end of the Second World War. After an introduction to the forms that political violence can take from a theoretical perspective, we turn to studying prominent varieties of violence in the region. We focus in the first half of the course on civil wars, studying features of them that also have relevance to other forms of violence: the recruitment and participation of fighters, the effects of armed groups' organizational structure, and military and political competition. In the second half of the course, we examine anti-colonial struggles for national liberation, counterinsurgency campaigns, the possibility of quagmire, ethnic cleansing and genocide, coups, popular mobilization and revolution, and the phenomenon of violent radical Islamist movements.

The course introduces students to current social science research on varieties of political violence, while examining this research in light of a deeper understanding of episodes of each variety of violence drawn from the Middle East. Readings for most weeks consist of theoretical and empirical scholarship on the type of violence in question, followed by material covering specific cases in the region. Students will be asked to consider, in class discussion and written assignments, the extent to which theory and advanced empirical analysis of violence inform our understanding of events, on the one hand, and the extent to which careful, detailed accounts of event helps to deepen our general understanding of violence, on the other hand.

The course culminates in a 20 pp. research paper assignment. Through the readings, discussion, and assignments over the course of the semester, students will develop and refine analytical skills necessary for conducting original research.

Requirements

Grades will be determined on the basis of:

1. In-class participation (15%). Attendance at every class meeting, for the full length of the class, is required and expected. Class participation is not an attendance grade, but instead reflects active

participation during class, including asking questions and grappling with arguments, concepts and evidence. Active participation also means completing the required reading prior to the class meeting.

The rubric for participation scores for each class session is as follows: 2 points for participation that is active and thoughtful (i.e., makes an original comment or ask a pertinent question about the course material); 1 point for brief participation (i.e., answers a short question); 0 points for no participation or if absent. In order to receive full credit for participation, students need to earn at least 24 points, which is the equivalent of earning 2 participation points approximately every other class session. If you were unable to participate in the discussion and would like to pose a question or make a comment, please do so within 24 hours of the end of the class in the “Discussions” section of the Collab website; comments and questions posted there within the specified time frame will be counted in the calculation of your class participation grade as well. If you are not present in class, you are unable participate and, as a result, will receive no participation credit for that class. I will drop your two lowest class participation grades in the calculation of your final grade in the course.

2. Critical review paper and presentation (together 30%). One 10 minute oral presentation based on a 4 pp. critical review paper on one of the assigned readings for weeks 3-15.
3. Research proposal for the final paper (15%). 7-10 pp. **Due by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 2.** The assignment and instructions for the proposal and the final paper will be distributed by February 2 (one month in advance).
4. Final research paper (40%). 20 pp. **Due by 5 p.m. on Monday, May 14.**

Hand in papers by uploading them to the File Drop folder on the Collab website. Papers must be written in a 12 pt font, double-spaced, with margins of no more than 1.25 inches on the sides and no more than 1 inch on the top and bottom.

Reading

Each week of the course schedule lists required reading. The following books, on order at the UVa bookstore, are required (denoted with an asterisk) or recommended for the course. All other readings are posted in an e-reserve on the class’s Collab website under “Resources.”

Ahmad, Aisha. 2017. *Jihad & Co.: Black Markets and Islamist Power*. New York: Oxford University Press. **CL**

Akçam, Taner. 2012. *The Young Turks’ Crime against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. **CL**, [Ebrary](#)

- * Baczko, Adam, Gilles Dorronsoro, and Arthur Quesnay. 2018. *Civil War in Syria: Mobilization and Competing Social Orders*. New York: Cambridge University Press. [Ebrary](#)
- * Bulutgil, Zeynep. 2016. *The Roots of Ethnic Cleansing in Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hanf, Theodor. 2014 [1993]. *Coexistence in Wartime Lebanon: Decline of a State and Rise of a Nation*. Trans. John Richardson. London: I.B. Tauris. **CL**
- Hegghammer, Thomas. 2010. *Jihad in Saudi Arabia: Violence and Pan-Islamism since 1979*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- * Horne, Alistair. 2011 [1977]. *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954-1962*. New York: NYRB Classics. **CL**
- * Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. **CL**
- * Kurzman, Charles. 2004. *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. **CL**
- Lackner, Helen. 2017. *Yemen in Crisis: Autocracy, Neo-Liberalism and the Disintegration of a State*. London: Saqi Books.
- Morris, Benny. *The Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*. New York: Cambridge University Press. **CL**, [Ebrary](#)
- Phillips, Christopher. 2016. *The Battle for Syria: International Rivalry in the New Middle East*. New Haven: Yale University Press. **CL**, [Ebrary](#)
- * Takriti, Abdel Razzaq. 2016 [2013]. *Monsoon Revolution: Republicans, Sultans, and Empires in Oman, 1975-1976*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ulus, Özgür Mutlu. 2010. *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution, and Kemalism*. London: I.B. Tauris. **CL**
- * Warrick, Joby. 2016. *Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS*. New York: Anchor Books. **CL**

* = required

CL = on course reserve at Clemons Library

Ebrary = available electronically, UVa Library

Additional Resources

Histories of the Region. Students with less background knowledge about the region may find it useful to consult the following general sources:

- Cleveland, William L. and Martin Bunton. 2013. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. 5th ed. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Hourani, Albert. 1991. *A History of the Arab Peoples*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

News sources (A=Arabic, F=Farsi, H=Hebrew, K=Kurdish, T=Turkish; you may want to take advantage of the translation function of a browser like Chrome to become familiar with the foreign language sites or to compare the English-language version of a site to the original)

Al-Hayat: <http://www.alhayat.com> (A)

Al-Jazeera: <http://www.aljazeera.net> (A) or <http://www.aljazeera.com>

BBC Farsi: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian> (F)

Milliyet: <http://www.milliyet.com.tr> (T)

Sabah: <http://www.sabah.com.tr> (T) or <http://english.sabah.com.tr>

Ha'aretz: <http://www.haaretz.co.il> (H) or <http://www.haaretz.com>

Rûdaw: <http://rudaw.net/kurmanci> (K), <http://rudaw.net/sorani> (K), or <http://rudaw.net/english>

BBC News: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/middleeast>

The New York Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/middleeast/index.html>

The Economist: <http://www.economist.com/world/middle-east-africa>

Foreign Policy's The Middle East Channel: <http://mideastafrica.foreignpolicy.com>

Expectations and Course Policies

Attendance, Reading, and Participation

This course requires that you manage your time well, keep track of the assigned readings and, most importantly, attend and participate actively in every class session. The course schedule lists required readings, which must be completed before the date listed. Plan your schedule around the class meeting, including avoidable conflicts, such as doctor's appointments or interviews. There are no "excused absences" per se; however, as noted above, your lowest two participation grades will be dropped. If you will be absent for a total of two full weeks or more over the course of the semester due to non-emergency and/or avoidable reasons (including vacations, travel or training), you may be ineligible to take this course. Please let me know in the first week of the course if you have planned an extended absence.

Late/missed assignments

Deadlines listed in the syllabus are firm, in the interest of fairness to all students. Extensions for assignments and/or makeup exams will not be granted except in cases of serious illness, family emergency or religious observance (see below). Papers will lose one third of a letter grade for each 24 hours or portion thereof that they are handed in late (i.e. an A- becomes a B+, etc.).

Academic integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the University's honor code: <http://honor.virginia.edu/>: If at any point during the semester you are unsure about whether you are in compliance with it, contact me as soon as possible, i.e. before you begin an assignment or while you are working on it, rather than when or after you hand it in.

Plagiarism and cheating are unacceptable and will be pursued to the full extent of the University's policies. Providing proper citations in your writing is necessary and expected. If you have any questions about what constitutes a correct citation, it is your responsibility to seek guidance prior to submitting the assignment. *In all writing, you must put any words that are not your own between quotation marks.* You must also attribute any ideas that are not your own to the source from which you derived them. For further information on academic integrity at UVA, please consult <https://honor.virginia.edu/plagiarism-supplement>.

Grading

Students are encouraged to consult with me during office hours about questions on an assignment before handing it in. In the event of a low grade on an assignment, you will not be allowed to rewrite or to resubmit the assignment for an improved grade except in rare – and extraordinary – circumstances. If you have faced an extraordinary circumstance that resulted in a lower grade on an assignment and would like the opportunity to resubmit that assignment, you must contact me within one week of receiving your assignment grade. If you believe that there was an error in the calculation of a grade, you may submit a re-grading request. All such requests must be submitted to me in writing, along with a memo explaining where you believe an error was made. If you elect to have an assignment re-graded, please be aware that this may result in a lower final grade on the assignment.

Religious observance

Students may ask for reasonable and timely accommodations for religious observances. Please review the syllabus closely to determine if religious obligations will present scheduling conflicts with any of the assignments. Students must inform me of any such conflicts within the first two weeks of the semester.

Accommodations

In compliance with University policy, I will provide appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Please provide your accommodations paperwork to me as soon as you have it available, within the first two weeks of the semester. For further information, please consult the [Student Disability Access Center](#).

Laptops and other electronic devices

Surfing the web, checking your email or social media, and sending messages during class distract you and your fellow students. If you choose to take notes on your computer during class, please disconnect your wireless access. Please also refrain from using cell phones and other mobile devices except in case of emergency. Violations of this policy may result in a reduction in your class participation grade or in a ban of laptop use in class. Note that [research](#) has found that students absorb class material better when taking notes by hand than when using a computer.

Communication

Email should generally be used for brief questions only. So that I'm sure to receive your email, write the course number in brackets at the beginning of the subject line of your message, i.e. [PLCP 4500]. I will respond to emails within 24 hours. Should you need to contact me regarding an urgent matter, please make a note of this in the subject line. In-person discussion is far preferable to email, so you should plan to attend office hours for any questions relating to course content or assignments (see below).

Office hours

I encourage you to come to my office hours with any questions or comments. I hold weekly office hours on Tuesdays from 4:00-6:00 p.m. You may stop by during this time without an appointment, but I encourage you to schedule one in advance online, at <https://calendly.com/schulhofer-wohl/15min>. Please cancel your reserved time if you cannot come so that it can be made available to another student.

Writing in this course

Being able to write effectively is essential to your success in this course and to your future career. For all course assignments, you should avail yourself of the resources of UVa's [Writing Center](#) to receive help with and feedback on your writing. I also recommend taking a look at the Guidelines for Writing, which I've posted to the class Collab website, [two short lectures on writing and research](#) that Professor Deborah Boucoyannis and I gave in spring 2014, and the websites of the Writing Programs at the [University of Chicago](#) and [Dartmouth College](#).

Extra credit

Many events relevant to this course will take place over the course of the semester, both in the Department of Politics and on Grounds. To encourage you to attend, you can earn one point on your final course grade for attending a talk or workshop and emailing me a 250-word reaction/critique of the speaker's talk. You may earn up to three points total by submitting these essays. If you intend to take advantage of this opportunity, please send all reactions no later than 12 p.m. on Monday, April 30.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Jan. 22 (Week 1): Introduction and overview of the course

What is political violence? How can we categorize and define the different forms that it takes?
What varieties of political violence has the Middle East seen from 1945 until the present?

O'Brien, Tim. "How to Tell a True War Story." In *The Things They Carried*.

Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Ch. 1, "Concepts."

Tilly, Charles. 2003. *The Politics of Collective Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Chapter 1, "Varieties of Violence," pp.1-25.

Mamdani, Mahmood. 2007. "The Politics of Naming: Genocide, Civil War, and Insurgency."
London Review of Books 29(5), March 8.

Jan. 29 (Week 2): Civil Wars 1 – Concepts

What is civil war? How do the forms of civil war (e.g. insurgencies, coups, splits in the military,
urban, rural) differ?

Armitage, David. 2017. *Civil Wars: A History in Ideas*. New York: Knopf. Introduction,
"Confronting Civil War," pp.3-30.

Sambanis, Nicholas. 2004. "What is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an
Operational Definition." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48(6): 814-858.

Tilly, Charles. 2003. *The Politics of Collective Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
"Mechanisms, Processes and Explanations," pp.20-2; "Violent Rituals", pp.81- 101.

Mueller, John. 2000. "The Banality of 'Ethnic War.'" *International Security* 25(1): 42-70.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2001. "'New' and 'Old' Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?" *World Politics*
54(1): 99-118.

Walter, Barbara F. 2017. "The New New Civil Wars." *Ann Review of Political Science* 20: 469-
86.

Hokayem, Emile. 2013. *Syria's Uprising and the Fracturing of the Levant*. London: IISS.
Introduction and Chs. 1-2.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. and Matthew Adam Kocher. 2007. "Ethnic Cleavages and Irregular War: Iraq
and Vietnam." *Politics & Society* 35(2):183-223.

Feb. 5 (Week 3): Civil Wars 2 – Recruitment & Informal Participation in Armed Groups

Guichaoua, Yvan. 2010. "Process of Violent Political Mobilization: An Overview of
Contemporary Debates and CRISE findings." Centre for Research on Inequality, Human
Security and Ethnicity, Oxford University.

Wood, Elisabeth J. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press. Ch 1, "The Puzzle of Insurgent Collective Action."

Petersen, Roger D. 2001. *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chs. 1-2.

Baczko, Dorronsoro, and Quesnay, *Civil War in Syria*, Introduction, Chs. 2-3 (Ch 1 optional).

Feb. 12 (Week 4): Civil Wars 3 – Armed Force Structures and Consequences

Gutiérrez Sanín, Francisco. 2008. “Telling the Difference: Guerrillas and Paramilitaries in the Colombian War.” *Politics & Society* 36(1):3-34.

Cohen, Dara Kay. 2016. *Rape in Civil War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Introduction and Ch 1.

Sinno, Abdulkader H. 2011. “Armed Groups’ Organizational Structure and Their Strategic Options.” *International Review of the Red Cross* 93(882):311-32.

Staniland, Paul. 2015. “Every Insurgency is Different.” *New York Times*, February 15.

Hoover Green, Amelia. 2016. “The Commander’s Dilemma: Creating and Controlling Armed Group Violence.” *Journal of Peace Research* 53(5):619-32.

Baczko, Dorronsoro, and Quesnay, *Civil War in Syria*, Chs. 4-7.

Feb. 19 (Week 5): Civil Wars 4 – Military Competition

Biddle, Stephen. 2007. “Explaining Military Outcomes.” In Brooks, Risa A. and Elizabeth A. Stanley. *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp.207-227.

Hanf, *Coexistence in Wartime Lebanon*, Chs. 4-5.

Jurdeini, Paul A., McLaurin, R.D., and Price, James M. 1979. “Military Operations in Built Up Areas 1975-78.” U.S. Army Human Engineering Laboratory, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Technical Memorandum 11-79.

Lackner, *Yemen in Crisis*, Ch. 1.

Feb 26 (Week 6): Civil Wars 5 – Political Competition

Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Ch. 11, “Cleavage and Agency.”

Steele, Abbey. 2017. *Democracy and Displacement in Colombia’s Civil War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Selections

Balcells, Laia. 2017. *Rivalry and Revenge: The Politics of Violence during Civil War*. Selections.

LeBas, Adrienne. 2006. “Polarization as Craft: Party Formation and State Violence in Zimbabwe.” *Comparative Politics* 38(4):419-38.

Hage, Ghassan. 1996. “Nationalist Anxiety or the Fear of Losing Your Other.” *Australian Journal of Anthropology* 7(2):121-40.

Khalaf, Samir. 2002. *Civil and Uncivil Violence: A History of the Internationalization of Communal Conflict*. New York: Columbia University Press. Ch. 2, “The Radicalization of Communal Loyalties.”

Baczko, Dorronsoro, and Quesnay, *Civil War in Syria*, Chs. 8-9, 13.

Mar. 5: (Week 7) Spring Break – No Class

Mar. 12 (Week 8): Violent Radical Islamist Movements

Ahmad, *Jihad & Co.*, Introduction and Chs. 1-2.

Hegghammer, *Jihad in Saudi Arabia*, Chs. 1, 4, and 5.

Warrick, *Black Flags*.

Sultany, Nimer. 2015. "[Three Theses on ISIS: The Universal, the Millenarian, and the Philistine.](#)" *The Disorder of Things* Blog. July 31.

Baczko, Dorronsoro, and Qesnay, *Civil War in Syria*, Ch. 10.

Mar. 19 (Week 9): Counterinsurgency Campaigns

Sambanis, Nicholas, Schulhofer-Wohl, Jonah, and Moses Shayo. 2012. "Parochialism as a Central Challenge in Counterinsurgency." *Science* 336(6038): 805-8. **Read supplemental online material first**, then article.

Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Chs. 6-7.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. and Matthew Adam Kocher. 2009. "The Dynamics of Violence in Vietnam: Analysis of the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES)." *J. of Peace Research* 46(3):335-55.

Downes, Alexander B. 2007. "Draining the Sea by Filling the Graves: Investigating the Effectiveness of Indiscriminate Violence as a Counterinsurgency Strategy." *Civil Wars* 9(4):420-44.

Lyall, Jason. 2009. "Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks? Evidence from Chechnya." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53(3): 331-362.

Takriti, *Monsoon Revolution*.

Mar. 26 (Week 10): Quagmire

Schulhofer-Wohl, Jonah. *Quagmire in Civil Wars*. Book ms, University of Virginia. Chs 1-4.

Phillips, *The Battle for Syria*. Introduction, Chs 1, 5-7, Conclusion

Apr. 2 (Week 11): Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide

Kesevan, Mukul. 2018. "[Murderous Majorities](#)." *New York Review of Books*, January 18.

Bulutgil, *The Roots of Ethnic Cleansing in Europe*.

Semelin, Jacques. 2001. "In Consideration of Massacres." *Journal of Genocide Research* 3(3):377-389.

Akçam, Taner. 2012. *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity*. Chs 5-6 (Ch. 7 optional but recommended). [Ebrary](#)

Morris, *The Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*. Introduction, Ch. 1, Conclusion. [Ebrary](#)

Ben-Ze'ev, Efrat. 2002. "The Palestinian Village of Ijzim during the 1948 War: Forming an Anthropological History through Villagers' Accounts and Army Documents." *History and Anthropology* 13(1):13-30.

Apr. 9 (Week 12): Working Session – Research for Final Papers

Apr. 16 (Week 13): Coups

- Tullock, Gordon. 2005. *The Social Dilemma: Of Autocracy, Revolution, Coup d'Etat, and War*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund. "Theory of the Coup" and "Coups and Their Prevention."
- Quinlivan, James T. 1999. "Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East." *International Security* 24(2):131-65.
- Belkin, Aaron and Evan Schofer. 2003. "Toward a Structural Understanding of Coup Risk." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 47(5):594-620.
- Albrecht, Holger. 2014. "The Myth of Coup-Proofing: Risk and Instances of Military Coups d'État in the Middle East and North Africa, 1950-2013." *Armed Forces and Society*
- Haddad, George M. 1971. *Revolutions and Military Rule in the Middle East*. Vols. 2 and 3. New York: Robert Speller and Sons. Vol. 2, Ch. 3 (on Syria). (optional: Vol. 3, Ch. 1 [on Egypt] and Vol. 2, Ch. 2 [on Iraq]).
- Ulus, Özgür Mutlu. 2010. *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution, and Kemalism*. London: I.B. Tauris. Chs. 2 and 6, pp.10-19, 92-131; and pp.179-185.

Apr. 23 (Week 14): Popular Mobilization and Revolution

- Kuran, Timur. 1989. "Sparks and Prairie Fires." *Public Choice* 61(1): 41-74.
- Keddie, Nikki R. 1995. "Can Revolutions be Predicted?" In Keddie, ed. *Iran and the Muslim World: Revolution and Resistance*. New York: New York University Press, pp.13-33.
- Brumberg, Daniel. 2014. "Theories of Transition." In Lynch, Marc, ed. *The Arab Uprisings Explained: New Contentious Politics in the Middle East*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp.29-54.
- Donker, Teije Hidde. 2018. "Beyond Syria: Civil Society in Failed Episodes of Democratization." In Donatella della Porta, Teiji Hidde Donker, Bogumila Hall, Emin Poljarevic and Daniel P. Ritter. *Social Movements and Civil War*. London: Routledge.
- Kurzman, *Unthinkable Revolution*.
- Jervis, Robert. 2010. *Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Ch. 2; pp.33-108; and pp.109-22.

Apr. 30 (Week 15): Colonialism, Settler Colonialism, and Struggles for National Liberation

- Darden, Keith and Harris Mylonas. 2012. "The Promethean Dilemma; Third-Party State-Building in Occupied Territories." *Ethnopolitics* 11(1):85-93.
- Kocher, Matthew Adam, Adria Lawrence, and Nuno P. Monteiro. 2013. "The Rabbit in the Hat: Nationalism and Resistance to Foreign Occupation." Working paper, Yale University, August 20.
- Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*.