



# History and Politics of Syria and Lebanon

MIDE 3880-002

Monday | 6:00PM-9:00PM

3 credits

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Ali El Hussein

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Middle East as a socio-economic region has been a hotbed of religious, sectarian, and confessional and ethnic conflict. This course by focusing on three countries, also known as Levant countries, will explore the following four questions: what are the historical and cultural origins of these conflicts? How did the colonial legacy shape these conflicts? How did the nation-building (Syrian and Lebanese) politicized sub-national (tribal, confessional and ethnic) and subra-national (pan-Arabic and pan-Islamic) identities? What are the social and economic conditions under which these identities are mobilized? By exploring these critical questions, the course seeks to provide a critical understanding of politics and culture of the Levant region. The course combines theoretical approaches to big questions with empirical knowledge of events and developments in these three countries. The key topics include: pre-Islamic history, geo-economic conditions, the legacy of the Umayyad, Abbasid and the Ottoman Empires, the process of colonization of the region in the 19th century, the nation-state formation, confessional and ethnic violence, economic development and underdevelopment and the persistence of the authoritarian regimes.

\*No prerequisites are required and the course is suitable for students with all levels of knowledge on the region.