History 161: Middle East II  
Jul 6 to Aug 7, 2020  
Monday-Thursday, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
Intercultural Center 213

Instructor: Benan Grams  
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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:  
The course outlines the factors that have shaped the political and social features of the modern Middle East from 1500 to the present. Its geographic scope comprises the central provinces and territories of the former Ottoman and Safavid empires: Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, and the Gulf states of the Arabian Peninsula. The syllabus emphasizes three analytical themes: first, the historical evolution of “Middle Eastern” polities from dynastic and religious empires in the 16th century to modern "nation-states" in the 20th; second, the impact of industrial capitalism and European imperial expansion on local societies and their modes of production; and third, the sociocultural and ideological dimensions of these large-scale transformations, specifically the rise of mass ideologies of liberation and development (nationalism, socialism, rights movements, political Islam), and the emergence of structural and social imbalances (economic polarization, cultural/ethnic conflicts, demographic growth, urbanization). This class will primarily examine the history of the region across the 19th-20th centuries with an emphasis on the analysis of primary sources and relevant academic scholarship. The course aims to enable students to engage critically with primary and secondary sources on the history of the region, to become familiar with the three of the most common historical categories of analysis (class, gender, and race), and to understand the impacts of two different forms of state organization (empire and nation) on the region in the modern period.

Course readings:  
Students should have access to copies of the following textbooks. They are available for rental or purchase in the bookstore and elsewhere. All additional literature will be posted on the course’s Canvas page.


Learning Goals:
By the end of the course, students will have:
1. Gained a broad and deep understanding of the modern history of the Middle East, contextualized within global trends.
2. Learned to engage with a broad variety of perspectives and sources, including a variety of genres and types of media, both print and visual: academic works such as peer-reviewed journal articles, memoir, journalism, official governmental and non-governmental reports, speeches, poetry, and literature. In other words, students will be able to identify and distinguish between different types of primary and secondary sources, noting their respective strengths and weaknesses.
3. Honed critical thinking and skills of analysis, interpretation, and communication (both written and verbal). Students should be able to articulate their ideas verbally and in writing, in both cases supported with the strongest evidence possible, properly cited.
4. Improved their ability to think critically about historical narratives; the work, methods, and concepts of other historians; and the relationship between past and present.

Assignments:
• Midterm: Tuesday July 21 [25 percent]
• Final: Thursday, August 6 [25 percent]
• Paper (8 pages) –
  o Draft Due Friday, July 26 by 5PM
  o Final Copy Due Monday August 12th by 5PM [25 percent: draft 10 percent; revision 15 percent]
• Participation: in-class contributions, discussion questions, pop quizzes [25 percent]

In-class student participation will drive the course and determine its success. Students must read carefully to position themselves to participate effectively. Keep in mind that quality of participation trumps quantity. Brief reading quizzes will help motivate careful preparation for class and will factor into the participation grade. Students will post four discussion questions about the readings to Canvas by noon before each class session.

Policies:
Each student has one automatically excused absence. Also, I will omit the participation grade from one class period. Everyone has a bad day. After that, attendance and participation will be graded fully. If a student has a valid excuse, they will be required to post discussion questions and a brief two-paragraph summary of the readings to Canvas by noon before the class they will miss.
Do NOT TO USE ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLASS unless asked to do so as part of a specific activity.

Non-discrimination clause:
In this class, you have the right to not be discriminated against for any reason including, but not limited to: race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious background, or political beliefs. This may be obvious but is nevertheless worth reiterating because students sometimes feel constrained by the perception that their views differ from their peers or the instructor. Nobody
should hesitate to share his or her opinion in the seminar out of fear of discrimination. Within the bounds of respectful discourse, we encourage students to express themselves without reserve.

*Note: the syllabus is subject to change with reasonable notice.*

Week One: What is the Middle East

**Monday, July 06: Locating the Modern Middle East**
- Abbas Amanat, “Is there a Middle East?” pp. 1-7
- Yilmaz, “The Eastern Question and the Ottoman Empire” pp. 11-35

**Tuesday July 07: Reading Primary Sources in the History of the MENA**
- Khater: 1-9
- Gelvin” 1-31
- Rashid Khalidi, “The Middle East as Framework of Analysis” 74-80
- Adelson, “British and the US Use and Misuse of the Term “Middle East”” pp36-55
- Nick Danforth, “How the Middle East was invented.”
  [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/05/19/the-modern-middle-east-is-actually-only-100-years-old/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/05/19/the-modern-middle-east-is-actually-only-100-years-old/)

**Wednesday July 08: Economy, Trade, and European Imperialism**
- Galvin: 69-106, 44-58, and 166-174

**Thursday July 09: Discussion**
- Khater: 34-57
- ELDEM, EDHEM. “Ottoman Financial Integration with Europe: Foreign Loans, the Ottoman Bank and the Ottoman Public Debt.” *European Review* 13, no. 3 (2005): 431–45

Week two: Ottoman Rule in nineteenth century and WWI

**Monday July 13: Modernity and Modernization**
- Provence: 9-56
- Galvin: 32-44
- Khater: 10-31

**Tuesday July 14: Modernity in Science**
- Watch documentary film: Arab Political Thought 1870-1970
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMQxZlXmb1c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMQxZlXmb1c)
**Wednesday July 15: New Binary, Modernity vs. Tradition**

**Thursday July 16: WWI and the End of the Ottoman Empire**
- Watch documentary “1913 Seeds of Conflict”
- Provence: 56-84

**Week Three: Post World War I and Midterm**

**Monday July 20: Post WWI and the struggle for self-rule**
Provence: 84-141

**Tuesday July 21: Midterm**

**Wednesday July 22 & Thursday July 23 Research days**
(no class)

**Week Four: Colonialism, Nationalism, Independence and Post-colonial Arab States**

**Monday July 27: Colonialism and Ideas of Nationalism**
- Galvin: 189-219

**Tuesday July 28: Ideas of Nationalism and the Rise of Israel-Palestinian Conflict**
- Watch *The Band*
- Gelvin: 220-256
- Khater: 142-190

**Wednesday July 29: Post-independence State and the Cold War**
- Gelvin: 259-316
- Watch film “The Battle of Algiers”, directed by Gillo Pontecorvo, 1967, available on Canvas under the Sharestream tab with English subtitles

**Thursday July 30: Gendered Nationalism**

**Week Five: Resistance and Arab Uprising**

**Monday August 03: Islamic Revolutions and Islamism**
• Galvin: 317-358
• Khater: 266-300

**Tuesday August 04: Subaltern Groups**
• Watch “*Yacoubian Building*”
• Khater: 307-342

**Wednesday August 05: Wrapping up the course Review for final exam**

**Thursday August 06: Final exam**