

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
Bg506@georgetown.edu
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.

Gelvin, James L. *The Modern Middle East: A History*. Fourth edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Provence, Michael. *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017

Khater, Akram Fouad. *Sources in the History of the Modern Middle East*. Second edition. Boston, MA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2011.

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) –
 - Draft Due Friday, July 26 by 5PM
 - 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
- Michael Bonine, “Of Maps and Regions: What Is the Geographer’s Middle East?”

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/>

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=IMQxZiXmb1c>
- Bektas, Yakup. "The Sultan's Messenger: Cultural Constructions of Ottoman Telegraphy, 1847-1880." *Technology and Culture* 41, no. 4 (2000): 669-96
- Grant, Jonathan. “The Sword of the Sultan: Ottoman Arms Import, 1854-1914.” *The Journal of Military History* 66, no. 1 (January 1, 2002): 9–36
- Marwa Elshakry, The Gospel of Science and American Evangelism in Late Ottoman Beirut, *Past & Present*, Volume 196, Issue 1, August 2007, Pages 173–214

Wednesday July 15: New Binary, Modernity vs. Tradition

- Thompson, Elizabeth. "Public and Private in Middle Eastern Women's History." *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 1 (2003): 52-69
- Yıldız, Hülya. "Limits of the Imaginable in the Early Turkish Novel: Non-Muslim Prostitutes and Their Ottoman Muslim Clients." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 54, no. 4 (2012): 533-562.

Thursday July 16: WWI and the End of the Ottoman Empire

- Watch documentary "1913 Seeds of Conflict"
- Aksakal, Mustafa. "'Holy War Made in Germany'? Ottoman Origins of the 1914 Jihad." *War in History* 18, no. 2 (April 2011): 184-99
- Provenance: 56-84

Week Three: Post World War I and Midterm

Monday July 20: Post WWI and the struggle for self-rule

Provenance: 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
- White, B. T. (2007) The nation-state form and the emergence of 'minorities' in Syria. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 7(1), pp. 64-85.

Tuesday July 28: Ideas of Nationalism and the Rise of Israel-Palestinian Conflict

- Watch *The Band*
- Galvin: 220-256
- Khater: 142-190

Wednesday July 29: Post-independence State and the Cold War

- Galvin: 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

- Ryzova, Lucie. *The Age of the Efendiyya : Passages to Modernity in National-Colonial Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. pp. 1-37

- Thompson, Elizabeth. *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. pp. 171-211.

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