

History of the Middle East

Ball State University HIST 373 Fall 2015

TTh 1230-1:45pm, BB221

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Office hours: T-Th, 11-12, Burkhardt 212

(Appointment highly recommended, see below)

This course is designed to provide you with an understanding of the social, cultural, intellectual, economic and political processes, which have shaped the Middle East since the rise of Islam in the seventh century, and more particularly, from the early nineteenth century. As such, this course will equip you with the historical background necessary to understand current affairs, such as the Arab-Israeli Conflict, the Arab Spring, radical Islam and terrorism, US interests in the region, the Iran nuclear deal, and human rights in Middle Eastern societies. While you may not become a world expert on the Middle East after one semester, this course will help you carry an informed conversation on these and other issues.

Furthermore, this course will help you further develop certain skills, including research (in primary and secondary materials), writing effectively and concisely, citing sources, and creative and global thinking about historical and contemporary problems.

Course Structure:

This course has an atypical structure. Unlike most courses, I will only provide a general schedule, but no definite list of texts to read. Instead, at the end of each Thursday class you will receive a weekly task and instructions for completing it by next week's classes. Tasks will include information you will need to dig out (based on sources I will ask you to read or such that you will need to find on your own), and questions to answer. Your responses and our discussion in class will then serve as the starting point for the following week's assignment.

Most questions will require you to do some research, in the library, online, or in unconventional places. Through your weekly research tasks, you will face problems and challenges historians often confront in their research. These include reading and analyzing hand-written primary sources, and figuring out the meaning of texts in a language you don't know, or know little of. To successfully complete the weekly tasks for this course, you will need

to think outside the box, be creative, patient, thorough, and willing to test your intellectual abilities to their limits. Some questions will be particularly challenging and/or time consuming.

Rules for completing weekly assignments

Use any source you want to resolve a question/problem. Bear in mind that some sources are “stronger” than others (primary better than secondary, books better than newspaper articles, etc.). In class, you will have to tell us the source for each piece of information you provide, so be as creative and meticulous as you can.

Note on Wikipedia/blogs/other obscure websites: You may use Wikipedia as much as you want as general reference, but you cannot claim it as the source of information you present in class (though you may want to consult the footnotes of Wiki entries for more legitimate sources). The same goes for blogs, or any disreputable websites. For our purpose, websites need to meet one of three conditions: 1. Be by subscription that you can access through the library. 2. Represent major news outlets or journals (see appendix for a partial list). 3. Be a depository of primary sources.

Remember: You may only cite/mention a source you have seen with your own eyes, not one quoted by another. This means that if a Wikipedia article or any website cites a book or an article, you must physically see a copy (or an electronic copy) to be able to claim it as your source in class.

Work alone or with others, whatever works for you. Collaborative work is fine, as long as you do the work too and not only copy from others (avoid the latter by all means – I can easily tell if you know what you’re talking about).

Ask others for help. Your sources will be mostly in written form, but from time to time you will discover that consulting other people – professors, librarians, and friends outside of class – is useful. When that is the case, go for it.

Read. To find a good (i.e. historically accurate *and* creative) answer you will need to read, sometimes a lot. You might be able to get away with little reading at first, but remember that assignments build up on knowledge acquired in previous weeks. What to read and how much of it depends on you, but a certain level of knowledge about the week’s topic will be assumed and expected (see the quizzes part, below).

Dig. I expect more than standard answers. What you discover should inspire you to look further into relevant questions I did not ask explicitly. The answer to these untold questions can sometimes be found in the book(s) sitting on the shelf right next to the one you were just using, or in a link from an article you were reading.

Assignments are **not** due in writing. It is up to you how much information you collect. Please bear in mind, however, that you will need to have enough knowledge to pass the quizzes (again, see below), and that I reserve the right to bump your grade up at the end of the semester if you were particularly active in class discussions and creative in your historical approach.

Quizzes – A short quiz will be given in class at the beginning of every Tuesday or Thursday meeting. The quiz will take 5-10 minutes and will consist of no more than 10 short questions, sometimes less. Questions will cover basic knowledge you should possess if you have completed the weekly task. Some questions will deal with historical events/places/figures; others will test your understanding of an article's main argument.

There will be no makeup quizzes, except in cases that are well documented and after discussing your particular situation with me. You will have to arrive on time every Tuesday to take the quiz (i.e. if the quiz is 10 minutes long and you arrive 5 minutes late, you will have only 5 minutes to take the quiz). Out of 15 quizzes, you are only required to take 12, or you may take all 15 and I will drop your three lowest scores. Please note: There are only 13 tasks, which means there will be 2 random, pop quizzes – always come to class prepared!

Two short essays – In the course of the semester, you will write two short essays.

The first (due 9/29) and the second (due 11/19) will ask for your response in 500-750 words to one of three questions. You will need to write clearly and effectively, and use footnotes to document your sources (footnotes won't count toward the word limit). Both essays will be due electronically by the beginning of class of the dates above. Students wishing to receive preliminary feedback may submit a draft no later than a week before the deadline. I will provide further details on both essays in class.

Meeting – To better assess your performance in this course, I need to know who you are. I always welcome students in my office and want to get to know all of you as soon as possible. Scheduling is easy. Just follow this link: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0d4eafab2caafa7-sign>, pick a time slot that works for you, and show up at the right time. Each initial meeting is 20 minutes long.

You will earn 10 points if you meet with me at least once before 10/1/15.

Attendance – given what you’ve read so far, it is clear that you need to do everything you can to avoid missing class. Things do come up from time to time, and when they do, I kindly ask that you e-mail me *in advance* to let me know about your upcoming absence.

I will be checking attendance randomly via a sign-in sheet. You have 3 grace absences for whatever reason during the semester (absence = your signature does not appear on a sign-in sheet for one of the classes in which students were asked to sign one, even if you were in class that day). Your grade will begin to suffer from the 4th absence, and you will automatically receive an F grade for the course once you have reached 8 absences.

No Final!

If you’ve read thus far and were wondering what about the final exam, I have good news for you. This class does not have a final exam. Your final grade will be determined by your quizzes, the two essays, and will be affected by your attendance and participation to some degree as explained above.

Grading:

The maximum number of points you may earn for this course is 250. Grading will be distributed as follows:

Meeting – 10 pts

Quizzes – 120pts (10 points per quiz for your top 12 out of 15 quizzes)

First essay – 60pts

Second essay – 60pts

Your final grade will be determined by your points balance as of 12/04/2015, according to the following key: 235 points or above: A *** 225-234; A- *** 215-224; B+ *** 205-214; B *** 198-204; B- *** 192-197; C+ *** 180-191; C *** 174-179; C- *** 168-173; D+ *** 150-167; D *** less than 150; F.

Note: You will need to complete the two essays *and* at least 12 out of the 15 quizzes (as enumerated above) to earn a passing grade for this course.

Miscellaneous things you should know:

No cellphones, no texting during class! Phones and related accessories should not be visible during class and must be either turned off or on silent mode. If you have special circumstances that require you to receive a call/text during class, please let me know in advance and make sure to sit by the door so you can exit without disrupting the class.

I allow the use of laptops/ipads etc. in class, but I ask you to refrain from using them for any purpose but taking notes or looking up a name/place mentioned in class online. This means no facebook/twitter/youtube etc. As with cellphones, please keep them silent.

Also:

1. I care a lot about how you write. In fact, how you write is more important to me than what you say. I have a website dedicated to improving college students' writing skills (<http://writingmaster.net>). The website has all the information you may need on grammar, style, punctuation, and citing sources. When grading your take-home exams, I will assume you are familiar with the rules described on this website. If you use facebook, I suggest you "like" this site's page (<http://facebook.com/writingm>) and follow it to receive occasional writing and academic tips. If you find it useful, feel free to spread the word and share this resource with your friends. It is free to use.

In addition, you might want to seek the help of the writing center. The Writing Center is a community of Ball State students and faculty who value writing. You may go there to collaborate with one of the center's trained peer tutors on any project for any major. The Writing Center is a comfortable, supportive environment for writers from all communities and backgrounds. It is located in Robert Bell 291. It has both online and face-to-face appointments. To make an appointment, go to ballstate.mywconline.com.

Furthermore, if you feel you need help with preparing for class, reading, understanding lectures, or preparing for exams, there's a resource on campus you can use: the Learning Center. The Learning Center offers free tutoring for many courses on campus, including science and humanities, modern and classical languages, math and business, help with any writing task, and study strategies such as time management, test taking, note taking, and effective textbook reading. Call 765-285-1006 or visit NQ 350 to make an appointment to meet with a tutor, or visit them online at www.bsu.edu/learningcenter. Needless to say, I would be happy to hear from you and help out as much as I can.

2. I have zero tolerance for violations of academic dishonesty, and especially plagiarism. Even the slightest suspicion of plagiarism, cheating in the form of copying the work of another student, or having someone write an exam for you, or any other violation of academic dishonesty as defined in the University's Student Academic Ethics Policy will result in an F grade (see <http://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/studentrights/policiesandprocedures/studentcode/viethicspolicy> for more details) and possible further disciplinary action.

3. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

4. Questions? Concerns? Suggestions how to make this course better? Just need someone to talk to? Feel free to get in touch via email. I will respond to all emails within 24 hours (48 hours during the weekend), but usually a lot faster. I'm looking forward to getting to know all of you!

Course Schedule:

There is one book you will need to buy, and it is available from the university bookstore or amazon.com and other similar online stores:

William Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013).

Note: Page numbers from this book appearing in weekly assignments will be referring to the most recent, 5th edition from 2013. For most of this class, you may use the 3rd or 4th editions (2004 and 2008) as well, but it will be your responsibility to obtain the parts missing in those editions and to verify which parts to read.

Week 1 – Introduction: the geography and climate of the Middle East, the rise of Islam
Tuesday, 8/25 and Thursday, 8/27

Week 2 – Early Islamic centuries, from the Umayyads to the Crusades
Tuesday, 9/1 and Thursday, 9/3

Weeks 3-4 – The Ottoman Empire, 14th to 18th centuries

Tuesday, 9/8 and Thursday, 9/10

Tuesday, 9/15 and Thursday, 9/17

Week 5 – Reforms in the 19th century

Tuesday, 9/22 and Thursday, 9/24

* First essay questions published on Blackboard after class on Tuesday, 9/22 *

Weeks 6 – The road to World War I and a new Middle East

Tuesday, 9/29 and Thursday, 10/1

*** Thursday, 10/1: Deadline to meet with me and earn 10 points ***

Week 7-9 – Political Islam, Arab Nationalism, and Middle Eastern politics in the 20th century

Tuesday, 10/6 and Thursday, 10/8

Tuesday, 10/13 – no class, fall break

Thursday, 10/15, Tuesday, 10/20, and Thursday, 10/22

*** First essay due at the beginning of class on 10/6 ***

Weeks 10-11 – The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Tuesday, 10/27 and Thursday, 10/29

Tuesday, 11/3 and Thursday, 11/5

Week 12 – Outside the Arab World: Turkey and Iran

Tuesday, 11/10 and Thursday, 11/12

* Second essay questions published on Blackboard after Tuesday's class, 11/10 *

Week 13 – Oil, wealth, and US interests

Tuesday, 11/17 and Thursday, 11/19

Weeks 14-15 – The Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Arab Spring

Tuesday, 11/24 and Thursday, 11/26 – no class due to Middle East Studies Association annual conference and Thanksgiving

Tuesday, 12/1 and Thursday, 12/3

*** Second essay due Tuesday 11/24 ***

Note: We do not have class on that day, but essays will still be due on Blackboard by 1230pm.

Week 16 – Women and gay rights in Middle Eastern societies

Tuesday, 12/8 and Thursday, 12/10

Appendix:

Journals/Newspapers that offer serious coverage of Middle Eastern issues:

Some require subscription to read certain articles, but check the library's catalog; BSU is subscribed to some of these through third-party websites.

Foreign Policy <http://foreignpolicy.com/>

The New Yorker <http://www.newyorker.com/>

The Atlantic <http://www.theatlantic.com/>

The Economist <http://www.economist.com/>

Foreign Affairs <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/>

Time <http://time.com/>

New York Times <http://nytimes.com>

Washington Post <https://www.washingtonpost.com/>

Wall Street Journal <http://wsj.com>

The Guardian (UK) <http://www.theguardian.com/uk>

Today's Zaman (Turkey) <http://www.todayszaman.com/>

Daily Sabah (Turkey) <http://www.dailysabah.com/>

Ahram online, English edition (Egypt) <http://english.ahram.org.eg/>

Saudi Gazette (Saudi Arabia) <http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/>

The Arabian Post (United Arab Emirates/Dubai) <http://thearabianpost.com/>

Tehran Times (Iran) <http://www.tehrantimes.com/>

Haaretz, English Edition (Israel) <http://haaretz.com>

Good books to read on the Middle East that our library has (a partial list):

1. Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*
2. Leila Ahmed, *A Quiet Revolution: the Veil's Resurgence, from the Middle East to America*
3. Fouad Ajami, *The Dream Palace of the Arabs: A Generation's Odyssey*

4. Michael Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice*
5. Dawn Chatty, *Displacement and Dispossession in the Modern Middle East*
6. Stephen Dale, *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals*
7. James Gelvin and Nile Green, *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*
8. Fawaz Gerges, *The New Middle East: Protest and Revolution in the Arab World*
9. Molly Greene, *Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean*
10. Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology*
11. Jane Hathaway, *The Arab Lands under Ottoman Rule, 1516-1800*
12. Sune Haugbolle, *War and Memory in Lebanon*
13. Efraim Karsh, *Islamic Imperialism: a History*
14. Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*
15. Rashid Khalidi, *The Iron Cage: the Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*
16. Rashid Khalidi, *Sowing Crisis: The Cold War and American Dominance in the Middle East*
17. Philip Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism*
18. Daniel Kurtzer, *Pathways to Peace: America and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*
19. Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*
20. Ussama Makdisi, *Faith Misplaced: the Broken Promise of US-Arab Relations, 1820-2001*
21. Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, *A History of Egypt: from the Arab Conquest to the Present*
22. Abraham Marcus, *The Middle East of the Eve of Modernity: Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century*
23. Margaret Meriwether, *Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East*
24. Muhammad Muslih, *The Origins of Palestinian Nationalism*
25. Joel Migdal, *Shifting Sands: the United States in the Middle East*
26. Yitzhak Nakash, *The Shi'is of Iraq*
27. Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam will Shape the Future*
28. Augustus Norton, *Hezbollah: a Short History*
29. Alison Pargeter, *The Muslim Brotherhood: from Opposition to Power*
30. Avi Raz, *The Bride and the Dowry: Israel, Jordan, and Palestinians in the Aftermath of the June 1967 War*
31. Sara Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza: Engaging the Islamist Social Sector*
32. Cyrus Schayegh, *Who is Knowledgeable is Strong: Science, Class, and the Formation of Modern Iranian Society, 1900-1950*
33. Andrew Cooper, *The Oil Kings: How the US, Iran, and Saudi Arabia Changed the Balance of Power in the Middle East*
34. Patrick Seale, *The Struggle for Syria: a Study of Post-War Arab Politics*
35. Kenneth Stein, *Heroic Diplomacy: Sadat, Kissinger, Carter, Begin, and the Quest for Arab-Israeli Peace*

36. Elizabeth Thompson, *Justice Interrupted: the Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Middle East*
37. Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*
38. Dirk Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*
39. Keith Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East: Revolution, Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Arab Middle Class*
40. Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*
41. Hakan Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*
42. Hakan Yavuz, *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: the Gülen Movement*
43. Hakan Yavuz, *Toward an Islamic Enlightenment: the Gülen Movement*
44. 'Abd al-Salam Zaif, *My Life with the Taliban*
45. Eyal Ziser, *Lebanon: the Challenge of Independence*