

# HISTORY OF THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST

HIS 266-01 (FALL 2014)

GRINNELL COLLEGE

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OFFICE HOURS: M 10-1030, T 215-3, W 1030-1130, TH 11-12

This course charts the emergence of the modern Middle East during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The political history of the states that constitute the Middle East is an essential part of this story. But the story of the modern Middle East is about much more than that. It is about the transformation of frameworks through which individuals and communities experience and make sense of the world around them. For our purposes, this includes history, conceptions of community, economic activity, and religion. We will guide our exploration of these broad themes with a set of more pointed questions: How did the nation (and national citizenship) become an organizing principle for collective life? How did capitalism take root? How and why did secularism become a question of urgent concern? How and for whom did modernity itself become an issue of very self-conscious concern? In answering these questions, we will explore the contestations, negotiations, and exclusions that characterize the emergence of modern forms of government in the Middle East, thus gaining insight into many of the most pressing issues in the region today.

## COURSE TEXTS:

Toby Dodge, *Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Robert Tignor and Shmuel Moreh, *Al-Jabarti's Chronicle of the French Occupation*. New York: Marcus Wiener, 2005.

Keith Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East: Revolution, Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Arab Middle Class*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

These texts form the backbone of our course, but throughout the semester we will also be working with articles or excerpts from books. All such readings are on electronic reserve, which you can access via "Library Resources" on our Blackboard course site, and have an (R) next to them on the syllabus. Primary sources (other than those in Gelvin) will typically have (pweb) next to them, which means you can find them in the "Course Readings" folder on the course site.

The secondary sources (the required course texts and reserves) consist of scholarly treatments of general themes or particular elements of the history of the modern Middle East. As you complete the reading for each secondary text, please always read for argument. You can do so with a few questions in mind:

- Can you identify a sentence or sentences that constitute the thesis statement?
- Can you state the author's thesis – even regarding a single chapter or article – succinctly in your own words?
- If part of a larger work, how does a particular chapter fit into the bigger picture? If a stand-alone piece, can you relate this reading to another that we have completed in the course?
- Can you identify at least two examples the author uses to support her or his argument?
- How is the author defining (implicitly or explicitly) “modern?” How does this affect the author's argument and analysis?

As you read the primary documents with which we will work, please keep the following questions in mind:

- Who is writing? What do you think was her or his purpose in so doing?
- What is the larger relevant context? (Beware of anachronistic analysis!)
- What is the author's relative position of power in the context of the document's production?
- How does this document support or call into question claims made by the authors of our secondary sources?

From a skill-building perspective, then, **the first and second learning goals** of this course are (1) reading scholarly sources for argument and presenting that argument and exemplary evidence in succinct terms and (2) cultivating the ability to offer contextually sensitive readings of primary source documents.

#### COURSE EVALUATION AND POLICIES

Engagement: 20%

As the weighty percentage indicates, I consider your participation in this course to be an essential component of its success. Participation includes regular attendance. In this vein, anything beyond two unexcused absences will result in a reduction of your participation grade. (I realize that things come up—the key to managing your various responsibilities is open communication.) Chronic tardiness will not help your cause, either. However, participation includes much more than attendance. Your participation grade is a reflection of your *engagement* with the course. I understand that not everyone chooses to speak in each class, and there are lots of other ways to show engagement: Make eye contact during lecture; when I request that you post to the course site, do so thoughtfully and punctually;

come by office hours now and then—even if you don't have a particular agenda; be sure you proof-read and edit your written work carefully (including journal and Blackboard posts)—the quality of your efforts in this regard plays a role in your participation grade, too. At the same time, nothing illustrates engagement like a willingness to be a vocal participant in our course. In the end, your (individual and collective) engagement with the course will be a significant determinant of what kind of experience we have together.

Map Quiz: 5%

Primary Document Exercises: 15%

The first exercise, which is worth 5% of your final grade, requires that you write a 100-word annotation in which you describe the event, note the significance of the event in the broader history of the region, and note something significant about the event you learned from the source.

The second Primary Document Exercise, worth 10% of your final grade, requires you to select primary sources from our course. Once you have selected particular documents, you will write four pages in which you discuss/analyze the documents and explain their relevance/importance in understanding the history of the modern Middle East (through the Great War).

I will distribute essay prompts at least one week prior to the due date. In all cases, unless otherwise noted, you are to use normal margins, 12-point font, and double spacing. Parenthetical text citation (author date, page) is the preferred method of citation. You can find all the information you could want about parenthetical text citation for different kinds of sources in the documentation sections of the Chicago Manual of Style, which is available on-line via our library. I do not require works-cited pages because you will not be using outside sources for any of your assignments. Please include a minimal header on all writing assignments—your name, the course name, and a simple title. All papers should be double-sided and should have page numbers.

Map and Chronology Assignments: 40%

You will be working with a group to create and maintain a map and chronology that charts change over time in various ways. Steady work on this assignment will be a way to review as we move along in the course. Your group will be responsible for making three entries/annotations per week beginning the week of September 15. There are two “due dates” for the map and chronology. My evaluation of your group's work on the first due date will yield 10% of your final grade, while my evaluation of your group's work on the second due date will yield 20% of your final grade. You will also be responsible for an individual journal, for which you will write from 100-400 words per week describing the process by which your group decided on the entries for that week. At times, I may give you more specific prompts to consider. Your journal will constitute 10% of your final grade

The group map-timeline project is the prime setting for the **third learning goal** of our course. As a group, you will have to debate the merits of different possible entries, raising important questions about questions of causality (what kind of historical explanation is most important?) and reinforcing the complexity of historical change. Given its extended nature, this group work assignment will ultimately depend upon your ability to successfully manage professional relationships.

Review essay: 10%

You will complete this assignment in lieu of two class meetings late in the semester.

Presentations: 10%

At the end of the semester, groups will present their maps and timeline projects to the class. Format and details TBD.

Course Policies:

- Email policy part I: I chose to teach at a small liberal arts college because I enjoy getting to know my students. I do not, however, enjoy answering reams of student email. Accordingly, I request that you not email me with logistical questions about the course. If I determine that the answer to your question is in the syllabus or an assignment prompt, you probably won't hear back from me. If you can't find the answer in either of those places, reach out to your colleagues via the email function on the course site. If no one can figure out the answer, then by all means get in touch. You can always ask in class, too, and you will find that I am quite accessible outside of class. I'd much rather meet you in person—and you can email to set up an appointment! [This policy does not apply to real emergencies.]
- Email policy part II: I encourage you to use email to share interesting news or course-related information you come across. This is actually a great way to help promote a collective learning experience.
- I will accept *only* hard copies of written work (unless otherwise noted). All work is due in class. I do not want to hear excuses about printing problems. You are responsible for planning your time in such a way that you can turn your work in on time.
- Know that I am pre-disposed to saying no to requests for extensions. I provide plenty of notice for each of the assignments – it is your responsibility to plan your time accordingly. That said, please do not be shy about approaching me for an extension if you have extenuating circumstances. It is essential to keep lines of communication open.
- If I suspect that you are using computers in class for anything other than note taking or document viewing, you will lose your computer privileges for the remainder of the semester. (If I suspect that you are texting in class I will ask that you leave your phone with me at the start of each class. Cell phones should be set on silent.)
- If you are involved in an extracurricular activity that will take you away from campus be sure to let me know beforehand. Regardless of the reason (except for dire family emergency, hospitalization), if I do not hear from you *before* you miss class I will

assume you are simply skipping class. An after-the-fact note from Health Services will not suffice.

- Breaches of academic integrity will result in an official disciplinary process guided by the Dean's office. Although I will inform you of any action I take, I will not negotiate with you privately about such matters. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism I suggest you consult the Student Handbook immediately.
- It is essential to me that everyone in the class has the same opportunity to thrive. Please let me know of any particular learning needs you have (assuming they are on file with the College) and we will work together to make sure that you get the most out of this learning experience.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### BACKGROUND, ENCOUNTERS

#### **September 1:** Ottoman Empire

- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, 1-32 (read through pp. 1-24; read 25-32 more closely)
- Daniel Goffman, "The Ottoman Empire" (pweb).
- "Draft Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the Ottoman Empire and France, February 1535," Gelvin, pp. 60-61.

#### **September 3:** Reading community in *Al-Jabarti's Chronicle*

- al-Jabarti, Intro and 19-61.
  - As you are reading this source, please pay particular attention to the picture of community that emerges. Who is part of al-Jabarti's community? What makes you think so?

#### **September 8:** Al-Jabarti continued

- **MAP QUIZ**
- al-Jabarti, 62-118.
- Class exercise: Mapping the Emergence of the Modern Middle East.

## BECOMING MODERN? LAND, CLASS, AND NATIONALISM

### September 10: Becoming Modern?

- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 69-99, photos 110-132, and 133-142
  - “Hatt-i Sharif (1839),” “Islahat Fermani (1856),” and “d’Arcy Oil Concession,” pp. 159-167.
  - Amin, “Economic Change under Muhammad ‘Ali” (pweb).

**Sunday, September 14: first primary document exercise due 5 p.m. Please submit electronically via the Assignments tab on the course site. You can either attach a document or write/paste directly in the assignment prompt.**

### September 15: Economy and Class (cont.)

- Zachary Lockman, “Imagining the Working Class” (R).
  - Amin, “Tahtawi and Justice” (pweb).

### September 17: Economy and Class (cont.)

- Keith Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East*, pp. 1-54.
  - “Commercial Convention,” Gelvin, pp. 147-148.

### September 22: Economy and Class (cont.)

- Keith Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East*, pp. 55-94.
  - “Young Turk Proclamation, 1908” (pweb).

### September 24: Economy and Class (cont.)

- Keith Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East*, pp. 95-120.

### September 29: Emergent Nationalism

- Elliot Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, pp. 121-165. \*

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\* As of the beginning of the semester, the library is continuing to work on finding the best way to deliver this material.

- Mustafa Kamil, “What the National Party Wants” (pweb).
- Blackboard post: Are we talking about the same Egyptian community that al-Jabarti was talking about? Why or why not? Please post 250 well-crafted words in response to this prompt. Your post is due by **9 p.m. on September 28**.

## DELIMITATION OF THE MODERN NATIONAL STATE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

### **October 1:** National State Formation

- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 180-216.
- Arkarli, “The Tangled Ends of an Empire and Its Sultan” (R).

### **October 6:** National State Formation: Mandate System

- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 184-195.
  - Sykes-Picot (pweb).
  - Treaty of Sèvres (pweb).
  - British Mandate, League of Nations (pweb).

### **October 8:** National State Formation: Syria

- Keith Watenpugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East*, pp. 121-173

### **Sunday, October 12:** First map/timeline evaluation

### **October 13:** National State Formation: Israel/Palestine

- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 217-226.
  - Herzl, “A Solution to the Jewish Question,” p. 228-230.
  - Balfour Declaration, p. 230.

### **October 15:** National State Formation: Iraq

- Toby Dodge, *Inventing Iraq*, pp. 1-62

### **October 27:** National State Formation: Iraq (cont.)

- Toby Dodge, *Inventing Iraq*, pp. 63-131

### **October 29:** Religion and National Life

- James Gelvin, “Secularism and Religion in the Arab Middle East” (R).
- Andrew Davison and Taha Parla, “Secularism and Laicism in Turkey” (R).
  - Ataturk’s Dissolution of the Caliphate (pweb).

### **November 3:** Religion and National Life (cont.)

- Hasan al-Banna, “Our Mission” in *Five Tracts* (R).
  - Amin, “Toward an Effective Reform” (pweb).
- Ali abd al-Raziq, “The Caliphate and the Bases of Power” (R).
  - Archival materials on dismissal of Ali abd al-Raziq (pweb).

### THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST?

#### **November 5:** Emergent Nations?

- **Second primary document exercise due in class**
- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 233-255.

#### **November 10:** Nationalism – Workshop

- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 283-293.
  - David Ben Gurion, Speech, 2 October 1947 (pweb).
  - Amin, “Egypt’s Liberation” (pweb).
  - Gamal abd al-Nasr, Speech, 29 May 1967 (pweb).
  - Ben Gurion Letter to DeGaulle, 6 December 1967 (pweb).

#### **November 12:** Religion and National Life

- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 307-318.
- Elliott Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, pp. 260-277. \*
  - Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones* (pweb).



**November 17:** Religion and National Life (cont.)

- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 294-306.
- Khomeini, Introduction to “Islamic Government” (pweb).
  - Ayatollah Montazari’s Fatwa on Legitimacy of Supreme Leader (pweb).

**November 19:** The Middle East and Global Capitalism

- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 256-282.
- Timothy Mitchell, “McJihad” (R).

**No class November 24 and November 26. Happy Thanksgiving!**

**December 1:** Return to Iraq

- **Two-page review essay due in class**
  - Walker, “The Making of Modern Iraq” (R).
  - Visser, “Other People’s Maps” (R).
- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 266-282.

**December 3: Presentations**

**December 8: Presentations**

**December 10: Wrap-up**

**December 16: Final Due Date for Maps and Timelines**