

The Modern Middle East

The Middle East is frequently described as a “problem region” by journalists and policymakers, where passion prevails over reason, where primordial loyalties are privileged over socio-economic or political coalitions. This course aims to step beyond such generalizations, by way of an overview of the region's modern history. This overview will provide a context with which students can approach further work in modern Middle Eastern studies. Perhaps more importantly, the course will, in its own right, enable students to adopt an informed, critical perspective on the region's current conflicts and challenges. Specifically, the course covers Egypt, Turkey, Iran, the Fertile Crescent, and the Arabian Peninsula. After surveying the Ottoman world in the nineteenth century, students will examine the emergence of the principal nation-states of the Middle East in the wake of the First World War. Although political currents are considered in depth, much discussion is devoted to associated social, intellectual, cultural, and economic developments.

Required Texts: William L. Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, third edition, and a packet of articles.

Evaluation Breakdown:

Review essay (1500 words)	30%
Mid-term examination	25%
Final examination	35%
Tutorial participation	10%

Map Quiz: This will form part of each student's participation grade. Students will be given an outline map of the region and a list of twenty-five cities and physical landmarks. They will be asked to locate twenty on the map. In preparation for the quiz, students should locate the following:

Aleppo	Dubai	Medina	Arabian Sea
Alexandria	Haifa	Nablus	Black Sea
Amman	Hama	Najaf	Euphrates River
Ankara	Isfahan	Qatar	Gulf of Aden
Aswan	Istanbul	Qum	Nile River
Baghdad	Izmir	Riyadh	Persian Gulf
Bahrain	Jerusalem	Sana	Red Sea
Beirut	Karbala	Sulaymaniyah	Straits of Tiran
Cairo	Mashhad	Tehran	The Bosphorus
Damascus	Mecca	Tel Aviv	Tigris River

Class Participation: Repeated absences from class will lead to a failing participation grade. Please consult the instructor should you have to miss classes for health or family reasons. Completion of the readings before class and a consistent effort to contribute to class discussions

will be rewarded with high marks in this category. Lateness and poor preparation for class will be penalized.

Cheating and Plagiarism: I will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism. These are extremely serious academic offences. If you are having trouble with a concept or assignment, meet with the instructor well before the relevant deadlines. Keep in mind that poor, but legitimate, performance in a given assignment is far preferable to jeopardizing your academic career through fraud.

Week I

Tuesday, September 5, 2006: Introduction

What is 'modern'? How can one date 'modernity'? What is 'the Middle East'? Why view 'the Middle East' as a unit of analysis?

Thursday, September 7: Islam and the Ottoman World

- William L. Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 3rd ed., pp. 37-56.

Week II

Tuesday, September 12: Map Quiz

Thursday, September 14: Egypt Under Mehmed Ali

- Cleveland, pp. 64-74.
- *Khaled Fahmy, "The Nation and Its Deserters: Conscription in Mehmed Ali's Egypt," *International Review of Social History* 43, 3 (1998), 421-436.

Discussion: How centralized was the administration of the Ottoman Empire? What are the advantages to a centralized, uniform administration? What are the disadvantages?

Week III

Tuesday, September 19: The Politics of the Notables

- Cleveland, pp. 81-89.
- *Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of the Notables," in Albert Hourani, Philip S. Khoury, and Mary C. Wilson, eds. *The Modern Middle East: A Reader* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1993), 83-109.

Thursday, September 21: The Nature of Colonial Rule

- Cleveland, pp. 92-109.
- *Earl of Cromer, "The Government of Subject Races," *Political and Literary Essays, 1908-1913* (London, United Kingdom: Macmillan and Co., 1913), 3-53.

Discussion: Was colonial rule in the Middle East an inherently racist enterprise?

Week IV

Tuesday, September 26: Islamic Reform

- Cleveland, pp. 119-128.

Thursday, September 28: Turks and Arabs in the Late Ottoman Empire

- Cleveland, pp. 128-143.
- *M. Sükrü Hanioglu, "Ideological Roots of the Young Turks," *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 7-32.

Discussion: Were Islamic modernists entirely hostile to the spread of Western influence in the Middle East?

Week V

Tuesday, October 3: Zionism

- Cleveland, pp. 239-244.

Thursday, October 5: World War I

- Cleveland, pp. 149-170.
- *"The Husayn-McMahon Correspondence," "Tripartite (Sykes-Picot) Agreement for the Partition of the Ottoman Empire: Britain, France and Russia," and "The British (Balfour) Declarations of Sympathy with Zionist Aspirations," in J. C. Hurewitz, ed. *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record, 1914-1956*, Volume II (New York, New York: Octagon Books, 1972), 13-17, 18-22, 25-26.

Discussion: Political historians tend to focus upon the policy differences that separated colonial officials from Ottomanists, Ottomanists from Arabists, and so forth. However, what assumptions might these disparate political forces have shared? What notions — about the role of the state in people's lives, about the bounds of political conduct, about the importance of science, about the nature of progress, reform, and enlightenment — might these ideologues have held in common?

Week VI

Tuesday, October 10: Kemalism

- Cleveland, pp. 175-185.

Thursday, October 12: *Mid-term examination*

Week VII

Tuesday, October 17: The Palestine Mandate

- Cleveland, pp. 244-261.

Thursday, October 19: The Emergence of the State of Israel

- Cleveland, pp. 261-271.

- *Avi Shlaim, "The Debate About 1948," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 27 (1995), 287-304.

Discussion: What were the guiding principles behind British policy in Palestine during the Mandate? Were these consistent through the period? Were there guiding principles at all?

Week VIII

Tuesday, October 24: Nasser and Pan-Arabism

- Cleveland, pp. 301-322.
- *Gamal Abdel Nasser, "The Charter," *Nasser Speaks: Basic Documents*, trans. E. S. Farag (London: The Morssett Press, 1972): 'General View,' 61-68; 'The Necessity of the Revolution,' 69-74; 'True Democracy,' 90-102; 'The Socialist Application and Its Problems,' 131-139; 'Arab Unity,' 140-144; 'Foreign Policy,' 145-151.

Thursday, October 26: The Roots of Civil War in Lebanon

- Cleveland, pp. 332-337.

Discussion: What was the most significant legacy of Nasser's rule (1) for Egypt and (2) for the Arab world?

Week IX

Tuesday, October 31: The Legacy of Oil Wealth in the Arabian Peninsula

- Cleveland, pp. 451-472.
- *Muhammad al Murr, "A Small Ad in the Newspaper," "A Late Dinner," and "Influence," *Dubai Tales*, trans. Peter Clark (London: Forest Books, 1991), 83-87, 107-112, 127-132.

Thursday, November 2: Case Studies of Authoritarianism

- Cleveland, pp. 397-421.
- *Lisa Wedeen, "Acting 'As If': The Story of M," *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 67-86.

Discussion: Was oil a blessing or a curse for the peoples of the Arabian Peninsula, and of the Middle East as a whole?

Week X

Tuesday, November 7: Prelude to Revolution in Iran

- Cleveland, pp. 288-299.

Thursday, November 9: Iran Since the Revolution

- Cleveland, pp. 423-440.
- *Ervand Abrahamian, "Fundamentalism or Populism?" *Khomeinism: Essays on the Islamic Republic* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1993), 13-38.

Discussion: How ‘Islamic’ was the ‘Islamic Revolution’? How ‘republican’ (i.e., pluralist, democratic) is the ‘Islamic Republic’?

Week XI

Tuesday, November 14: Islamism in Theory

- *Sayyid Qutb, “The Characteristics of the Islamic Community and the Correct Method of Its Formation” and “A Muslim’s Nationality and Belief,” *Milestones* (Indianapolis, Indiana: American Trust Publications, 1990), 37-42 and 101-110.

Thursday, November 16: Islamism in Practice

- Cleveland, pp. 440-448.

Discussion: Are Islamists, on the whole, “anti-modern”?

Week XII

Tuesday, November 21: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict to Oslo

- Cleveland, pp. 345-367 and pp. 499-510.

Thursday, November 23: Gulf Wars

- Cleveland, pp. 478-496.

Discussion: What might a “binational” state look like? What implications would a “binational” state have for Israelis and Palestinians, and the Middle East as a whole? Is such a state now beyond the realm of possibility?

Week XIII

Tuesday, November 28: Looking to the Future

- *United Nations Development Programme, “Overview: A Future for All,” *Arab Human Development Report 2002: Creating Opportunities for Future Generations* (New York: United Nations Publications, 2002), 1-13.

Thursday, November 30: Review Session

Discussion: Is the Middle East an “exceptional” region, or is it subject to the same social and political forces as any other?