

Spring 2024
HIST 246
Modern Middle East and North Africa

Place: WALC 2127
Day and Time: M-W-F, 10:30-11:20 am

Instructor: Professor Holden
Student Hours: M-W, 12 noon-1 pm (BRNG 6166)
Email: sholden@purdue.edu

This class focuses on the multiple meanings of "modern" as we consider the history of the Middle East and North Africa. We focus not only on the arrival of "modern" technologies to this region but also how modern institutions and identities were adopted and adapted. While time does not allow us to focus on the diverse histories of this region, we can focus on themes and topics—geographical imaginings, political belonging (or lack thereof), economic opportunities—that facilitate your understanding of a dynamic and sometimes unexpected history of a modern Middle East.

Class Requirements

Textbooks:

- William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 6th ed. (Westview Press, 2016).
- Karnig Panian, *Goodbye Antoura: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide* (Stanford University Press, 2015).
- Jonathan Wrytzen, *Worldmaking in the Long Great War: How Local and Colonial Struggles Shaped the Modern Middle East* (Columbia University Press, 2022).

Evaluation & Due Dates

- 20%, Attendance and Class Engagement
- 10%, Take-Home Exam #1 [2/2/2023]
- 10%, Take-Home Exam #2 [2/23/2023]
- 20%, Take-Home Exam #3 [3/29/2023]
- 20%, Take-Home Exam #4 [4/12/2023]
- 20%, Take-Home Exam #5 [5/6/2023]

Attendance and Class Engagement: I will count attendance and engagement with class materials toward your grade. Those who are in every class get an automatic 90 for that component. If you will be absent, you should contact me via email so we can communicate about what you missed. If you participate (in class or via email, for those reluctant for any reason to speak in

class), you will earn more points toward participation. In class as in other aspects of your professional life, you want to figure out how to respectfully the ideas of your colleagues.

Assigned material is below the date of the class. I often provide reflection questions that allow you to anchor your thoughts and get a preview of what we will discuss in class. These questions are not an assignment, but a type of support.

Students will have **five take-home exams**. I will provide a review sheet with questions one week before your exam. I will both email the exam and post it on Brightspace the night before it is due. Your responses—as will be described on the review sheet—should evaluate material from lectures, class discussions, and assigned materials. You must upload your exam to Brightspace by noon on its due date. I deduct 5 points for each hour the exam is late, and I do not accept exams after 5 pm unless arranged in advance.

My **AI Statement** was adapted—almost word for word—from an article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (see [here](#)): “Cheating isn’t new, and neither is ‘contract cheating’ (paper mills, etc.). Cheaters are only cheating themselves. **A track coach who would tell runners they could or should ride an electric scooter around the track wouldn’t make athletes faster or stronger. Think about yourself like a world class athlete. There is value in doing the work of learning instead of outsourcing it to a machine.** In an era of remote & hybrid jobs, working in ways that establish trust...is more important than ever.”

Grading:

A	=	94-100
A-	=	90-93
B+	=	87-89
B	=	84-86
B-	=	80-83
C+	=	77-79
C	=	74-76
C-	=	70-73

Learning Outcomes: I have designed a class intended to sharpen your critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. We do so by addressing the question: “what does it mean to be modern?” You are encouraged to discuss your ideas about class materials on the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of “being modern” in class. Regular unit evaluations will replace a cumulative mid-term or final, allowing for lower stakes/lower stress chances to address questions raised in class.

January 8 (M)

Class Introductions

Class Preparations

upload a photo (of yourself!) to Brightspace

introduce yourself in 3-5 sentences, and include in this introduction an answer this question: if you could travel anywhere in the Middle East or North Africa, where would you go and why?

January 10 (W)

What do we know, or think we know?



Class Preparations

look at this map, and think about what stands out to you

be prepared to respond to the following:

- What do you know about the Middle East? What 5 words do you associate with it?
- What are gaps in your knowledge about the Middle East and North Africa?
- How did you learn about the Middle East? What are your sources of information about it (classes, films, history books, novels, family stories...)? How reliable are the sources?
- What challenges do you anticipate as you study the Middle East and North Africa?

January 12 (F)

Inventing a Middle East

Class Preparations

Huseyin Yilmaz, “The Eastern Question and the Ottoman Empire: The Genesis of the Near and Middle East in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Is there a Middle East? The Evolution of a Geopolitical Concept*, ed. Bonine, Amanat, and Gasper (Stanford University Press, 2012), 11-35.

Reflection: How did Yilmaz’s essay further your understanding of the Middle East? What is the central point the author seeks to convey in “The Eastern Question and the Ottoman Empire”?

January 15 (M)

Day Off (MLK Day)

January 17 (W)

Decisive Moments in Early Ottoman History

Class Preparations

Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 35-52.

Reflection: How did the Ottomans organize a system of rule? And legitimize their rule?

January 19 (F)

Classifying the Ottoman Empire

Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 1-34.

Reflections: What are the necessary components of an empire according to Howe? What aspects of empire do you find most important in your reading of the Ottoman Empire?

January 22 (M)

Egypt: Power on the Periphery

Class Preparations

William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 6th ed. (Westview Press, 2016), 53-70, 87-92.

al-Rahman Jabarti, “The Destruction Caused by the French and the Ottomans in Cairo,” in *Al-Jabarti’s History of Egypt*, ed. Jane Hathaway (Princeton University Press, 2009), 197-201.

January 24 (W)

Algeria: French Imperialism

Class Preparations

Phillip C. Naylor, *North Africa: A History from Antiquity to Present* (University of Texas Press, 2015), 152-155.

Assia Djebar, “Women, Children, Oxen Dying in Caves,” *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade* (1993; reprint, Heinemann, 2003), 64-79.

fill out worksheet on Djebbar excerpt, upload it to Assignments in Brightspace, bring it to class

January 26 (F) Greece: Nationalist Revolutions

Class Preparations

William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 6th ed. (Westview Press, 2016), 70-73.

January 29 (M) Generating Shared Ottoman Identity

Class Preparations

William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 6th ed. (Westview Press, 2016), 76-86 & 94-95.

“Decrees from the Ottoman Tanzimat,” in Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, 167-172.

Abdullah Cevdet Pasha, “A Muslim Intellectual on the Emancipation of Ottoman Non-Muslims (1856),” in *Sephardi Lives: A Documentary History, 1700-1950*, ed. Julia Phillips Cohen and Sarah Abrevaya Stein (Stanford University Press, 2014), 120-121.

Ludwig August Frankl, “The Ottoman Chief Rabbi’s Ambivalent Response to the Proclamation of Jewish Equality (1856),” in *Sephardi Lives: A Documentary History, 1700-1950*, ed. Julia Phillips Cohen and Sarah Abrevaya Stein (Stanford University Press, 2014), 121-123.

Reflection: What reforms did Ottoman rulers implement in the nineteenth century? How did these reforms try to shape political identity and/or belonging among Ottoman subjects?

January 31 (W) Discussion of Take-Home Exam #1

February 2 (F) No Class

Class Preparations

Take Home Exam Due by 12 noon!

February 5 (M) Putting a Value on Time

Class Preparations

Avner Wishnitzer, “Ferry Tales,” in *Reading Clocks alla Turka: Time and Society in the Late-Ottoman Empire* (The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 124-150.

Reflection: What political, social, and cultural changes are highlighted in this reading?

February 7 (W) Urban Planning

Class Preparations

“Dreaming of a City in Stone,” in *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean: Urban Culture in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), 63-69

Reflection: What political, social, and cultural changes are highlighted in these readings?

February 9 (F) Geographical Mobility

Class Preparations

Ilkay Yilmaz, “Passport Regulations and Practices during the Hamidian Era,” in *Ottoman Passports: Security and Geographic Mobility, 1876-1908* (Syracuse University Press, 2023), 189-235.

Reflection: What political, social, and cultural changes are highlighted in these readings?

February 12 (M) Recovering the Modern in Pre-World War I ME

Class Preparations

Brainstorming Session: Come prepared to discuss aspects of modernization as well as their impact on social or political life. What have we already discussed? What is left to discuss?

February 14 (W) Library Exercise-photo project

February 16 (F) Library Exercise-photo project

February 19 (M) Zionist Immigration in Ottoman Palestine

Class Preparations

James L. Gelvin, “Cultures of Nationalism,” *The Israel-Palestine Conflict: 100 Years of War*, 3rd edition (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 14-44.

Judah Leib Levin, “To America or to the Land of Israel? (1881),” in Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2010), 393-394.

Osip Aronowich Rabinowich, “Russian Must Be Our Mother Tongue (1861),” in Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2010), 378.

Reflections: What futures did Jewish leaders in Europe discuss in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries? Was settlement in Palestine by European Jews inevitable? What were the other paths that Jewish communities in Europe might have taken (or did in fact take)?

February 21 (W) The Seeds of Conflict

Class Preparations

Watch “1913: Seeds of Conflict,” PBS, 2015 (53 minutes)

This website reviews the historical personalities or commentators in the film:
<http://1913seedsofconflict.com/>. See also, <https://www.pbs.org/show/1913-seeds-conflict/>.

Reflections: Did conflict between Palestinian Arabs and Zionist immigrants seem inevitable on the eve of World War I? What forces and conditions promoted conflict? Or engagement?

February 23 (F) No Class

Class Preparations

Take Home Exam #2 Due by 12 Noon!

February 26 (M) The Young Turks

Class Preparations

Cleveland and Bunton, *The Modern Middle East*, 124-134.

Wyrzten, *Worldmaking*, vii-xvi, 1-52 (Preface, Intro and Ch. 1)

February 28 (W) The Eastern Front in World War I

Class Preparations

Cleveland and Bunton, *The Modern Middle East*, 139-152.

Wyrzten, *Worldmaking*, 53-88.

“[The Ottomans](#),” episode 2 of “World War I through Arab Eyes,” *Al Jazeera*, 2014 (45 min.).

March 1 (F) British Anxieties

The Political & Secret Department of the India Office, “[The War: German Attempts to Fan Islamic Feeling](#),” 26 November 1915, The British Library, IOR/L/PS/11/99.

“[The Arabs](#),” episode 1 of “World War I through Arab Eyes,” Al Jazeera, 2014 (45 min.)

Reflections: Describe the British Library document including marginalia. What information does it provide? How can you glean information or context from those first handwritten pages?

March 4 (M)**Wartime Conditions in Jerusalem**Class Preparations

Stafanie Wichhart, “The 1915 Locust Plague in Palestine,” *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, 56 & 57 (Winter 2013/Spring 2014): 29-39.

Ihsan Turjman, “An Arab Soldier in the Ottoman Army,” in Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, 251-254. please also read other diary excerpts of Ihsan Turjman posted on Brightspace

Reflections: How did World War I effect political, social, and economic developments in Palestine and the rest of the Middle East? What would you deem its long-lasting legacy?

March 6 (W)**Wartime Conditions in Baghdad**Class Preparations

Violette Shamash, *Memories of Eden: A Journey through Jewish Baghdad* (Forum Books, 2008), in Stacy E. Holden, ed., *A Documentary History of Modern Iraq* (University Press of Florida, 2011), 47-50. [an account of World War I by a Jewish woman in Baghdad who was a child]

Tamara Chalabi, “Stacking Rifles: Hadi and the War (1914-1916),” *Late for Tea at the Deer Palace: The Lost Dreams of My Iraqi Family* (Harper Collins, 2011), 23-34. [an account of World War I by the granddaughter of a Shi’i resident of Khadhimiya, just outside Baghdad]

Listen to “Voices of the First World War: Mesopotamia,” Imperial War Museum, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/voices-of-the-first-world-war-mesopotamia> [an account of World War I by British soldiers]

Reflections: I provided you with three primary sources: who is speaking? What do they tell you about World War I? To what extent do these sources provide information? Or obscure it?

March 8 (F)**No Class****March 11 (M)****Spring Break****March 13 (W)****Spring Break****March 15 (F)****Spring Break****March 18 (M)****A Story of Armenian Survival**Class Preparations

Karnig Panian, *Goodbye Antoura: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide* (Stanford University Press, 2015, in its entirety!

March 20 (W) **A Story of Armenian Survival**

March 22 (F) **The Mandate System**

Class Preparations

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, 152-159.

Wyrzten, *Worldmaking*, 91-122 (chapter 3)

“[The New Middle East](#),” episode 3 of “World War I through Arab Eyes,” *Al Jazeera*, 2014 (47 min.)

March 25 (M) **Post War Political Loyalties, Identities, &/or Belonging**

Class Preparations

Wyrzten, *Worldmaking*, 123-166.

March 27 (W) **Gertrude Bell, Kingmaker**

Class Preparations

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, 195-201.

watch, Zeva Oelbaum and Sabine Krayenbuhl, “Letters from Baghdad,” 2018 (95 min.).
[available at Purdue Library’s Kanopy, <https://purdue.kanopy.com/product/letters-baghdad>]

Reflections: What sources did the film use to present Bell’s life? How do you think the filmmaker would describe Bell: agent of change (revolutionary) or defender of the status quo (reactionary)? How did she transgress norms of her time? And how did she maintain them?

March 29 (F) **No Class**

Exam #3 Due on Brightspace by 12 Noon!

April 1 (M) **Greek-Turkish Population Exchange**

Sarah Shields, “[The Greek Turkish Population Exchange: Internationally Administered Ethnic Cleansing](#),” in *MERIP*, 267 (September 2013).

Mark Mazower, “The Muslim Exodus,” *Salonica: City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jew, 1430-1950* (Knopf, 2005), 311-332 (ch. 17).

Ernest Hemingway, "A Silent, Ghastly Procession," in *Dateline Toronto: Hemingway's Complete Toronto Star Dispatches, 1920-1924*, ed. William White (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985), 232.

April 3 (W)

Ataturk's Turkey

Class Preparations

Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 166-175 & 263-273.

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, 207-231 (ch. 12 and ch. 13).

Reflection: Why did Mustafa Kemal emerge from World War I as a military leader capable of reorganizing the Ottoman heartland as a modern state? What was his vision for the state? And how did his vision of a modern state compare and/or contrast with ideas of the Ottoman era?

April 5 (F)

Erdogan's Revival of an Ottoman Ethos

Class Preparations

Jenny B. White, "[The Turkish Complex](#)," *The American Interest* 10, no. 4 (2 February 2015), 15-23.

Nicolas Bourcier, "Erdogan, the Enduring Reinterpreter of Turkish History," *Le Monde* (29 October 2023).

watch trailer for Season 1 (2017) of "Payitaht: Abdülhamid [The Last Emperor]"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x70zCyRYTzQ>

Reflections: How would you compare Reycip Erdogan with Mustafa Kemal? How does Erdogan offer glaring differences and similarities with Ataturk? What is Erdogan's vision of a modern state, and how does this vision engage Ottoman imperialism? And towards what end?

April 8 (M)

Political Resistance

Class Preparations

Wyrzten, *Worldmaking*, 169-215.

April 10 (W)

When Did World War I End in the ME? --Classroom Visit Via Zoom, Dr. Wyrzten

Class Preparations

Wyrzten, *Worldmaking*, 216-258.

April 12 (F) No Class

Exam #4 Due on Brightspace by 12 Noon!

April 15 (M) Egypt Independence, The Old Elite

Class Preparations

Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 184-194.

April 17 (W) Egypt under Nasser, A New Social Compact

Class Preparations

Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 206-305 & 325-326.

April 19 (F) Egypt and the Culture of Pan Arabism

Class Preparations

watch, Michael Goldman, "Umm Kulthum: A Voice Like Egypt," 1996 (67 min.)

April 22 (M) Sunni and Shii in Iraq

Class Preparations

Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 195-203 & 310-313.

Muhammad al-Khalisi, "Shi'is Oppose (Rigged) Election," in *A Documentary History of Modern Iraq*, Stacy E. Holden, ed. (University Press of Florida, 2012), 81-86.

Yara Badday, "Reframing Sunni and Shi'i Discussions," in *In We Are Iraqis: Aesthetics and Politics in a Time of War*, ed. Al-Ali, Nadje and Deborah Al-Najjar (Syracuse University Press, 2013): 83-92.

Reflections: What do these short readings tell you about the relationship between Sunni and Shi'i in Iraq? How do they complement or contrast with what you read about Iraq in the textbook?

April 24 (W) Iraqi-Arab-Kurdish-Jewish-Israeli...?

Class Preparations

"Sami Michael," in *Iraq's Last Jews: Stories of Daily Life, Upheaval, and Escape from Modern Babylon*, ed. Tamar Morad, Dennis Shasha, and Robert Shasha (Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 77-91.

Ariel Sabar, *My Father's Paradise: A Son's Search for His Family's Past* (Algonquin Books, 2009). 134-145 (chapter 31).

Reflection: Sami Michael is the same generation as Yona, Ariel Sabar's father. They were born in Iraq to Jewish families, and both moved to Israel in the 1950s. What did you learn about how these men identified themselves or were identified both in Iraq and Israel? What are some of the political challenges these short excerpts provide you, any information that your textbook obscured?

April 26 (F) Baathist Iraq

Class Preparations

Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 433-446.

April 29 (M) TBA

May 1 (W) TBA

May 3 (F) TBA

Exam #5 Due on Brightspace by 12 Noon on 6 May!!!

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Disclaimer: *In case of a major campus emergency, the requirements on this syllabus are subject to changes required by a revised semester calendar. Any changes will be posted, once the course resumes, on the course website. It may also be obtained by contacting the instructor via email.*