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:

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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


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


January 24 (W) Algeria: French Imperialism

Class Preparations

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

**January 26 (F)**  
Greece: Nationalist Revolutions

Class Preparations


**January 29 (M)**  
Generating Shared Ottoman Identity

Class Preparations


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


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.


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.

Wyrtzen, 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.

Wyrtzen, 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 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


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


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]


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

March 20 (W) A Story of Armenian Survival

March 22 (F) The Mandate System

Class Preparations

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

Wyrtzen, *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


March 27 (W) Gertrude Bell, Kingmaker

Class Preparations


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


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


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 Recep 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


April 10 (W)         When Did World War I End in the ME?

--Classroom Visit Via Zoom, Dr. Wyrtzen

Class Preparations

Wyrtzen, 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

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

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


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

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!!!

University Policies:

**Plagiarism Will Not Be Tolerated at Purdue University:** Plagiarism is a crime, and students can be expelled for turning in a paper that they did not write. Copying a person’s work verbatim is not the only form of plagiarism. In some cases, plagiarism involves paraphrasing the idea of another without a footnote or the repetition of another author’s phrase. Students are advised to consult Purdue University’s Guide to Academic Integrity for guidelines at: [http://www.purdue.edu/ODOS/osrr/integrity.htm](http://www.purdue.edu/ODOS/osrr/integrity.htm). Plagiarized work will receive a 0, and the professor reserves the right to forward the case to the administration for further review by a dean.

**Here Is the Purdue University Policy for Academic Dishonesty:** Purdue prohibits "dishonesty in connection with any University activity. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are examples of dishonesty." [Part 5, Section III-B-2-a, Student Regulations] Furthermore, the University Senate has stipulated that "the commitment of acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest." [University Senate Document 72-18, December 15, 1972] [https://www.purdue.edu/odos/academic-integrity/](https://www.purdue.edu/odos/academic-integrity/)

**Purdue University Policy Prohibits Discrimination:** Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of
academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. Purdue University prohibits discrimination against any member of the University community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, genetic information, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, or status as a veteran. The University will conduct its programs, services and activities consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and orders and in conformance with the procedures and limitations as set forth in Executive Memorandum No. D-1, which provides specific contractual rights and remedies. Any student who believes they have been discriminated against may visit [www.purdue.edu/report-hate](http://www.purdue.edu/report-hate) to submit a complaint to the Office of Institutional Equity. Information may be reported anonymously. [http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html](http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html)

**Accessibility and Accommodation:** Purdue University strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, you are welcome to let me know so that we can discuss options. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: [drc@purdue.edu](mailto:drc@purdue.edu) or by phone: 765-494-1247.

**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.