

**History 161: Middle East II**  
3 June to 5 July 2024  
Monday-Thursday, 8:30-10:35 am  
St. Mary's Hall, G40

Instructor: Patrick Schilling  
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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11:00-12:00, and by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is a survey of the history of the modern Middle East, covering the period from roughly 1800 to the present. The geographical scope of the course comprises the lands which were formerly the central territories of the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, and are today divided between Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Israel, and the states of the Arabian Peninsula. Together we will explore the major events and developments which have shaped the history of this region over the past 200 years. Themes covered include the transformation in the geopolitical makeup of the Middle East, formerly dominated by empires and now composed of nation-states; the impact of European and American imperialism on the region; political, social, intellectual, economic reforms and transformations; and the emergence and growing importance of ideologies and movements of liberation and development (nationalism, constitutionalism, socialism, political Islam, rights movements). The course is divided between lectures providing an overview of the history of the region, discussions of key themes based on readings in recent historical scholarship, and the analysis of primary sources (political pamphlets, newspaper articles, photographs, films, diaries, letters).

**COURSE AIMS**

By the end of this course, students will have:

1. Gained a broad and deep understanding of the modern history of the Middle East, and of how that history has shaped the present-day Middle East.
2. Been exposed to a variety of approaches to, and perspectives on, Middle Eastern history.
3. Learned to critically engage with a wide variety of historical sources, both primary and secondary.
4. Honed their skills as analytical readers, writers and public speakers.
5. Gained an appreciation of the value of history as a means of understanding the world.

## **COURSE READINGS**

You should have access to the following course book. It is available for purchase through the Georgetown Bookstore and other outlets. All other readings and class materials will be posted on the course's Canvas page.

James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History*, **fifth edition** (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

## **ASSESSMENT**

### ***Attendance and Participation: 25%***

Regular class attendance is a requirement for this course. Attendance will be taken daily. You are permitted one automatically excused absence. After this, each further unexcused absence will result in a 10% deduction from your overall attendance and participation grade.

You should come to class having read the texts assigned for that day. You are expected to actively participate in class discussions and activities. Participation will be graded based on both the quantity and the quality of your contributions.

I will post a preliminary mid-term participation grade for each student on Canvas at the end of week 2.

### ***Four Canvas posts (400 words each) on any four of the assigned films: 20% (5% each)***

These should be submitted by Friday, 5:00 pm, of the week when the film is shown.

Your response paper should be about 400 words long. It should discuss how the film illustrates and relates to events or broader themes which we have covered in class.

### ***Four Weekly Mini Exams: 30% (7.5% each)***

There will be one one-hour mini exam at the end of each week, for the first four weeks of the course. The mini exam will test your knowledge of the major historical events, figures and developments which we learned about during the week. Each exam will consist of two parts. The first part consists of multiple-choice questions. In the second part, you will be asked to answer one of a selection of essay questions. Your essay should be about 500 words long. Material will be taken from lectures and from lecture and discussion readings.

### ***Final Take-Home Exam: 25%***

This exam will ask you to answer two from a selection of five essay questions covering the entirety of the material taught in this course. Each essay should be about 800 words in length. Essay questions will require you to make specific reference to lectures and class readings. Essay questions will be published on Canvas at 11:00 am on Thursday, 27 June. Exams are due back to me by 11:00 am on Friday, 5 July. You may consult all course materials and your lecture/discussion notes (but not your fellow students or programs like Chat GPT) while completing the exam. If you need an extension, let me know well before the deadline. Unauthorized late submissions will result in a significant reduction in your final exam grade.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES & RESOURCES**

### ***Honor Code/Plagiarism:***

You are expected to adhere to the university honor code pledge:

*“In pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life I commit myself to respect and to uphold the Georgetown University honor system: to be honest in every academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community as we live and work together.”*

The most common violations of the honor code are cases of plagiarism. Remember that all written assignments must be entirely your own work. This means that you may not use AI programs like Chat GPT to write your essays for you. I would also strongly discourage you from using such programs to create essay drafts. Critical and independent thinking are key parts of intellectual work, and allowing AI programs to do your thinking for you prevents you from developing these skills.

Also remember that, when you use arguments taken from other authors, you have to reference these authors. Direct quotations must be signposted *as quotations* through the use of quotation marks and, again, properly referenced. If you are not sure about how to do this, ask me!

As per university policy, I will report any suspected violations of the honor code to the university honor council.

### ***Sexual Misconduct***

Georgetown University and its faculty and staff are committed to supporting survivors and those impacted by sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking. Georgetown requires faculty members, unless otherwise designated as confidential, to report all disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a professor or staff member in or outside of the classroom (with the exception of disclosures in papers), that faculty or staff member must report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator, or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The coordinator will, in turn, reach out to the student to provide support, resources, and the option to meet. Please note that the student is not required to meet with the Title IX coordinator and no action will be taken without the student’s awareness. More information about reporting options and resources can be found on the Sexual Misconduct Website: <https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/resourcecenter>.

If you would prefer to speak to someone confidentially, Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources that can provide support and assistance. These resources include:

- Health Education Services: Sexual Assault Response and Prevention: [sarp@georgetown.edu](mailto:sarp@georgetown.edu)
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS): 202.687.6985

Additional resources are included below:

- Georgetown Self-Care Resource Guide: <https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/health-promotion/self-care/>
- Georgetown Wellness Wheel: <https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/hoya-wellness-wheel/>
- Georgetown Guide to Recognizing Students in Distress: <https://studentaffairs.georgetown.edu/studentoutreach/facultystaffresources/>

### ***Pregnancy Modifications and Adjustments***

Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant students. At any point throughout their pregnancy students may request adjustments/modifications based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication or medical need. Students may also request accommodations following labor and delivery based on a complication or medical need.

To request pregnancy modifications, please complete the [SCS Pregnancy Modification Request Form](https://forms.gle/ZBfASxui7u13A8TU6): <https://forms.gle/ZBfASxui7u13A8TU6>

More information about pregnancy modifications can be found on the Title IX Georgetown University Website: <https://titleix.georgetown.edu/title-ix-pregnancy/student-pregnancy/>

## COURSE SCHEDULE

**Note:** This schedule may be subject to changes at reasonable notice.

### **Week 1: Setting the Scene: Concepts, Periodization, Historical Background**

Monday, 3 June

#### **Course Introduction**

##### **Lecture:**

What, When, Where is the Modern Middle East?

##### **Lecture Readings:**

Rashid Khalidi, "The "Middle East" as a Framework of Analysis: Re-mapping a Region in the Era of Globalization," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 18:1 (1998), pp. 74-80.

**On Canvas**

Tuesday, 4 June

**Film:** *Whose is this Song?*, dir. Adela Peeva, Adela Media, 2003.

Wednesday, 5 June

##### **Lecture:**

The Middle East From the Fifteenth to the Threshold of the Nineteenth Century

##### **Lecture Readings:**

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, chs. 2-4 (pp. 22-55).

##### **Discussion Reading:**

James McDougall, "Sovereignty, Governance, and Political Community in the Ottoman Empire and North Africa," in Joanna Innes and Mark Philp (eds.), *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Mediterranean, 1780-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018). **On Canvas**

Thursday, 6 June

#### **Primary Source Exercise 1:** Introduction to Primary Sources

"The 1808 Deed of Agreement (*Sened-i İttifak*)"; also read the introduction. **On Canvas**

Further readings TBA

#### **Mini-Exam 1**

\*\*\* Canvas post on film due by Friday, 5:00 pm

## **Week 2: The Long Nineteenth Century**

Monday, 10 June

### **Lecture:**

Inter-Imperial Competition and Reform: Egypt, Iran, the Ottoman Empire

### **Lecture Readings:**

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, chs. 5 and 6 (pp. 67-105).

### **Discussion Readings:**

Thomas Kuehn, "Translators of Empire: Colonial Cosmopolitanism, Ottoman Bureaucrats and the Struggle over the Governance of Yemen, 1898-1914," in Derryl N. MacLean and Sikeena Karmali Ahmed (eds.), *Cosmopolitanisms in Muslim Contexts: Perspectives from the Past* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp.51-67 **On Canvas**

Tuesday, 11 June

**Film:** *Letters from Baghdad*, dirs. Sabine Krayenbühl and Zeva Oelbaum, Vitagraph Studios, 2016.

Wednesday, 12 June

### **Lecture:**

Social, Cultural, Intellectual Transformations

### **Lecture Readings:**

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, chs. 8 and 9 (pp. 140-157).

### **Discussion Reading:**

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, ch.7 and photo essay (pp. 106-139).

Thursday, 13 June

### **Primary Source Exercise 2:** Reimagining Gender Roles

"Should a woman demand all the rights of a man?" **On Canvas**

Other Readings TBA

### **Mini-Exam 2**

\*\*\* Canvas post on film due by Friday, 5:00 pm

### **Week 3: Remaking the Middle East, 1908-1923**

Monday, 17 June

#### **Lecture:**

Constitutionalism and Nationalism

#### **Lecture Readings:**

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, chs. 10 and 13 (pp. 158-165; 222-231).

#### **Discussion Material:**

Film: *1913: Seeds of Conflict*, dir. Ben Loeterman, PBS Distribution, 2015. **On Canvas**

Tuesday, 18 June

#### **Lecture:**

The First World War and its Aftermath

#### **Lecture Readings:**

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 189-192.

Mustafa Aksakal, "The Ottoman Empire," in Robert Gerwarth and Erez Manela (eds.), *Empires at War: 1911-1923* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). **On Canvas**

#### **Discussion Reading:**

Ayhan Aktar, "Debating the Armenian Massacres in the Last Ottoman Parliament," *History Workshop Journal* 64 (2007), pp. 240-270. **On Canvas**

Wednesday, 19 June

**NO CLASS**

Thursday, 20 June

**Primary Source Exercise 3:** Competing Visions of the post-WWI Middle East

Readings TBA

**Mini-Exam 3**

\*\*\* Canvas post on film due by Friday, 5:00 pm

## **Week 4: Nation-States and Mandate States: the post-WWI order**

Monday, 24 June

### **Lecture:**

Independence: Turkey, Iran, Egypt

### **Lecture Reading:**

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, ch. 12 (pp. 207-221).

### **Discussion Reading:**

Christine Philliou, "When the Clock Strikes Twelve: The Inception of an Ottoman Past in Early Republican Turkey," *Comparative Studies in South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 31:1 (2011), pp. 172-182. **On Canvas**

Tuesday, 25 June

**Film:** *Sürü* ('the Herd'), dir. Zeki Ökten, 1978.

Wednesday, 26 June

### **Lecture:**

Mandates: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine

### **Lecture Reading:**

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, ch. 11 (pp. 193-206).

### **Discussion Materials:**

Elizabeth Thompson, Sunil Amrith, Claire Messud. "How the West Stole Arab Democracy." *Mahindra Humanities Center - Writers Speak*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1mkQjvQzDE>

Priya Satia, "The Defense of Inhumanity: Air Control and the British Idea of Arabia," *American Historical Review* 111:1 (2006), pp. 16-51. **On Canvas**

Thursday, 27 June

**Primary Source Exercise 4:** Israel/Palestine

Readings TBA

### **Mini-Exam 4**

\*\*\* Final take-home exam questions posted on Canvas at 11:00 am \*\*\* Canvas post on film due by Friday, 5:00 pm

## **Week 5: The Middle East from the Second World War to the Present**

Monday, 1 July

### **Lecture:**

The Middle East in the Global Cold War

### **Lecture Reading:**

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 261-271, and ch. 17 (pp. 303-320).

### **Discussion Readings:**

Constantin Katsakioris, "The Socialist Countries, North Africa and the Middle East in the Cold War: The Educational Connection," *Contemporary European History* 30 (2021), pp.597-612. **On Canvas**

Toby Jones, "After the Pipelines: Energy and the Flow of War in the Persian Gulf," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 116:2 (2017), pp.417-425. **On Canvas**

Tuesday, 2 July

**Film:** *The Square*, dir. Jouhane Noujaim, Netflix, 2014 **OR** *Ecumenopolis: City Without Limits*, dir. Imre Azem, 2011.

Wednesday, 3 July

### **Lecture:**

The Crisis of the State and Resistance

### **Lecture Reading:**

Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, chs. 15 and 18 (pp. 272-290; 321-347)

**Primary Source Exercise 5:** Resistance in the Contemporary Middle East

Readings TBA

Thursday, 4 July

**NO CLASS**

\*\*\* Final take-home exams due by Friday, 5 July, 11:00 am

\*\*\* Canvas post on film due by Friday, 5:00 pm