History of the Modern Middle East
History 508: 205
Rutgers University
Instructor: Charles Anderson
Office: Van Dyck Hall, room 107; Office hrs by appointment
Email: cwa203@nyu.edu

This is a survey class designed to introduce students to the broad contours of Middle Eastern history since the eighteenth century. Together we will explore through lectures, discussion and other exercises major themes in the history of the region, including: transformations in the Ottoman empire in the 18th and 19th centuries; its dissolution in the 20th century; imperialism and colonialism; regional incorporation into the world economy; anti-colonialism, nationalism and the emergence of the contemporary state system; the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; the effects of the Cold War; the rise of Islamism; and postwar US policy in the region. Throughout, our focus will be on analyzing themes and developments within their historical contexts. The geographic concentration of the class will largely be the Arab East (the mashriq), Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Israel, with more limited attention on Iran and North Africa as well.

While building a basic knowledge of the region this course also aims at strengthening and utilizing analytical and interpretive skills and at building a conceptual vocabulary adequate to understanding and thinking about Middle Eastern history.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

1. Weekly response papers: One page (two pages max) reaction papers that treat materials read for class are due each week. Responses may take the form of summarizing the key points of a reading or readings, or they may be a comment or critique of readings. Students may miss two weeks of responses without penalty. (20% of grade)

2. Mid-term paper: You will write a paper answering one of a prepared set of questions, citing from class materials. The paper will be 5-6 pages in length. (25% of grade)

3. Final paper: Similar in format to the mid-term. Length 7-8 pages. (35% of grade)

4. Attendance and classroom participation: mandatory at all classes. (20% of grade)

***Please note: plagiarism is grounds for failure of the course. Do not plagiarize.***

REQUIRED TEXT:
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS:

September 10: The Ottoman Empire in historical perspective
• Gelvin, part I introduction, and chapter 1: p. 9-26

September 17: The Ottoman Empire in 18th century: regional autonomy
• Gelvin, chapter 4: 47-59
• Juan Cole, Napoleon’s Egypt: invading the Middle East (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) – selection TBA

September 24: The 19th century and the Tanzimat reforms
• Gelvin, part II introduction and chapters 5 and 7: 69-87, 100-110

October 1: The close of the Ottoman era: imperialism and fragmentation
• Gelvin, chapters 6, 8, 10: 88-99, 123-131, 139-146
• Martin Daly, “The British Occupation of Egypt, 1882-1922” in The Cambridge History of Egypt, v.2, p. 239-251

October 8: World War I and the mandates system
• Gelvin, part III introduction and chapters 11-12: p. 171-196

October 15: Arab nationalism and resistance
• Gelvin, chapter 13: 197-205

October 22: Palestine, Zionism, and the birth of Israel
• Gelvin, chapter 14: 206-214

**October 29: The cold war, Arab socialism, and the politics of pan-Arabism**

**November 5: Oil, Islamism, and geopolitics: the US, Saudi Arabia and Iran**
• Gelvin, chapter 16: 247-256

**November 12: the end of the Cold War and the New World Order**
• Anders Strindberg and Mats Wärn, “Realities of Resistance: Hizballah, the Palestinian Rejectionists, and al-Qa‘ida Compared”, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, v. 34, n. 3, Spring 2005, p. 23-41

**November 19: Palestine-Israel: from occupation to ‘peace process’ and beyond**
• Samih K. Farsoun and Naseer Aruri, *Palestine and the Palestinians: a social and political history* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2006), ch 8: p. 239-274

**November 26: Thanksgiving break – no class**
December 3: the Iraq wars, 9-11, and the ‘war on terror’
• Project for a New American Century, letter to President Bill Clinton, Jan 26, 1998
• Jason Brownlee, “Imagining the Next Occupation”, *Middle East Report*, No 249 (Winter 2008), p. 8-11

December 10: the ‘Arab spring’ and the counterrevolution
• readings TBA