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21H.615 The Middle East in the 20th Century  
Spring 2003

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**Massachusetts Institute of Technology**  
**Department of History**

***The Middle East in the Twentieth Century***

**21H.615**

**CI-H**

MWF 11-12:00

Spring 2009

**Bedross Der Matossian**

The goal of this course is to introduce students to major intellectual, political, social and cultural issues and practices in the Middle East from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century until the present. We will focus on important events, movements and ideas that shaped the history of the Middle East from the Ottoman and Egyptian reforms, through the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, to the creation of modern states. The second half of the course will deal with contemporary issues ranging from the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Gulf War, oil and regional security, to the impact of the Iranian revolution, and the emergence of Islamic movements. In addition, the class will be based on various types of readings ranging from primary documents, historical narratives, and historiography, to works of fiction and movies. This is intended to familiarize students with the craft of historical work and the process of creating the historiographies of the Modern Middle East.

**Books:**

- William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 2004)
- James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007)
- Ahlam Mosteghanemi, *Memory in the Flesh* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2003)
- Naguib Mahfouz, *Miramar* (New York: An Anchor Book, 1993)
- Rashid Khalidi, *Resurrecting Empire: Western Footprints and America's Perilous Path in the Middle East* (New York: Beacon Press, 2005)
- Burgat, Francois. *Face to Face with Political Islam* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2005)

## Course Organization

The format of the class will be lectures on Mondays and Wednesdays, and discussion sessions on Fridays. The regular class meetings will be composed of lecture, question and answer and brief discussion of the material. The discussion section on Fridays will address the material covered on Mondays and Wednesdays. Therefore the discussion session will be a very important part of the course as is reflected in the breakdown of the final grade:

Class Participation: 20%

Reaction Papers: 10%

Midterm paper: 15%

Term Paper: 20%

Oral Presentation: 5%

Final Exam: 20%

Map Quiz: 5%

**Oral Participation in Class:** All students must demonstrate that they have read and critically analyzed the material in preparation for lectures and class discussions.

**Essays:** In addition to the discussion session, the criteria for CI-H subjects include twenty pages of written assignments during the semester. The written assignments will be divided into 1) a 10-page final essay, 2) a 5-page short essay, and 3) 5 reaction papers. Each reaction paper is one page. These papers will be based on readings, lectures, discussion, and movies over the course of the class. There will be no need for additional outside research. The long essay is due at the end of the course whereas the short essay is due on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March.

**Final Examination:** The final exam will take place during finals' week and will encompass the entire semester's work. The final exam will include a map, key terms, short essays, and a long essay question. All of the sections mentioned in the final exam will have some element of choice.

**Academic Honesty:** The work that you submit for this class must be your own work. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated under any circumstances and will result in an immediate "F" grade for the course. In addition, all such cases will be immediately directed to the Committee of Discipline. Any words and ideas that are not yours should be accompanied by full and complete citation. If you have any further questions dealing with academic honesty you must contact the professor prior to the submission of any written assignment.

**Week 1: The Middle East and the World in the 18th and the Early 19th Centuries.**

**Feb. 4-6**

Reading: *Gelvin*, 1-67; *Cleveland*, 37-56.

**Week 2: The Era of Reform: Ottoman, Egyptian and Iranian Reforms in the 19th Century.**

**Feb.9, 11, 13.**

Reading: *Gelvin*, 69-87; *Cleveland*, 57-132;

**Week 3: The Ottoman and Iranian Constitutional Revolutions: Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.**

**Feb.16, 18, 20**

**NOTE: February 16: President's Day-Holiday**

Reading: *Gelvin*, 139-169; ; *Cleveland*, 133-148. Quataert, 172-198

**Week 4: Western Imperialism in the Middle East: The Eve of World War I and thereafter.**

**Feb. 23, 25, 27**

Reading: *Gelvin*, 88-110; *Cleveland*, 149-192;

Ahlan Mosteghanemi, *Memory in the Flesh* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2003)

**Week 5: Nationalism and Nation-States in the Middle East.**

**March 2, 4, 6**

Reading: *Gelvin*, 111-138; 171-205; 223-246; *Cleveland* 193-238.

**Week 6: The Arab-Israeli Conflict I.**

**March 11, SHORT TERM ESSAY IS DUE.**

**March 9, 11, 13**

Reading: *Gelvin*, 206-221; *Cleveland*, 239-271

**Week 7: The Arab-Israeli Conflict II.**

**March 16, 18, 20**

Reading: *Gelvin*, 268-277; *Cleveland*, 345-367, 473-526.

**SPRING VACATION-MARCH 23-27.**

**Week 8: The Middle East in the Age of Abdul al-Nasser**

**March 30, April 1, 3**

Reading: *Cleveland*, 301-344.

Naguib Mahfouz, *Miramar* (New York: An Anchor Book, 1993)

**Week 9: Islamic Movements in the Middle East I.**

**April 6, 8, 10.**

Reading: *Burgat*, 1-121; *Gelvin*, 290-299.

Saad Eddin Ibrahim. "[Egypt's Islamic Activism in the 1980s.](#)" *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 2, Islam & Politics. (Apr., 1988), pp. 632-657.

**Week 10: Islamic Movements in the Middle East II.**

**April 13, 15, 17.**

Reading: *Burgat*, 122-185,

Ziad Abu-Amr. " [Hamas: A Historical and Political Background.](#)" *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 4. (Summer, 1993), pp. 5-19.

**Week 11: The Iranian Revolution of 1979: Causes and Outcomes.**  
**April 20, 22, 24**

**NOTE: April 20: Patriots Day Holiday.**

Reading: *Gelvin*, 278-289; *Cleveland*, 273-300; 423-450;

**Week 12: The United States and the Middle East I.**

**April 27, 29, May 1**

Reading: Khalidi, Chs. 1-3

**Week 13: The United States and the Middle East II.**

**May 4, 6, 8.**

**MAY 8: Final paper is DUE.**

Reading: Khalidi, Chs. 3-5. *Gelvin*, 247-267.

Movie: Bahman Ghobadi, *Turtles Can Fly*.

**Week 14: Iraq: The Rise and Fall of Saddam Hussein**

**May 11, 13.**

Reading: *Cleveland*, 397-422.

John F. Devlin. "The Baath Party: Rise and Metamorphosis." *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 96, No. 5. (Dec., 1991), pp. 1396-1407

**Concluding Remarks: The Post-Saddam Middle East.**

**Reading:** *Gelvin*, 247-267; *Cleveland*, 527-576.