

William Paterson University
History Department
Winter 2015

History 3920-80 - Contemporary Middle East History
Dr. John Livingston

I. Course Description:

This course is a political, social and economic survey of Middle Eastern History in the 20th century. It begins with World War I and continues up until contemporary times. The area covered includes Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, the Persian Gulf states, Israel, the Fertile Crescent, Turkey and Iran. The main issues to be studied are:

- the problem of modernization
- the Mamluks of France and Britain and western control of the area between the World Wars
- rise of Modern Republican Turkey
- emergence of the independent Arab states (Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon)
- Zionism and the establishment of Israel
- the Arab-Israeli struggle, and the Arab Cold War
- rise and fall of the Pahlevi dynasty in Iran and establishment of an Islamic republic in its place
- Iran-Iraq War
- Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and Desert Storm
- the Palestinian intifada (uprising) in Gaza and West Bank (1987)
- the Arab-Israeli peace process and its present critical state since the election of Ariel Sharon of Israel, Bush II of the U.S., and the Second Palestinian Intifada in 2000
- United States policy in the Middle East and U.S. invasion of Iraq

II Course Prerequisites are Western Civ. 101 & 102

III Course Goals

The goals of the course are to give the students an understanding of the basic historical causes and patterns that led to the present socio-economic and political condition of the separate Middle East states; and to inculcate skills in interpretation and analysis of historical documents, and to develop ability in writing and methods of research.

Books Required:

A History of the Modern Middle East, William Cleveland

Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, Charles Smith

The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World, Avi Shlaim (**optional**)

Papers:

In addition to exam and quiz essays, there will be a term paper of 6-8 pages (minimum 1,500 words). The subject of the term paper is: “*Stumbling Blocks that Hinder a Peace Agreement between Israel and the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories.*”

Exams and Quizzes:

There will be two exams: a midterm and final, and one quiz.

Grading:

The paper will count 30% of the final grade; the 2 exams will count a total of 60%; a quiz will count 10%.

Weekly Readings:

- Week 1.
- A. Introduction and Historical Background (This is optional, the purpose of the reading is to give background of history before World War I.
Readings: Cleveland, 1-148; Smith, 1-58;
 - B. World War I and the Middle East:
Readings: Cleveland, 149-170; Smith, 59-110;
 - C. Turkey and Iran: Ataturk (Mustafa Kemal) and Reza Shah, founders of Modern Turkey and Iran: Similarities and Differences
Readings: Cleveland, 171-192, 273-300;
 - D. Egypt, The Mandates and Emergence of the Modern Arab States Egypt.
Readings: Cleveland, 193-237;
- Week 2:
- A. Palestine, 1920-1948: Between Arab and Jew with Britain in-between: the creation of Israel.
Readings: Cleveland, 239-271; Smith, 111-225; Shlaim, 1-53 (optional)
 - B. Egypt’s 1952 military revolution led by Gamal abd al-Nasser; Egypt under Nasser to the 1956 Suez War. Israeli-Egyptian friction
Readings: Cleveland, 301-337; Smith, 226-279; Shlaim, 143-185 (optional)
 - C. The Arab-Israeli Conflict: The 1967 War and the new reality created by the Israeli conquests.
Readings: Cleveland, 337-344; Smith, 279-324; Shlaim, 218-309 (optional)
 - D. 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the Camp David Peace Agreement of 1979
Readings: Cleveland, 373-395; Smith, 324-353; Shlaim, 309-383 (optional);

Week 3

A. Israel and the Palestinians: Internal developments in the occupied territories and the Zionist-Palestinian Arab struggle for survival; and the Lebanese Civil War and Israeli Invasion of Lebanon, 1982.

Readings: Cleveland, 345-367 & 474-478 (on Intifada); Smith, 354-428; Shlaim, 384-423 (Israeli Invasion of Lebanon); and Shlaim 450-460 (Palestinian Intifada).

B. The Islamic Revolution in Iran: Fall of the Pahlevi Dynasty and rise of the Islamic Republic of Ayatallah Khomeini.

Readings: Cleveland, 423-450;

C. Iraq-Iran War, 1980-1988: Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and Desert Storm.

Readings: Cleveland, 397-421; 451-497, Smith 428-449;

D. The So-called Road to Peace: The agreement on principles of September, 1993 between Rabin of Israel and Arafat.

Readings: Cleveland, 499-517; Smith, 450-498; Shlaim, 424-450, explains the political paralysis of Israel on the Palestinian issue for a state and how this exploded in the first Palestinian intifada, which in turn influenced Arafat and PLO leadership to gamble on a peace with Israel for a Palestinian state, with the PLO banking on U.S. leadership to pressure Israel to leave most of the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967 (Gaza and West Bank). Also Shlaim, 502-545, on build-up and breakdown of Oslo peace hopes.

E. The derailment of the peace process, followed by September 11, 2001 and the U.S. led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Readings: Cleveland, 519-548, Smith, 499-560, Shlaim, 546-609 (optional)