Middle Eastern Societies

MAP/World Cultures – V55.0511
Fall 2002
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-3:15

Instructor:
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Preceptors:
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Course description: This course examines the histories, cultures and societies of the “Middle East”, a loosely defined term designating a large area of north Africa and west Asia. It starts by asking how historical and anthropological knowledge, western media and travel writing, and academic scholarship have traditionally defined the “Middle East”. It then offers a brief historical perspective of the Ottoman past, i.e. the period from the sixteenth century onwards, passing through the colonial period in the nineteenth century to the present post-colonial period in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The course will then shift to discussing the important issues of gender, family and sexuality and how women and men in the region construct their gender identity. In addition, topical issues such as democracy and human rights, the Arab-Israeli conflict and political Islam will be dealt with. We will use a wide range of materials including diplomatic documents, short stories, biographies, scholarly texts, photographs and videos, to explore the many different ways people in the Middle East have come to define and shape their world and also how outsiders have also attempted to define and shape this world.

Course format: The course consists of two lectures followed by one recitation (discussion group) per week. A list of the weekly topics is given below. The lectures are meant to introduce the weekly topics and will be related to, but not a repetition of, the assigned readings. During the recitations students will discuss with their preceptors issues covered by the lectures and/or discussed in the assigned readings in greater detail and will be encouraged to raise questions and issues for further explorations. Occasionally we will be showing video clips and slides during the lecture.

Required books: available for purchase at the NYU Book Center and also put on reserve in the Reserve Room at Bobst Library (on A Level):

- William Cleveland, A History of the Modern Middle East.
- Joel Beinin and Joe Stork, eds., Political Islam.
- Edmund Burke, Struggle and Survival in the Modern Middle East.
- Edward Said, Covering Islam.

There is also a coursepack of required reading available for sale at MacDougal Center, 172 MacDougal St. Items marked with an asterisk (*) in the reading list below are included in this coursepack.
Course Requirements:
- You are expected to do all the assigned readings carefully and critically before the first lecture of the week for which they are assigned. You should also be ready to discuss these readings as well as the lectures in the recitations with your preceptors.
- You will be asked to write a total of 12 papers of 1-2 pages each in response to a given question stated in the attached readings list. These papers are to be handed in on time to your preceptor in the first recitation following the Thursday lecture. Late papers will be penalized.
- Occasionally and without prior notice a 3-minute pop quiz will be given at the end of the lecture.
- A map quiz on September 17th.

The weekly papers will count for 80% of your final grade, whereas the map and pop quizzes will count for the remaining 20%.

Weekly Readings:
N.B. Items marked with (*) are available for sale in a coursepack from MacDougal Center, 172 MacDougal St.

Week 1 (Sept. 5th): Introduction to the course

Week 2 (Sept. 10th and 12th): What, When and Where is the Middle East

Essay question: Do you think the Middle East to be lucky or unlucky in its physical and human geographical endowment compared to other major regions of the world?

Week 3 (Sept. 17th and 19th): Representing, picturing and imagining the Middle East
- Edward Said, *Covering Islam*, chs. 1-2, pp. 3-64.

Essay question: What images come immediately to your mind when the term “Middle East” is mentioned? How close do you think these images are to the “real” Middle East?

Week 4 (Sept. 24th and 26th): Islam: dogma, faith and practice

Essay question: How close do you think Islam is to the Judeo-Christian tradition (or different from it)?

Week 5 (Oct. 1st and 3rd): The Ottoman heritage
- *Hurewitz, J. C., ed. Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East; a documentary record*, vol. I, documents 1-2, 6, 10, 11.

Essay question: How was it that an empire which had its origins in the late 13th century was still there in 1800?
Week 6 (Oct. 8th and 10th): European Colonialism and its impact
- Edmund Burke, *Struggle and Survival in the Modern Middle East*, chs. 2-7, pp. 31-113.

Essay Question: “Given the nature and extent of European designs on the Middle East in the nineteenth century, it is a wonder that the different states in the region could cope so successfully.” Comment.

Week 7 (Oct. 15th and 17th): The emergence of the modern Middle East: WWI, redrawing the map and the struggle for independence

Essay Question: “Among the different players in the power game that the Middle East was part of during and after World War I, the Arabs where the ones who lost most.” Comment.

Week 8 (Oct. 22nd and 24th): Peoples and States

Week 9 (Oct. 29th and 31st): Democracy and Human Rights
- *Chassan Salame, “Political power and the Saudi State”*
- *Saad Eddin Ibrahim, The New Arab Social Order*, chs. 1-2, 7 (pp. 1-25, 161-174).

Essay question: How do you account for the lack of democracy and the human rights abuses in the Arab world?

Week 10 (Nov. 5th and 7th): Gender and Social relations I
- *Alifa Rifaat, “Distant view of a minaret”*

Essay Question: What is the significance of the veil in the discourse about women in the Middle East?

Week 11 (Nov. 12th and 14th): Gender and Social Relations II
- *Michael Gilsenan, Lords of the Lebanese Marches*, ch. 10, pp. 159-188.

Essay question: What do you think being a "man" means in the Arab world?

**Week 12 (Nov. 19th and 21st): Palestine, Zionism and Israel**
- Edmund Burke, Struggle and Survival in the Modern Middle East, ch. 24, pp. 364-376.
- *Amos Oz, "The Insult and the Fury" and "The Finger of God?" in In the Land of Israel, pp. 25-73.
- *Ghassan Kanafani, "Men in the Sun".

Essay Question: Do you think the Arab-Israeli conflict is essentially a religious, ideological or military conflict?

**Week 13 (Nov. 26th): Islam and Revolution in Iran**
- Edmund Burke, Struggle and Survival in the Modern Middle East, chs. 19-21, pp. 290-335.
- Joel Beinin and Joe Stork, eds., Political Islam, ch. 9, pp. 103-119.

**Week 14 (Dec. 3rd and 5th): Religion and politics**
- John Esposito, Islam: The Straight Path, chs. 4-5.

Essay question: How do you account for the rise of political Islam in the Middle East in recent years?

**Week 15 (Dec. 10th): prospects for the future**

Essay Question: What do you think the Middle East will look like when you turn fifty?
Academic Guidelines for Students

To help foster common academic expectations among students and instructors, the following guidelines for MAP courses are offered to students. While these represent minimum expectations across the curriculum, individual faculty members may set additional course requirements. Students should therefore be sure to consult the course syllabus for details of policies in each class.

Attendance

Inasmuch as students have voluntarily sought admission to the University, they are expected to attend all class meetings, including all lectures and all meetings of associated recitation, workshop, or laboratory sections. Students may be excused for documented medical or personal emergency and will receive reasonable accommodation for the observance of religious holidays. In these cases, they should contact their instructors in advance or, in cases of emergency, as soon as is practicable. Students are responsible for making up any material or assignments they miss.

Classroom Decorum

The classroom is a space for free and open inquiry and for the critical evaluation of ideas, and it should be free of personal prejudice. Students and instructors alike have an obligation to all members of the class to create an educational atmosphere of mutual trust and respect in which differences of opinion can be subjected to deliberate and reasonable examination without animus.

As a matter of courtesy to their fellow students and instructors, students should arrive at class promptly, prepared and ready to participate. Students are reminded particularly to shut off all cellular telephones and pagers and, except in cases of emergency, to remain in the classroom for the duration of the lecture or section meeting. If it is necessary to leave or enter a room once class has begun, students should do so quietly and with as little disruption as possible.

Under University policy, disruptive classroom behavior may be subject to faculty review and disciplinary sanction.

Completion of Assignments

Students are expected to submit course work on time and to retain copies of their work until a final grade has been received for the course. Instructors are not obliged to accept late work and may assign a failing or reduced grade to such assignments.

Students who encounter sudden and incapacitating illness or other comparably grave circumstance that prevents them from completing the final examination or assignment in a course may request a temporary mark of Incomplete from the course instructor. To receive an Incomplete, students must have completed all other requirements for the course, including satisfactory attendance, and there must be a strong likelihood they will pass the course when all work is completed.

Questions and Concerns

Up-to-date course information is available on the MAP website, http://www.cas.nyu.edu/cas/map. Questions, concerns, comments, and feedback may be directed to the following members of the MAP staff, both located in 903 Silver, (212) 998-8119. Complaints will remain confidential.

- Foundations of Contemporary Culture: Dr. Vincent Renzi, map.fcc@nyu.edu
- Foundations of Scientific Inquiry: Dr. Trace Jordan, map.fsi@nyu.edu

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Autumn, 2002
Statement on Academic Integrity

As a student at New York University, you have been admitted to a community of scholars who value free and open inquiry. Our work depends on honest assessment of ideas and their sources; and we expect you, as a member of our community, likewise to maintain the highest integrity in your academic work. Because of the central importance of these values to our intellectual life together, those who fail to maintain them will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University.

Plagiarism consists in presenting ideas and words without acknowledging their source and is an offense against academic integrity. Any of the following acts constitutes a crime of plagiarism.

- Using a phrase, sentence, or passage from another person’s work without quotation marks and attribution of the source.
- Paraphrasing words or ideas from another’s work without attribution.
- Reporting as your own research or knowledge any data or facts gathered or reported by another person.
- Submitting in your own name papers or reports completed by another.
- Submitting your own original work toward requirements in more than one class without the prior permission of the instructors.

Other offenses against academic integrity include the following.

- Collaborating with other students on assignments without the express permission of the instructor.
- Giving your work to another student to submit as his or her own.
- Copying answers from other students during examinations.
- Using notes or other sources to answer exam questions without the instructor’s permission.
- Secreting or destroying library or reference materials.
- Submitting as your own work a paper or results of research that you have purchased from a commercial firm or another person.

**Particular emphasis is placed on the use of papers and other materials to be found on the World-Wide Web, whether purchased or freely available. In addition to having access to the same search engines as students, faculty also have at their disposal a number of special websites devoted to detecting plagiarism from the web.**

Plagiarism and other cases of academic fraud are matters of fact, not intention. It is therefore crucial that you be diligent in assuring the integrity of your work.

- Use quotation marks to set off words not your own.
- Learn to use proper forms of attribution for source materials.
- Do your own original work in each class, without collaboration, unless otherwise instructed.
- Don’t use published sources, the work of others, or material from the web without attribution.
- Ask your professor or preceptor if you have questions about an assignment or the use of sources.
- For further information, consult the Bulletin of the College of Arts and Science, the CAS Academic Handbook, and the Student’s Guide to NYU.