

The Modern Middle East: A History 1880 to the Present

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Purpose: The aim of this class is to give RenMin University undergraduate students an overview of the main developments in modern Middle Eastern history. By the end of the course students will be 1) ready for advanced study and 2) able to integrate Middle Eastern history into the general patterns of modern world history.

Content: The course covers four main areas. They are 1) The decline of the Ottoman Empire and the division of the Middle East by Western powers, 2) The creation of modern states in the Middle East and the problems associated with them, 3) The consequences of the oil crisis of the 1970's and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and 4) The collapse of Middle Eastern order following the First Gulf War.

Method: The course will consist of two parts. First students will be given lectures that cover the central themes of the class. Second, they will be given examinations and other written work that tests their ability to absorb the knowledge and explain it.

Readings: There are two main reference works for this class:

David Fromkin, *A Peace to End all Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*

James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History*

In addition, each lecture will be supplemented by original source material. Students will be expected to read primary documents. Details will follow in class.

Lecture Outline:

- 1) What are Islamic Empires?
- 2) The reasons for the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the start of Western imperialism.
- 3) World War One as a turning point.
- 4) The illusions of the "Mandate Era" in the 1920's
- 5) The collapse of British and French rule in the 1940's and 50's.
- 6) Nasser and his significance for the Middle East.
- 7) Israel until 1967.
- 8) The United States and the Middle East until 1973.
- 9) Mid Term
- 10) The Civil war in Lebanon
- 11) The fall of the Shah in Iran.
- 12) Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq.
- 13) "Intifada" in Israel and Palestine.
- 14) Anti-Semitism as an explanatory force in the Modern Middle East

- 15) Troubles in Algeria.
- 16) The first Gulf War and its consequences.
- 17) The aftermath of 9/11 for the Middle East.