

World War I and the Making of the Modern Middle East
University of West Georgia

CRN: 82892 / HIST 4385 – Fall 2019
Monday/Wednesday: 2:00-3:15 PM
Room: HUM, #212

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Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday, 8:15-9:15 AM, 12:30-1:45 PM and
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PLEASE DO NOT USE COURSEDEN EMAIL



Enver and Cemal Paşa visiting the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem (1916)

World War I and the demise of the Ottoman Empire defined the modern Middle East in profound and lasting ways. The postwar settlement organized the current state system in the region on a purported “national basis,” which, along with the question of Palestine, is perhaps the most enduring legacy of the war in the Middle East. Against demands for self-determination, British and French rule replaced Ottoman sovereignty in the Arab provinces under the League of Nations mandates system. At the same time, the Turkish Republic emerged as one of the few independent states in the post-Ottoman

Middle East. From the perspective of international relations, the war effectively solved the old “Eastern Question.” The core successor state of the empire, Turkey, once one of the most important, if weak, peripheral powers in Europe, was suddenly formally outside of the international order and no longer a European power.

In the Middle East, World War I did not end in 1918. The period between 1918-1923 was one of flux and opportunity, as nationalists throughout the region fought to establish facts on the ground in order to determine political outcomes. Anti-colonial resistance movements impeded European colonial control in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Palestine. Until the fate of the Ottoman Empire was finally settled at Lausanne in 1923, the British and French mandates in the Middle East could not fully implemented and assured. The war rearranged the demographic map of the former Ottoman lands, most profoundly in the new Turkey. After years of continuous warfare, the influx of refugees from the Balkans, the deportation and massacres of the Armenians, and the internationally sanctioned population transfer between Greece and Turkey at Lausanne, the demographic makeup of Turkey was significantly more Muslim and more Turkish than before the war. There were still large minority populations, notably the Kurds, but much of the work of making the state national had been carried out under the cover of war.

This class will cover the period between the Young Turk Revolution in 1908 and the demise of the Ottoman Empire in the early 1920s. It will examine a series of historical debates, including the Ottoman decision to enter the war on the side of the Central Powers, Ottoman mobilization practices, the Armenian Genocide, the Arab Revolt as well as the how the Great Powers and the populations of Middle East confronted one another at the Paris Peace Conference. The course will analyze the violence associated with the breakdown of empire and will conclude with a discussion of the legacies of Ottoman rule in Anatolia and the Arab provinces.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is mandatory. All students are expected to have completed the week’s readings prior to each lecture. If you are unable to attend a discussion section, send me an email before class. Three or more unexcused absences will result in automatic failure.

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course:

- Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to understand the political, social, economic, or cultural dimensions of modern Middle Eastern history and the central role World War I played in crafting that political world.
- Students will be able to differentiate between primary and secondary sources.
- In both written and oral work, students will be able to analyze and interpret primary sources and will be able to formulate historical arguments based upon primary sources.

Evaluation:

Midterm (take home exam): 20%

Research project on the Famine in Greater-Syria (2 pages): 15%

Research project on the King-Crane Commission (2 pages): 15%

Final Exam or Research Paper: 30%

Class participation: 20% (includes attendance, map quizzes and written homework)

Grade Scale:

A = 90% and above B = 80-89 % C = 70-79% D = 60-69% F = below 60%

CourseDen and Required Reading:

Fethiye Çetin, *My Grandmother: A Memoir* (Verso, 2012)

All other readings, including primary sources, are available on CourseDen

Classroom Policies:

Assignments: Students are expected to complete ALL assigned readings before class. Pay attention to the due date of written assignment and exams. You will receive a handout for each writing assignment along with a rubric. Late papers will lose half a letter grade per day late.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is essential to perform well in the class and is mandatory. Late students will be marked absent. **If you are unable to class, please send me an email before class. Excessive absences** will significantly affect your final grade.

Academic Honesty: Students are required to abide by the University's Honor Code. **Plagiarism or cheating will result in the automatic failure of the course. The code can be found here:**

<https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/assets/docs/2016-2017-code-of-conduct.pdf>

Technology: The use of **cell phones**, especially text messaging, is strictly prohibited. If you are found to be text messaging during class, you will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the day and marked absent. I prefer that students **take notes by hand, if you require the use of a computer please see me.**

Student Resources: I encourage all students to meet with me at least once during the semester. If you have any questions about the readings, material covered in lectures or the written assignments, please send me an email or visit me in my office.

For assistance with writing, please make use of the University Writing Center (UWC) located in TLC 1201: <https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing/>.

For assistance with developing study skills and time management please visit the Center for Academic Success (CAS) located in UCC 200: <https://www.westga.edu/student-services/cas/index.php>.

Disability Services and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act): The Office of Disability Services will help you understand your rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide you further assistance with requesting and arranging accommodations. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please notify me using the course email system by the end of

the second full week of class and attach a PDF copy of your SAR (Available from the Office of Disability Services).

For important policy information, i.e., the UWG Honor Code, Email, and Credit Hour policies, as well as information on Academic Support and Online Courses, please review the information found in the Common Language for Course Syllabi documentation at: http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf

Weekly Syllabus

Wed. Aug.14 – Introduction

Mon. Aug. 19 - A Short History of the Ottoman Empire: 1299-1908

Wed. Aug. 21 - Political and Social Life in the Ottoman Empire during the Young Turk Revolution

Bedross Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution: From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire*, chap. 2 “Debating the Future of the Empire”

Document: Revolutionary poems and songs (distributed in class)

Mon. Aug. 26 – The July Crisis in Europe

*NO CLASS MEETING

Homework: Please read the chapter below and follow the instructions on the worksheet distributed in class. The homework assignment is due in class on Wed. Aug. 28

Stephen Kern, “Temporality of the July Crisis,” in *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918*

Wed. Aug. 28 - The Italian invasion of Libya and the Balkan Wars, 1911-1913

Mustafa Aksakal, “Not ‘by those old books of international law, but only by war’: Ottoman Intellectuals on the Eve of the Great War,” *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 15, 3(2004): pp. 507-544

Document: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Report of the International Commission on the Balkan Wars* (1914), “The War and the Non-Combatant Population,” p. 71-78

Monday, Sept. 2 – NO CLASS - HOLIDAY (LABOR DAY)

Wed. Sept. 4 - The Ottoman Road to War and the Declaration of Jihad

Mustafa Aksakal, “Holy War Made in Germany? Ottoman Origins of the 1914 Jihad,” *War in History* 18 (2011): 184-99

Document:
Declaration of Jihad

Mon. Sept. 9 - Conscription and Mobilization

Yığıt Akin, "From the Fields to the Ranks" in *When the War Came Home: The Ottomans' Great War and the Devastation of an Empire*

Film (in class) - "Jihad," episode from Strachan's documentary series, *The First World War*

Wed. Sept. 11 – Cemal Paşa in Syria: The Arab Question

Salim Tamari, "Arabs, Turks, and Monkeys: The Ethnography and Cartography of Ottoman Syria" in *The Great War and the Remaking of Ottoman Palestine*

Document:

Ahmed Cemal (Ahmed Djemal), "The Arab Rebellion" in *Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 1913-1919*. You may skim the chapter, but be prepared to discuss pp. 197-205

Mon. Sept. 16 – The Gallipoli Campaign

Mehmed Fasih, *Gallipoli 1915: Bloody Ridge (Lone Pine) Diary of Lt. Mehmed Fasih, 5th Imperial Ottoman Army*, selection

Introduction to Research Project 1:

Writing the Social History of the Middle East: The Famine in Greater Syria (worksheet available in class)

Wed. Sept. 18 – A Plague of Locusts and the Famine in Greater Syria

Halide Edip, "How I went to Syria" in *House with Wisteria*

Mon. Sept. 23 – War Profiteering

Leila Fawaz, "Entrepreneurs and Profiteers" *A Land of Aching Hearts: The Middle East and the Great War*, p. 121-160

Document:

Cartoons from Sedad Simavi, *Yeni Zenginler/Les Néo-Riches* (1918)

** Start reading Fethiye Cetin's *My Grandmother* for discussion on Wednesday Sept. 25

Wed. Sept. 25 – The Armenian Genocide

Recommended: Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, p. 159-184

Continuing reading Fethiye Cetin's *My Grandmother* for discussion on Monday Sept. 30

Mon. Sept. 30 – The Politics of Remembering the Armenian Genocide

Fethiye Cetin, *My Grandmother: A Memoir* (entire)

Wed. Oct. 2 - The Homefront: Social Consequences of the War in Greater Syria and Anatolia

Salim Tamari, "The Diary of Ihsan Turjman," in *Year of the Locust: A Soldier's Diary and the Erasure of Palestine's Ottoman Past*

Research project on the Famine in Syria due in class!!!

Take-home midterm distributed in class!

Mon. Oct. 7 – European Plans for the Partition of the Ottoman Empire

Rogan, *The Arabs: A History*, p.147-174 (skim, focus on the primary sources below)

Document:

Sykes-Picot Agreement; McMahon–Hussein Correspondence

Wed. Oct. 9 – Pan-Islam and the Arab Revolt

T.E. Lawrence, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, p. 8-15; p. 538-541

Mon. Oct. 14 - Britain, Islam and Wartime Propaganda

John Buchan, *Greenmantle* (novel) read the entire book, focus on chapters 1, 9-12, 16-20

MIDTERM DUE at 11:59 PM!! Please upload a copy to CourseDen

Wed. Oct. 16 – Colonial Soldiers and Ottoman Prisoners of War

Yücel Yanıkdağ, "Captivity in Russia and Egypt," *Healing the Nation: Prisoners of War, Medicine and Nationalism in Turkey*

Mon. Oct. 21 – Losing the War: From the Fall of Baghdad to the Armistice

Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, p. 355-383

Wed. Oct. 23 - The Scramble for Recognition at Paris

"The Wilsonian Moment and the Rise of Anticolonial Nationalism: The Case of Egypt," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 12:4 (December 2001), 99-122

Documents:

Series of Pamphlets sent to Wilson and Clemenceau from delegations representing various subjects of the Ottoman Empire including Egyptians, Greeks, Armenians, Arabs and Sudanese as well as the Zionist Organization. Selection one pamphlet. Be prepared to present the argument in your pamphlet to the class.

Introduction to Research Project 2:

Writing the Political History of the Middle East: The King Crane Commission Digital Collection, Oberlin College Archives (details available in class)

Mon. Oct. 28 – Faisal, Syria and the General Syrian Congress at Damascus

Resolution of the Syrian General Congress at Damascus, 2 July 1919

Wed. Oct. 30 - The King-Crane Commission and the Mandates for Syria and

Lebanon

“Recommendations of the King-Crane Commission with regard to Syria-Palestine and Iraq”

Mon. Nov. 4 – Istanbul under Allied Occupation and the Turkish Independence War

Halide Edip, “Memoranda to the Sivas Congress Regarding Foreign Mandates”

The National Pact, January 28, 1920

Wed. Nov. 6 - The Treaty of Lausanne: The Population Exchange

Bruce Clark, *Twice a Stranger: The Mass Expulsions that Forged Modern Greece and Turkey*, selection

Mon. Nov. 11 – Film “They Shall Not Grow Old”

Wed. Nov. 13 – The British Mandate for Palestine and Transjordan

Awad Halabi, “Liminal Loyalties: Ottomanism and Palestinian Responses to the Turkish War of Independence, 1919-22” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 41:3 (Spring 2012)

Document: Mandate for Palestine

Mon. Nov. 18 - The British Mandate for Iraq

Susan Pedersen, “Getting Out of Iraq—in 1932: The League of Nations and the Road to Normative Statehood,” *American Historical Review*, (2010) 115 (4): 975-1000

Document:

“Special Report by His Majesty’s Government on the Progress of Iraq during the Period, 1920-1931”

Research Project 2 due in class!!!!

Wed. Nov. 20 – Making the Turkish Republic

M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*, chap. 6

Document:

Images of the New Turkey from *Yabancı Gözüyle Cumhuriyet Türkiyesi* (1938)

THANKSGIVING BREAK November 25-29 – NO CLASS

Monday, December 2 – Conclusions

Ahmed Emin, “The After-Effects of the War,” *Turkey in the First World War* (1930)

Erdağ Göknaç, “Reading Occupied Istanbul: Turkish Subject-Formation from Historical Trauma to Literary Trope,” *Culture, Theory and Critique*, 55, 3(2014): 321-241

Wed. Dec. 4 – Final Exam (You may opt to write a research paper in lieu of taking the exam.)