

HISW 242: History of the Middle East A History Skills Workshop

Winter 2021
Tuesday & Thursday 4:15–5:30pm
Remote

Dr. Mark Sanagan
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Office hours: Tues & Thurs. 2-3pm

Teaching Assistants

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Calendar description

“This course surveys the history of the Middle East from the rise of Islam to the present. It traces broadly the formation of an Islamic World over a millennium and follows its engagements with modernity, examining closely the shift from the overarching paradigm of the multi-ethnic/multilinguistic Ottoman Empire to that of the mono-ethnic/monolingual modern nation state. This course covers the political history of the region including the experience of British and French colonialism, the rise of nationalist movements, and the Arab-Israeli conflict, and focuses on its social, intellectual, and cultural history.”

Because this course is a survey that spans hundreds of years and multiple continents, there will be a great deal left out. This is unfortunate, but it’s also a good reason to do your readings, watch the lectures, and participate in conference sessions with your fellow students and Teaching Assistants.

Course Objectives

- Introduce students to basic geopolitical and social forces – both from within and without – that have helped shaped the contemporary Middle East.
- Challenge essentialist assumptions about the people of the region, while also placing their history within a trans-regional or global perspective.
- Encourage students to read primary and secondary sources critically; to formulate coherent scholarly arguments in response to a historical question; to articulate these arguments in a persuasive fashion. Namely, to become better historians.

Lecture delivery

Concordia has issued some guidelines around online lecture delivery. It reads: “Best practices for remote instruction teaching indicate that asynchronous (posted video lectures, posted lecture notes, chat sessions) rather than synchronous methods (Zoom classroom meetings) are more compatible with student needs and availabilities under the conditions of COVID-19.” I’ve heard lots of different takes on

this, including some that say students much prefer the regularity of live lectures. I honestly don't know which is right, and I suspect that half the class prefers one over the other, but I'm going to go with the recommendation from Concordia.

As such I will be recording short videos that, when taken together, will form some semblance of a "lecture." This is certainly not the optimal situation (no kidding) so please be patient with me and your TAs as we work through the technological aspects of the course. The videos will be posted around the time of the scheduled lecture on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

History Skills Workshop (HSW)

History Skills Workshop courses include small discussion groups ("conferences") whose purpose is to develop your skills as a nascent historian. These conferences offer you an opportunity to discuss the course materials with your classmates and engage with your Teaching Assistants. History Skills Workshop courses include an emphasis on primary sources and historiography (I'll explain more on what these are during lectures). Some assignments in HSWs also have you engage in the more practical aspects of the work historians do: evaluating sources, thinking through your arguments, marshalling evidence, and telling a story.

Conferences

Weekly conference sections will be held remotely through Zoom. These conferences will be led by your Teaching Assistant, who will send you a link for each session. The conferences are an opportunity to work through ideas by expressing them out loud and engaging with your classmates. This is a particularly beneficial but difficult task in our current environment.

Contributing to class discussions over Zoom will not be easy. The technological interface makes a discussion a little more disjointed, a little less free flowing. However, if you are someone who tends to shy away from these situations (public speaking in a group of your peers) this may also be a helpful medium: prepare some notes, raise your hand (electronically), and when called upon by your TA, briefly deliver your prepared remarks. This might have seemed a bit strange had the conferences been held in person, but it is difficult to jump into any conversation over Zoom – even among close friends. On the other hand, if you find yourself talking too much or always speaking first, please try to hold back and give your classmates the opportunity to contribute. Being polite and considerate of your classmates comes across in these meetings and leaves a good impression with your TA.

Finally, do remember: these discussions are not a competition. This is an academic environment and there should be a respectful give-and-take with your fellow students over even the most controversial issues. If you find yourself arguing with a classmate over something in which you strongly believe, that's understandable, but be respectful and make your case. For more on this, see the section *Student behaviour* below, and consult the [Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Readings

You will, on average, have two sets of readings assigned to you each week.

Textbook

The first will be sections of a textbook. Most of these will be taken from a textbook written by William Cleveland and Martin Bunton. These readings will form the basic historical narrative, supplemented by lectures.

- *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Sixth Edition) Edited by William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, (Westview Press, 2016).

Normally I'd ask you to buy this textbook. Because the second set of readings are available for free, the textbook is your only expense. However, everything sucks now and cash is tight for many of you. I want to give you the option to not buy the book, so I've come up with a bit of a work around.

I'll be posting your textbook readings on Moodle. For the record: I'm going to hew as closely as possible to copyright laws. With that in mind they won't all be taken from the same textbook. I'll find alternatives and post them whenever I can. This is a complicated process so just note that the textbook readings identified in the syllabus will change. Check in on Moodle before you read your textbook reading for the week and make sure what I have posted for you to read is the same as what is on the syllabus (but go with what I've posted).

You're welcome to buy the textbook (Martin Bunton is a great guy and a world-class historian). But for this semester – in this environment – I can't in good conscience make you try and get it. If you DO buy the textbook you can get ANY edition and I will give you the corresponding page numbers.

I've requested that the eBook be made available in course reserves and I ask that, as often as you can, you try to take the book out from the online Concordia library. If that doesn't work for some reason (maybe someone else has the book out), try OpenLibrary for the third edition here:

https://openlibrary.org/books/OL8024103M/A_History_of_the_Modern_Middle_East

Ah – now you ask: “What is the difference between the editions if you say you don't care which I read?” or maybe “If I read the second edition, will I be missing information found in the sixth edition that I might be tested about?” And the answer is that I won't assign readings from the latest edition that do not appear in the earlier versions. The textbook is really there to give you a strong chronological foundation in what is happening, decade to decade, in the Middle East during the period covered by this course.

Conference readings

The second set of readings will be either primary source texts or academic articles, also available to you through the course's Moodle site. The primary source texts will be important in showing you what historical figures thought, said, or wrote in their own words. This second set of readings will be the focus of your conference sessions so make sure to read them closely.

Writing resources

Lastly, I will be posting a series of texts that will help you produce a better term paper. *You do not have to read them* – if you're interested in becoming better historians or better writers in general, feel free to skim or peruse them at your leisure.

Method of Assessment

Your grade will be calculated according to the following criteria:

1. Map quiz (5%)
2. Conference participation (15%)
3. Research/Thesis statement exercise (10%)
4. Source assessment (15%)
5. Term paper (25%)
6. Final exam (30%)

Map quiz

This is an open book test and an easy way to get 5%. You may think this to be a silly thing to test but being able to visualize the geographic relationship between places that will be discussed over the course of the semester is important.

Conference participation

Your participation in Zoom conferences will be determined according to a simple system – you will be assigned a weekly grade of:

+	excellent	(10/10)
✓	satisfactory	(8/10)
-	unsatisfactory	(6/10)

We all have off days and other commitments, so you won't be graded on every conference. Instead, only your best ten conferences will count towards your final grade. Further, if you are not comfortable speaking online, or if it is impossible for you to join your conference section on a regular basis, you have the option of allotting all your participation grades to the final three assignments (so your source assessment would be worth 20%; term paper, 30%, final exam, 35%). Please inform your Teaching Assistant if you would like to take this option.

Research/Thesis statement exercise

This assignment will have you write a short (500 to 750 words) introduction to a term paper on the topic of the transition from empire to nations or on a topic of your term paper. Details of this assignment will be provided early in the semester.

Source assessment

This assignment is designed for you to start thinking and *working* like a historian. You'll write a 1000-word paper analyzing a series of documents about a single event that took place 1932. I'll explain this assignment in a video and provide you with the documents in a package in February.

Term paper

This is a more traditional term paper (2000 words) that you can begin to think about early in the semester. I have a list of potential topics for you to consider and you do have the option to research a different question, subject to instructor approval.

Final exam

The final exam will be given as a take-home, open book exam. You will have 24 hours (9am to 9am) to complete the exam and submit it via Moodle. The exam will be exclusively essay format. More details will be given to you about the content of the exam in the final week of the term.

Important dates

14 January	First day of class
19 January	Conferences begin
26 January	Map quiz
16 February	Research/thesis statement exercise due
1-7 March	Mid-term break
18 March	Source assessment due
26 March	Last day to register with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities
29 March	Drop date
6 April	Term paper due
27 April	Final exam

Schedule

Thursday January 14: Introduction: What are we talking about?

Tuesday January 19: What are we talking about when we're talking about a history of the Middle East?

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 1-4
- Akram Khater, "How to Read a Primary Source"

***** Conferences begin this week*****

Thursday January 21: Empires of the Middle East I

Tuesday January 26: Empires of the Middle East II

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 35-52: "Ottoman and Safavid Empires: A New Imperial Synthesis"
- Donald Quataert, "Why Study Ottoman History?"

***** Map quiz *****

Thursday January 28: The Ottoman Empire I

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 76-102: "The Ottoman Empire and Egypt during the Tanzimat"
- "The Gulhane Proclamation"
- "An Ottoman Bill of Right"

Tuesday February 2: The Ottoman Empire II (Guest lecture, Dr. Michael Ferguson)

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 111-124: "The Response of Islamic Society"
- Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, "Plan for Islamic Unity"

Thursday February 4: Nationalisms in the Middle East

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 124-134; "The Era of the Young Turks"
- C. Ernest Dawn, "From Ottomanism to Arabism: The Origins of an Ideology"
- Adeed Dawisha, "Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century"

Tuesday February 9: The First World War

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 139-159: "World War I and the End of the Ottoman Order"
- "The Husayn-McMahon Correspondence"

Thursday February 11: The Republic of Turkey, and Iran

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 166-183: "Authoritarian Reforms in Turkey and Iran"
- Mustapha Kemal Pasha, "An Exhortation to Progress"

Tuesday February 16: The Inter-War Period (Sykes-Picot)

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 184-225: "The Arab Struggle for Independence: Egypt, Iraq, and Transjordan from the Interwar Era to 1945"
- "The Sykes-Picot Agreement"
- "Parliamentary Debate About the Relationship Between Gender and Citizenship in the Proposed State, April 25, 1920" (Syria)

***** Research/thesis statement exercise due*****

Thursday February 18: Zionism to 1948

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 184-225: "The Arab Struggle for Independence: Syria, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia from the Interwar Era to 1945"

- Theodore Herzl, "The Jewish State"
- "The Basel Program"
- "The Balfour Declaration"
- Ze'ev Jabotinsky, "Evidence submitted to the Peel Commission"

Tuesday February 23: Palestine to 1948

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 226-242: "The Palestine Mandate and the Birth of the State of Israel"
- Rashid Khalidi, "The Formation of Palestinian Identity: The Critical Years..."

Thursday February 25: Nahalal, 1932 (Source assessment introduction)

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 242-256: "Communal Conflict and the British Response"
- Mark Sanagan, "Teacher, Preacher, Soldier, Martyr..."

***** March 1-7, Mid-term break *****

Tuesday March 9: Nasserism and Arab Socialism

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 286-313: "The Middle East in the Age of Nasser"
- Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir (Gamal Abd al-Nasser), "Egypt's Liberation"

Thursday March 11: Autocracies in Syria and Iraq

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 423-446: "The Consolidation of Authoritarian Rule in Syria and Iraq"
- "The Program of the *Ba'th* (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party, 1963"

Tuesday March 16: The 1967 War

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 313-327
- Palestinian National Council, "The National Charter"
- "UN Resolution #242: Withdrawal from Occupied Territory"
- Nizar Qabbani, "The Catastrophe of Arab Defeat"

Thursday March 18: Iran to the 1960s

- Cleveland and Bunton, p. 273-285
 - Muhammad Mossadeq, "Nationalizing Iranian Oil"
- *** Source assessment due*****

Tuesday March 23: Political Islam I: The Egyptian Case

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 351-354, 371-375, 378-389
- "The Rise of Mass Doctrinal Parties: the Program of Hassan al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood, 1936"
- Sayyid Qutb, "Introduction" in *Milestones*, p. 5-10

Thursday March 25: Political Islam II: The Iranian Revolution

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 355-371
- Ayatollah Khomeini, "We Shall Confront the World with our Ideology"
- Ervand Abrahamian, "Fundamentalism or Populism?"

***** Drop date is March 29 *****

Tuesday March 30: Lebanese Civil War

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 389-398
- "The Taif Agreement"
- "Text of Open Letter Addressed by Hezbollah to the Downtrodden in Lebanon and the World"

Thursday April 1: The First Intifada

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 451-456
- Yasser Arafat, "Speech to the UN, 13 December 1988" (excerpts)
- Platform of the Likud Party (1977)
- "Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement of Palestine (Hamas)"

Tuesday April 6: "The Peace Process" or the Arab-Israeli conflict since 1989

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 474-498
- Chronology of the Peace Process
- "Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization Agreement: 1993" (The Oslo Accords)
- Ariel Sharon, "Six Red Lines for Peace"

***** Term paper due *****

Thursday April 8: Zanzibar & the Middle East (Guest Lecture, Devin Murray)

Tuesday April 13: The Peace Process cont.

- Osama Bin Laden, "Letter to Americans: Why we are fighting you"
- George W. Bush, "Freedom and Fear are at War"
- Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage"
- Edward Said, "The Clash of Ignorance"

Thursday April 15: The "War on Terror" & the "Arab Spring"

- Cleveland & Bunton, p. 519-536

Tuesday April 20: Term review

Tuesday April 27: * Final exam *****

(Final version)

Other stuff to know

A note on guest lectures

There will be a couple of guest lectures (or more accurately guest videos) this semester. These are usually good opportunities to hear from someone with more specialized knowledge and you should be sure to tune in and treat these occasions like any other class lecture.

Submission of course work

Essays will be marked for content and analysis first and foremost, but also for clarity of writing, grammar, and organization (you will be given a rubric with this information on it during the semester). If you're worried about any of these aspects of your paper, you should make an appointment to speak to me or your TA via Zoom during office hours. While we won't read your essay, we can talk about it and give you tips on how you might make it better.

Your essay assignment will be distributed to you early in the semester so you will have lots of time to work on it. Use the time wisely. Essays will be due 6 April at 3:30pm. Any time after 3:30pm on the 6th, your paper will be assessed a 3% per day penalty. (See also *Requests for the extension of a deadline* below).

Accessibility

The issue of accessibility is extremely important to me personally and particularly sensitive in an online learning environment. If you have accessibility needs that require academic accommodations, please contact an advisor from the [Access Centre for Students with Disabilities](#) (ACSD) as soon as possible to set up an accommodation plan. The ACSD will be in touch with me directly about accommodation plans so there is no pressure to do so yourself, however, any student is welcome to get in touch with me to discuss their accessibility needs.

Email communication

All email communication sent from students to your instructors and TAs should originate from the student's own Concordia University email account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. Unless arrangements have been made within the first two weeks of the course, emails that do not originate from Concordia accounts will be deleted. This is for everyone's good!

Modifications to the syllabus

"The Instructor and the University reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The University may change the dates and deadlines for any or all course requirements in extreme circumstances. If modifications become necessary, reasonable notice will be given along with an explanation and the opportunity to comment on the changes. Changes will be flagged, but it is the responsibility of the students to check their Concordia email and Moodle course site regularly during the term and to note any changes."

Requests for the extension of a deadline

Extensions or other accommodations will be determined by the instructor on a case-by-case basis but should be made as far in advance as possible. While there are **no** automatic extensions or accommodations, those requests that are supported by appropriate documentation are typically granted pro forma.

This is an extraordinary time and as such I understand that there are a number of obstacles that may stand between your intentions to complete an assignment and actually doing so. I'm sympathetic to all sorts of these obstacles so convincing me to give you an extension is not the challenge: doing a good job on the assignment—even with three extra days—is not the salvation you might think it is. Trust me. Late papers are never as good as you think they are. When you hand in an assignment late it is often graded on its own, sometimes by someone you weren't expecting to grade it (ie. maybe your TA would have normally been the one to grade your paper but because it was late it goes to a different grader – this is common). Further, an extension on one assignment can wreak havoc on other assignments: I gave some thought to the spacing and timing of your papers and tests and taking longer on one may leave you with less time for the next (or just as often, jam you up with papers for a different class). Finally, don't forget: your instructor and the TAs have their own deadlines to submit graded materials back to students before the drop date of 29 March, and to the department at the end of term. There is only so much they can do. The point of all this: get an extension only when you need it.

Land acknowledgments

This is a course that focuses a great deal on the issue of colonialism in the Middle East and I would be remiss to not acknowledge its impact here in Canada as well.

“Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which the University is located. Tiohtià:ke/Montréal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.” (For more, please see [The Indigenous Directions Action Plan: Concordia's Path Towards Decolonizing and Indigenizing the University](#)).

Additionally, this course is being taught from the traditional lands of the Huron-Wendat, the Haudenosaunee (Seneca), and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River; as well as the traditional lands of the Ojibwa Chippewa of the Anishnaabe people. This territory was subject to the Dish with One Spoon wampum, under which multiple nations agreed to care for the land and resources by the Great Lakes. (See: University of Toronto's [Land Acknowledgment](#), and Huron County's [Indigenous Awareness and Reconciliation Statement](#)).

Syllabus sources

Historians should always cite their sources and a syllabus is no different! I've been teaching this course off and on for nearly a decade, and though it has gone through a number of iterations since, I want to acknowledge my initial sources of inspiration: First, Professor Paul Sedra (now of Simon Fraser University) taught "Introduction to the Modern Middle East" at the University of Toronto in 2003-2004. I was a student of his and his syllabus is the initial reference point for what was the first version of this course. For the lecture topics related to the Arab-Israeli conflict, I am indebted to Professor Laila Parsons of McGill. Lastly, Professor Emeritus Virginia Aksan of McMaster taught this course for many years before me and was instrumental in my syllabus design when I taught there.

Concordia Rules and Regulations

Moodle and Zoom disclaimer

"Note that videoconference portions of this class may be recorded and uploaded on the course Moodle site. You may not share recordings of your classes; instructor will only share class recordings for the purpose of course delivery and development. Any other sharing may be in violation of the law and applicable University policies, and may be subject to penalties."

Student behaviour

"All individuals participating in courses are expected to be professional and constructive throughout the course, including in their communications. Concordia students are subject to the [Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#) which applies both when students are physically and virtually engaged in any University activity, including classes, seminars, meetings, etc. Students engaged in University activities must respect this Code when engaging with any members of the Concordia community, including faculty, staff, and students, whether such interactions are verbal or in writing, face to face or online/virtual. Failing to comply with the Code may result in charges and sanctions, as outlined in the Code."

Intellectual property

"Content belonging to instructors shared in online courses, including, but not limited to, online lectures, course notes, and video recordings of classes remain the intellectual property of the faculty member. It may not be distributed, published or broadcast, in whole or in part, without the express permission of the faculty member. Students are also forbidden to use their own means of recording any elements of an online class or lecture without express permission of the instructor. Any unauthorized sharing of course content may constitute a breach of the [Academic Code of Conduct](#) and/or the [Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#). As specified in the [Policy on Intellectual Property](#), the University does not claim any ownership of or interest in any student IP. All university members retain copyright over their work."

Extraordinary circumstances

“For undergraduate courses & courses that are cross-listed with graduate courses: In the event of extraordinary circumstances and pursuant to the [Academic Regulations](#), the University may modify the delivery, content, structure, forum, location and/or evaluation scheme. In the event of such extraordinary circumstances, students will be informed of the changes.”

Academic integrity

“Plagiarism: The most common offense under the Academic Code of Conduct is plagiarism, which the Code defines as “the presentation of the work of another person as one’s own or without proper acknowledgement.” This includes material copied word for word from books, journals, Internet sites, professor’s course notes, etc. It refers to material that is paraphrased but closely resembles the original source. It also includes for example the work of a fellow student, an answer on a quiz, data for a lab report, a paper or assignment completed by another student. It might be a paper purchased from any source. Plagiarism does not refer to words alone –it can refer to copying images, graphs, tables and ideas. “Presentation” is not limited to written work. It includes oral presentations, computer assignments and artistic works. Finally, if you translate the work of another person into any other language and do not cite the source, this is also plagiarism. In Simple Words: Do not copy, paraphrase or translate anything from anywhere without saying where you obtained it.” (For more on this please consult the [Academic Integrity](#) website).

List of student services

- [Access Centre for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Student Success Centre](#)
- [Counselling and Psychological Services](#)
- [Concordia Library Citation and Style Guides](#)
- [Health Services](#)
- [Financial Aid and Awards](#)
- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Dean of Students Office](#)
- [International Students Office](#)
- [Student Hub](#)
- [Sexual Assault Resource Centre](#)
- As a Concordia student, you are a member of the Concordia Student Union and have many resources available to you including:
 - [HOJO](#) (Off Campus Housing and Job Bank)
 - [CSU Advocacy Centre](#)
- [Aboriginal Student Resource Centre](#)

(This material comes from Concordia’s [Centre for Teaching and Learning](#)).