

HIS 361  
GRINNELL COLLEGE

SPRING 2013  
CALEB ELFENBEIN

SACRED AND SECULAR HISTORY IN THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST

STEINER 201! ELFENBEI@GRINNELL.EDU! X4352  
OFFICE HOURS M, 10-11 & TH 12:45-2:00

## COURSE TEXTS

I have assembled a reader that includes a number of primary and secondary scholarly sources. I have noted readings from this material in the syllabus with an (R). Other course readings include the following texts (available in the bookstore):

James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History* New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Nur Masalha, *The Bible and Zionism* New York: Zed Books, 2007.

Tignor and Jabart, *Al-Jabarti's Chronicle of Napoleon in Egypt*

- ¥ What is the author's relative position of power in the context of the document's production?
- ¥ How does this document support or call into question claims made by the authors of our secondary sources?
- ¥ What is the author's conception of history? What is the relationship between history and community?

#### SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS 15%

You are responsible for completing two 2-3 page short essays before spring break. I will post topics from week to week and you may choose two to complete.

#### PRESENTATIONS 20%

After spring break, we will meet once a week to discuss your progress on your final research project. (I will be available to meet with you individually on these other class-meeting day.) These discussions will culminate in a formal presentation of your work (approximately 20 minutes). I am tentatively planning on Thursday, May 2, as our presentation day, though this is subject to negotiation/change.

#### RESEARCH PROJECT 40%

Your final research project consists of a 20-25-page essay on a topic of your choice. A successful essay will (1) build an argument around primary sources and situate your argument in a field of secondary literature or (2) provide a critical analysis of scholarly literature on a given matter. We will focus on this project in weeks nine through 15, during which time you will be responsible for completing three discreet steps. We will work together to establish a project timeline (including due dates), though the earlier you can begin to think about a possible topic the better (so that you can ILL material, for example).

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accordingly. That said, please do not be shy about approaching me for an extension if you have extenuating circumstances. It is essential to keep lines of communication open.

- ¥ If I suspect that you are using computers in class for anything other than note taking or document viewing, you will lose your computer privileges for the remainder of the semester. (If I suspect that you are texting in class I will ask that you leave your phone with me at the start of each class. Cell phones should be set on silent.)
- ¥ If you are involved in an extra-curricular activity that will take you away from campus be sure to let me know beforehand. Regardless of the reason (except for dire family emergency, hospitalization), if I do not hear from you before you miss class I will assume you are simply skipping class.
- ¥ Breaches of academic integrity will result in an official disciplinary process guided by the Dean's office. Although I will inform you of any action I take, I will not negotiate with you privately about such matters. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism I suggest you consult the Student Handbook immediately.
- ¥ It is essential to me that everyone in the class has the same opportunity to thrive. Please let me know of any particular learning needs you have (assuming they are on file with the college) and we will work together to make sure that you get the most from this learning experience.

#### COURSE READINGS AND SCHEDULE

¥ Class 2: Gelvin, Part I; Finkel, 1-2 (R); Al-Jabarti (selections)

## RESEARCH RESOURCES

This is a brief guide to help you begin your research. I strongly encourage you to make a library lab appointment with Grinnell's history librarian, Catherine Rodd ([rod@grinnell.edu](mailto:rod@grinnell.edu)), to help you along with your search.

It might be a good idea to begin the research process in one of three ways (and they aren't necessarily mutually exclusive).

These sites are available via Burling Library's database collection. They provide access to subject guides and/or sources regarding the history of the modern Middle East. You will also want to explore the on-line databases for newspapers as well. Times of London and the New York Times (among others) may prove helpful to you as well.

¥ Empire Online (<http://www.empire.amdigital.co.uk>)

¥ Center for Research Libraries (<http://catalog.crl.edu>)

The following sites are among the finest subject guides for Middle East studies prepared by research libraries across the country. You will notice that there is some duplication in the collections that these guides lead you to, suggesting that if you spend time perusing the guides themselves you will end up with a good sense of what is available. I am including links directly to the primary source section of the guides, but clicking on "home" for each of the guides will be helpful for more general research, too.

¥ University of Southern California Library:  
(<http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=160514&sid=1357398>)

¥ University of Washington Library  
(<http://guides.lib.washington.edu/content.php?pid=63215&sid=406023>)

The Nationalism Project is another on-line resource that may be of help to you. A collaborative effort among scholars from the US and Europe, it contains subject guides on nationalism (in general) as well as some Middle East-specific bibliographies.

¥ <http://www.nationalismproject.org>

Finally, Fordham University's Internet History Sourcebooks Project provides a unique resource for research, serving as a clearinghouse of sorts for primary sources on a vast array of subjects. I am providing links to the Middle East specific material, but a more general perusal might benefit you, too.

¥ <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/modsbook54.asp>

¥ <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/islam/islamsbook.asp>