

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Dr. Daniel Zisenwine

Fall Semester

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Short description:

Until the last third of the twentieth century, history mostly addressed the lives and deeds of “big men” – rulers, diplomats, or military officers- and focused largely on political and diplomatic developments. Over recent decades, historians have gradually broadened their perspective and incorporate new groups and social structures including women, families, and youth into their work. This course examines the history of the modern Middle East from the bottom up. We will examine shifting social structures, cultural protocols, class formations, and the agendas of different social groups in the region. The course will situate these themes in the broader theoretical debate about social history and its contribution to the study of history, and discuss the impact of social history on prevailing assumptions that underpin modern Middle East history.

Assessment:

Minor assignments: Three short response papers to set readings (1 page each) – 30 percent of the final grade.

Midterm: This will be a take home exam, covering topics studied over the first part of the semester. Students will be asked to answer 2 out of 4 essay questions (each answer around 1000 words) on topics and readings assigned. Students will have 48 hours to complete the assignment and submit it electronically. The midterm grade will be 19 percent of the final grade.

Final requirement: A take home exam in a similar format to the midterm exam, covering the later part of the semester. The final exam will be 51 percent of the final grade.

A second exam date (“Moed Bet”) will be offered ONLY to International B.A. students and not to students on Exchange or Study Abroad (OSP) programs.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted a maximum of three unexcused absences without penalty. Any additional absences will affect the final grade and may result in failure of the course.

Academic conduct:

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously. Any instance of academic misconduct which includes: submitting someone else’s work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously

received credit; working in a group for individual assignments; using unauthorized materials in an exam and sharing your work with other students, will result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.

Additional requirements:

In order to maintain a congenial academic environment during class, students are requested to arrive on time to each session, and refrain from using electronic devices (cell phones, tablets) during class. Laptop computers may be used for taking notes only and not for surfing the internet, emails, or social media.