

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

and

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

and

THE UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

IR/HI/ UNI 591

THE GREAT POWERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SEMESTER II, 2007/2008

TUESDAY, 2:00-5:00 P.M.
IRC 102, 154 Bay State Road

PROFESSOR DAVID FROMKIN

Office Hours

Monday, 11:00 –12:00 pm and Tuesday, 10:00-12 noon
Pardee House, 67 BSR
Phone: 358-4002

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE OBJECTIVE

Seminar focuses on the rivalry between the Great Powers of Europe in the Middle East, commencing in 1798; and on the resolution of these conflicts in the First World War and its immediate aftermath. The focus is on 1914-1922, the formative years of the modern Middle East. In the age of imperialism, the big decisions in world politics were made by the European Powers; so this seminar is mainly about the Europeans and the conflicts among them, even though it answers, in the end, the question of how the modern Middle East, with its new countries and frontiers, emerged from the wreckage of the Ottoman Empire and the other Muslim regimes that had held sway in the past. The arena of conflict between the Great Powers was the Middle East as defined, not in a geographic, but in a geopolitical sense: it was the road to British-ruled India, a road that England was defending and that England's rivals were attempting to sever. As so defined the Middle East included northern Africa, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Persia (Iran), as well as Turkish and Arabic speaking western Asia.

It will be observed that the Great Powers were changing during the period in question; but these changes will be discussed only insofar as they affected the goals and conduct of international rivalry in the Middle East. The Middle East was changing too, and was changed. Certainly, this was true of its political structure, with the creation of Turkey, of Saudi Arabia, of European mandatory regimes, and with the promise of eventual independence to such newly created states as Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and a Palestine that was part Jordan to serve as a Jewish National Home. The seminar will concern itself with those changes in the Middle East wrought by the outside Great Powers. The internal history of the area—an account of the indigenous peoples and their leaders, and of the extent to which they brought about changes in their own condition—is beyond the purview of this seminar and will be alluded to but mainly to suggest the dimensions of what government officials of the Great Powers often were ignoring.

The course will end with a brief survey of events since the peace settlement of the 1920s and up to Suez in 1956 and Europe's withdrawal from the Middle East. Although current events in Iraq and Afghanistan are outside the scope of this course, questions about them inevitably will arise.

For prospective students who intend to become historians, journalists, or writers of some other character, an effort will be made to provide bibliographical assistance and to explain how A Peace to End All Peace was researched, organized, and written. In this connection, please note that one of the challenges that had to be met in writing the book was combining many stories into one narrative; and that classes 1-8 are devoted to putting the narrative together, while in classes 9-13, the separate strands are disentangled and pulled apart.

REQUIREMENTS

Course meets once a week for three hours. Students will be called upon for oral contributions. They will be asked to report on assigned subjects, requiring some research (but not a great deal), or to summarize and offer a critique of assigned sections of the required reading. Other readings, not required, will be suggested, either in this Syllabus or in class, for those with special interests who wish to delve into them more deeply in their own.

A paper of preferably 5 or 10 typewritten pages, but in any event, no more than 20, will be due in February on a set common subject: an outline and evaluation of all British wartime commitments (1914-18) re: the post-war Middle East.

From the outset, each student will be doing further reading on one chosen topic, in most cases, a specified Great Power and its policy in the Middle East during specified years (see TOPICS, below, for typical subjects). That research will provide the basis for a paper of perhaps 5 or 10 typewritten pages, but in no event more than 20, due in March. Students will use it as a basis for an oral presentation to the class during subsequent class sessions.

Class attendance is mandatory. No mid-term or final examination will be given. Grading will be based 50% on class participation and 50% on the two papers.

REQUIRED READINGS

The following texts are required reading, and are available at the (Boston University) Barnes & Noble bookstore: Fromkin, David, A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East, New York: Owl, 2002 (paperback); relevant sections of T.E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom (Bantam Doubleday) paperback; and Antonius, George, The Arab Awakening, International Book Center, 1969.

An additional text is required reading as a starting point for each student in connection with the research paper he or she is doing. The text required in each case is listed under TOPICS, below, as the first suggested reading.

SUGGESTED BACKGROUND READING PRIOR TO CLASS

Coles, Paul. The Ottoman Impact on Europe. London: Thames & Hudson, and Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968. One of the volumes in the History of European Civilization Library, edited by Geoffrey Barraclough. Concise—less than 200 pages—and unusually readable, this beautifully written and illustrated survey covers the period 1000-1700 A.D. and, therefore, leads up to the 18th century, which is where this class picks matters up in the introductory opening sessions.

COURSE OUTLINE

(IR/HI/UNI 591)

THE GREAT POWERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SEMESTER II, 2007/2008

I. Introduction (2 weeks)

1. No required reading.
2. Suggested readings: Bernard Lewis, The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2,000 Years, Scribner: New York, 1995, chapters 14-17.
Alan Moorhead, The Blue Nile, New York: Harper & Row, 1962, in any edition.

II. The Great Game in Asia 1798-1907 (2 weeks)

1. Fromkin – chapters 1, 2, and 3.
2. Suggested readings:
Clayton, G.D. Britain and the Eastern Question (University of London Press, 1971)
Ingram, Edward, The Beginnings of the Great Game in Asia 1824-1834 (Oxford University Press, 1979) and Commitment to Empire: Prophecies of the Great Game in Asia 1797-1800 (Oxford University Press, 1981)
Langer, William L. The Diplomacy of Imperialism 1890-1902 (New York: Knopf, 1951) and European Alliances and Alignments 1871-1890 (New York: Knopf, 1956)
Macfie, A.L. The Eastern Question, 1774-1923 (rev. ed.) (London: Longman, 1996)
Ridley, Jasper. Lord Palmerston (London: Constable, 1970 hardcover, or Granada, 1972, Panther paperback.)
Taylor, A.J.P. The Struggle for Mastery in Europe: 1848-1914 (Oxford University Press, 1954)
Temperley, H.W.V. and L.M. Penson, Foundations of British Foreign Policy (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1938), Parts VI and XIX to XXV.

III. The Young Turks and the Road to War: 1908-1914 (1 week)

1. Required reading:
Fromkin, Chapters 4 through 7
2. Suggested reading:
Zurcher, Eric J. Turkey: A Modern History (New York: Tauris, 1993), chapter 8

IV. The Great War 1914-1916 (1 week)

1. Required reading:
Fromkin, Chapters 8 through 30

2. Students interested in the origins and conduct of the war in Europe should consult me: the literature is vast but, to my mind, unsatisfactory.

V. The Great War 1917-1918, and New Forces: The United States; the Arab Movement; Zionism (1 week)

1. Required reading:
Fromkin, chapters 31 through 39

VI. The Peace and the Revolt Against It 1919-1922 (1 week)

1. Required reading:
Fromkin, chapters 40 through 61
2. Suggested reading:
Fromkin, David. In the Time of the Americans (New York: Vintage, 1995 paperback) chapters 23 through 33
Macmillan, Margaret. Peacemakers: Six Months That changed The World (London: Murray, 2002 paperback)

VII. The Great Powers and the Great War: Russia; France; Germany; Austria-Hungary (1 week)

1. Readings: see TOPICS below

VIII. The Great Powers and the Great War: Great Britain; British India; British Cairo (1 week)

1. Readings: see TOPICS below

IX. The Great Powers and the Great War: Italy, Greece, and Turkey (1 week)

1. Readings: see TOPICS below

X. The Great Powers and the Great War: the United States (1 week)

1. Readings: see TOPICS below

XI. New Forces: The Arab Movement; Zionism; Bolshevism; the Oil Industry (1 week)

XII. – end: A brief survey—1922 to 1956

Readings: see TOPICS next page

TOPICS

For student papers, oral presentation, and critique by seminar

1. GERMANY, AUSTRIA-HUNGARY and the MIDDLE EAST 1914-1918
Suggested reading: Trumpener, Ulrich, Germany and the Ottoman Empire 1914-1918 (Princeton 1968) and Weber, Frank G., Eagles on the Crescent: Germany, Austria and the Diplomacy of the Turkish Alliance (Cornell, 1970)
2. FRANCE and the MIDDLE EAST 1914-1924
Suggested reading: Andrew, Christopher, and A.S. Kanya-Forstner, The Climax of French Imperial Expansion, 1914-1924 (Stanford, 1981) and Nevakivi, Jukka, Britain, France, and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920 (University of London, 1969)
3. BRITAIN and the MIDDLE EAST 1914-1921
Suggested reading: Kedourie, Elie, England and the Middle East 2nd ed. (Sussex: Harvester, 1978) and The Chatham House Version and other Middle-Eastern Studies (Brandeis, 1984). Also Klieman, Aaron S., Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World (Johns Hopkins, 1970)
4. BRITISH INDIA and the MIDDLE EAST 1914-1922
Suggested reading: Busch, Briton Cooper, Britain, India, and the Arabs 1914-1921 (California 1971)
5. ITALY, GREECE, and the MIDDLE EAST 1911-1922
Suggested reading: Smith, Michael Llewellyn, Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor 1919-1922 (Johns Hopkins, 1965)
6. UNITED STATES and the MIDDLE EAST 1914-1924
Suggested reading: Evans, Laurence, United States Policy and the Partition of Turkey, 1914-1924 (Johns Hopkins, 1965)
7. ZIONISM
Suggested reading: Sanders, Ronald, The High Walls of Jerusalem (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1983)
8. THE OIL INDUSTRY and the MIDDLE EAST
Suggested reading: Kent, Marion, Oil and Empire (London: Macmillan, 1976) dealing with Iraq 1900-1920. More comprehensive is Daniel Yergin's The Prize (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991)

9. THE ARAB MOVEMENT

Required readings: Antonius, George, The Arab Awakening (New York: Capricorn paperback, 1965); Dawn, C. Ernest, From Ottomanism to Arabism (University of Illinois, 1973); and Kedourie, Elie, In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: The McMahon-Husayn Correspondence and its Interpreters 1914-1939 (Cambridge University, 1976)

Note: The three readings above are the indispensable minimum for anyone dealing with this question. Hence, I have described them as required rather than merely suggested readings.

OTHER TOPICS AVAILABLE IF ENROLLMENT WARRANTS MORE

OUTLINE OF SESSIONS

THE GREAT POWERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SEMESTER II 2007/2008

Session One: Organizational meeting. Questions answered about course and subject matter. Suggested readings.

Session Two: Lecture: the “barbarian” invasions of Europe in the thousand years between the fall of the Latin and of the Greek Roman empires. The last of the nomad invasions: the Ottomans, their rise and fall. The first Eastern Question (what should be done with Turkey in Europe) gives way to the second: what should be done with Turkey in Africa and Asia. The first European invaders of the Ottoman domains: Austria-Hungary and Russia.

Session Three: France invades Egypt in 1798, opens up the Middle East to revolutionary European ideas, and opens a new phase in the Eastern Question. Britain, to defend the imperial road to India, is cast in the role of defender of the status quo in the Muslim Middle East against all (European) comers.

Session Four: The unification, first of Italy, then more importantly that of Germany, changes the configuration of European politics in such a way that Britain has to choose between continental and imperial politics. She can preserve her national security in Europe by aligning with France and Russia against Germany; or she can protect her empire by aligning with Germany against her rivals in Asia, France, and Russia; but no longer can she win simultaneously on both chessboards.

Session Five: The young Turks: who they were: how they came to power: and how (though by no means inevitably) they brought the Ottoman Empire into collision with Britain. Britain, and how she made the choice of allies that she did. How a leftover piece of Ottoman business in the Balkans provided the occasion for the Great War. Who caused the outbreak of war?

Session Six: The Great War, first phase, fought under the initial leaders: Asquith and Kitchener in Britain; the Kaiser and Bethmann-Hollweg in Germany; Rene Viviani in France; the Czar and

Sazanov in Russia; Prince Said Halim in the Ottoman Empire. Their (initially) limited goals in the Middle East.

Session Seven: The Great War, second phase. Societies collapse; governments are overthrown; revolutionary change threatens or takes place all around the world; new forces and new movements take the field; new leaders pursue new goals. To a lesser or greater extent, all the European Powers harbor increasingly large ambitions to seize control of some or all of the Middle East.

Session Eight: The United States, a new country, and two new forces, Zionism and the Arab movement, seemingly enter the war of Britain's side. Appearance or reality? How the war came to an end.

Session Nine: The negotiation of the Peace of Paris, followed by Sevres, Berlin, and others. Disorders throughout the Middle East. Having disarmed, the victorious Allies have to deal with indigenous and other Middle Eastern demands that hitherto they had ignored. The creation of the political structure of the modern Middle East.

Sessions Ten, Eleven, Twelve, and Thirteen: How the Middle Eastern events of 1914-22 looked from the special perspective of various participants:

- Germany
- Austrians
- Russians, White and Red
- Italians
- Greeks
- Turks
- French
- Britons, in England, Egypt, and India
- Americans
- Arabs of various persuasions
- Jews, pro-and anti-Zionist

Session Fourteen: A look backward at the material covered in the course. A brief look ahead: interwar, wartime, and Suez: Europe's withdrawal from the Middle East and from the positions won in and around 1922.