ISLA 615: MODERN MIDDLE EAST HISTORY
New directions in the study of Palestine
Thursday: 3:35-5:25, MOR 313
Laila Parsons (laila.parsons@mcgill.ca)
Office hours: by appointment

In this course we will read recently published work on Palestine in the 20th Century. We will examine technologies of British colonialism; race and religion in early Arab-Zionist encounters; the emergence of the figure of “the collaborator”; poetry and Palestinian nationalism; Palestinian-Israeli citizenship; refugees and memory; life under occupation; and the policing of Gaza. In addition to learning about the history of Palestine, students will be exposed to the new approaches being used by scholars across a range of disciplines.

Grading:

Attendance and participation: 40%

Students will be expected to read one book a week and to come to class prepared to talk about that book in a serious way. The participation grade will be evaluated on the basis of short oral presentations, the quality of your comments during discussion, and how precisely your comments are connected to what we have read. I will give more details on how we will structure discussion once I have a clearer idea of how many students will take the class. If you miss class you must provide a doctor’s note.

Final paper: 60% (5% of which will be based on the four-page paper outline).

I know that most graduate students in the class will not be specialists in the history of Palestine. For your final paper you can:

1) Pick a topic that interests you that is directly related to the study of Palestine.
2) Pick a topic that connects your own area of research with Palestine in some way.

The paper is due on December 10 at 5pm. On November 19 in class you will be expected to give a presentation on your paper that is based on a four-page paper outline. I will expect to meet with each student individually to discuss the choice of topic. Expectations for the paper will depend to a large extent on the discipline that the student’s research is grounded in. The final paper should be 10,000 words excluding notes and bibliography.

Readings

Most of the books are available as e-books at McGill. Those not available as an e-book should be bought directly from amazon (or whatever). These books will also be on reserve in the library.
Schedule

Week 1 (Sep 10): Introduction

Week 2 (Sep 17): Overview of Palestinian history


Week 3 (Sep 24): Ottoman Palestine


Week 4: (October 1): no class – I am away at a conference

Week 5 (October 8): Refugees

Diana Allan, *Refugees of the Revolution: Experiences of Palestinian Exile* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013) e-book at McGill [Diana Allan will visit class to discuss her work]

Week 6 (Oct 15): Money and technology


Week 7 (Oct 22): Race and religion


Week 8 (Oct 29): Palestinian citizenship in Israel


Week 9 (Nov 5): Poetry

Week 10 (Nov 12): Collaborators and resisters


Week 11 (Nov 19):

No readings. Presentations on final papers. Four-page paper outline should be handed in in class.

Week 12 (Nov 26): Gaza and Egyptian governance


Week 13 (Dec 4): Living the occupation


McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information

L’université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l’on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l’étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).

In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maitrise d’une langue).