Class analysis and the dialectics of modernization in the Middle East

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This class will seek to answer these questions with a tripartite approach: meta-historical, macro-historical and micro-historical. First, we will work on the emergence component of the course, and trace the genealogy of the Middle-East as a concept. This will involve looking at modernization theory and the civilizing mission in its specific Middle-Eastern formation. As such, particular attention will be paid to colonialism as a vector of modernization and as the primary Western mode of relating to the “Middle-East” as a region. Modernization will allow us to look into the Middle-East along multiple axes. In David Szanton, ed., The Politics of Knowledge: Area Studies and the Disciplines. His analysis focused on the role of the urban commercial class in the formation of the modern Saudi state. Shortly afterwards, Ali Sultan wrote an important doctoral thesis in which he incorporated an interesting class categorization of Saudi society. He drew upon a large amount of various government data and statistics.
