

ATA 613

Spring 2022

Revolution in History

ATA Seminar Room
Tuesdays, 14.00-17.00

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This course examines revolutions and revolutionaries in the Ottoman Empire during the last century and a half of its existence. While there was no ideal-type revolution in the Ottoman domains à la French, Bolshevik or Iranian examples, the empire was home to a number of revolutionary organizations that played crucial roles in the transformation of the imperial polity, particularly so by the late nineteenth century. These Ottoman revolutionaries organized themselves into secret societies and operated underground, tapping into a broad range of ideologies from nationalism to socialism and anarchism. Their willingness to employ tactics of violence, however, was what united this heterogenous mix of individuals who saw violence as a way of facilitating historical ruptures in the service of revolutionary goals. Over the course of time, particularly after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, these organizations gradually turned into political parties, ultimately overseeing the violent transition from empire to nation-state. This course revisits this contentious historical period, sampling the existing historiographical literature along the way and situating Ottoman revolutionaries in broader historical context.

In traditional historiographies, late Ottoman revolutionaries are either demonized due to their violent legacies or romanticized as a result of later ideological re-appropriations. In this course, we hope to approach them in their complexity and develop a working set of tools to historicize them as agents of change in their own right. In so doing, this graduate seminar will first of all help students attain a more complex empirical understanding of revolutionary politics in the late Ottoman history. Some basic questions will drive this mission: where to situate the Ottoman Empire in the broader global revolutionary wave lasting from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century? Why did revolutionary organizations suddenly begin to mushroom in the Ottoman Empire by the mid-1880s? What really sets apart the late nineteenth-century revolutionaries from their earlier counterparts? How to explain the specific context and timing of their violent acts? Such context-driven questions will also enable us to develop a more critical approach to studying the end of the Ottoman Empire, forcing us to come to terms with the powerful narratives that continue to shape the history writing on the period.

Weekly Readings

There are four readings assigned for each week (except the first week). You are required to come to class having read at least three out of the four. Please feel free to choose whichever interests you the most.

The instructor will make the weekly readings available via Google Drive.

Assignments & Evaluation

1) Participation (30 percent)

Students are expected to be present in each session and participate actively in discussions. Absence is only allowed on the grounds of documented medical emergencies. Each unexcused absence will drop a letter grade (from A to B); those with two unexcused absences will fail the course.

2) Final Paper Drafts (10 percent)

Students are expected to have scheduled individual meetings with the instructor (in-person or online) and choose a final research paper topic by **March 29** at the latest. The expectation on my part is that you choose a paper topic that will require you to do research in primary sources, while engaging with the secondary literature. First drafts of final papers are due on **May 6**.

3) Presentation (10 percent)

Students will present their final paper projects on **May 24** to receive feedback from their classmates. The presentation will last around 15 minutes, preferably with a PowerPoint (though reading from slides and/or notes will be frowned upon). During your presentations, you are expected to discuss your research questions and introduce your arguments, while identifying your interventions within the existing body of secondary literature. Reflections on source material, theory, and/or methodology, if appropriate, will also be welcome.

4) Final Paper (50 percent)

Students are expected to turn in a final paper that is revised in accordance with the feedback received a month prior. The final paper is due **June 11** (15 pages, for MA students; 20 pages for PhD students; double-spaced, with footnotes).

Covid-19 Policy

The seminar will be held in person, but typical social distancing measures will be in place and the wearing of masks is required. The instructor reserves the right to move the class online depending on the progress of the pandemic or in case of an infection in class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, March 1

Introduction

Jack A. Goldstone, *Revolutions: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) chapters 1 and 2.

George Lawson, *Anatomies of Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019) pp. 21-47.

Week 2, March 8

Atlantic Revolutions in a Global Perspective

David A. Bell, "Atlantic Revolutions" in *Revolutionary World: Global Upheaval in the Modern World*, ed. David Motadel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021) pp. 38-65.

C. A. Bayly, "The 'Revolutionary Age' in the Wider World, c. 1790 1830," in Richard Bessel, Nicholas Guyatt, and Jane Rendall (eds.), *War, Empire and Slavery, 1770 1830* (New York, 2010) 21-43.

Simeon Simeonov, "Miranda in the Balkans: Decadent Despotism, Consulship, and the Making of a South-eastern Revolutionary in the Age of Revolution," in *Journal of Global History*, 16:3 (Nov. 2021) pp. 375-94.

Peter Hill, "How Global was the Age of Revolutions? The Case of Mount Lebanon, 1821," in *Journal of Global History*, 16:1 (March 2021) pp. 65-84.

Week 3, March 15

Ottoman Age of Revolutions

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983) pp. 47-65.

Frederick F. Anscombe, "The Balkan Revolutionary Age," in *The Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 3 (2012) pp. 572-606.

Fatih Yeşil, "Looking at the French Revolution through Ottoman Eyes: Ebubekir Ratib Efendi's Observations," in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 70:2 (2007) pp. 283-304.

H. Şükrü Ilıcak, "The Revolt of Alexandros Ipsilantis and the Fate of the Fanariots in Ottoman Documents," in *The Greek Revolution of 1821: A European Event*, ed. Petros Pizaniias (Istanbul: The ISIS Press, 2011) pp. 225-38.

Week 4, March 22
Revolutionary Waves of 1848

Christopher Clark, "The Revolutionary Waves of 1848," in *Revolutionary World: Global Upheaval in the Modern World*, ed. David Motadel (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2021) pp. 66-91.

James Morris, "Locating the Wallachian Revolution of 1848," in *The Historical Journal*, 64:3 (June 2021) pp. 606-25.

Christos Aliprantis, "Transnational Policing after the 1848-1849 Revolutions: The Hapsburg Empire in the Mediterranean," in *European History Quarterly*, 50:3 (2020) pp. 412-37.

Kemal Karpat, "Kossuth in Turkey: The Impact of Hungarian Refugees in the Ottoman Empire, 1849-1851," in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History: Selected Articles and Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 2002) pp. 169-184.

Week 5, March 29
Changing Horizons of Expectations

Anna Vakalis, "Tanzimat in the Province: Nationalist Sedition (*Fesat*), Banditry (*Eşkiya*) and Local Councils in the Ottoman Southern Balkans (1840s to 1860s)," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Basel, 2019, pp. 116-99.

Alexander Vezhenkov, "In the Service of the Sultan, in the Service of the Revolution: Local Bulgarian Notables in the 1870s," in *Conflicting Loyalties in the Balkans: The Great Powers, The Ottoman Empire and Nation-Building*, eds. Hannes Grandits, Nathalie Clayer and Robert Pichler (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011) pp. 135-54.

Nader Sohrabi, *Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) 33-71.

Niall Whelehan, "Youth, Generations, and Collective Action in Nineteenth-Century Ireland and Italy," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 56:4 (2014) pp. 934-66.

Week 6, April 5
Age of Assassinations

Richard Jensen, "Daggers, Rifles and Dynamite: Anarchist Terrorism in Nineteenth Century Europe," in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 16:1 (2004) pp. 116-53.

Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963) pp. 104-31.

Varak Ketssemanian, "The Hunchakian Revolutionary Party and the Assassination Attempts against Patriarch Khoren Ashegian and Maksuzade Simon Bey in 1894," in *IJMES*, 50 (2018) pp. 735-55.

Davit Gutman, "Migrants, Revolutionaries, and Spies: Surveillance, Politics, and Ottoman Identity in the United States," in *Living in the Ottoman Realm: Empire and Identity, 13th to 20th*

Centuries, eds. Christine Isom-Verhaaren and Kent F. Schull (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016) pp. 284-96.

Week 7, April 12 **Age of Insurgency**

Tasos Kostopoulos, “‘Land to the Tiller’: On the Neglected Agrarian Component of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement, 1893-1912,” in *Turkish Historical Review*, 7 (2016) pp. 134-66.

Keith Brown, *Loyal unto Death: Trust and Terror in Revolutionary Macedonia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013) pp. 41-69.

Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, “Tools of Revolution: Global Military Surplus, Arms Dealers, and Smugglers in the Late Ottoman Balkans, 1878–1908,” in *Past & Present* 237:1 (2017) pp. 167-95.

Dimitris Livanios, “‘Conquering the Souls’: Nationalism and Greek Guerilla Warfare in Ottoman Macedonia, 1904–1908,” in *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 23 (1999) pp. 195-221.

Week 8, April 19 **Connected Revolutions and Revolutionaries**

Alp Yenen and Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, “Age of Rogues: Transgressive Politics at the Frontiers of the Ottoman Empire,” in *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires*, eds. Ramazan Hakkı Öztan and Alp Yenen (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021) pp. 3-52.

Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902-1908* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) pp. 210-78.

Houri Berberian, *Roving Revolutionaries: Armenians and the Connected Revolutions in the Russian, Iranian, and Ottoman Worlds* (University of California Press, 2019) pp. 1-43.

Nader Sohrabi, “Global Waves Local Actors: What the Young Turks Knew about Other Revolutions and why it Mattered,” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 44:1 (Jan. 2002) pp. 45-79.

Week 9, April 26 **Revolutionaries in Power**

Benjamin C. Fortna, “Late-Ottoman ‘Rogues’ and their Paths to Power: A Prosopographic Study,” in *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires*, eds. Ramazan Hakkı Öztan and Alp Yenen (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021) pp. 302-32.

Erik-Jan Zürcher, “[Patterns of Young Turk Decision-Making 1913-1915],” in *Das Deutsche Reich und die Völkermord and den Armeniern*, eds. Rolf Hosfeld and Christin Pschichholz (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2017) pp. 81–105.

Alp Yenen, "Envisioning Turco-Arab Co-Existence between Empire and Nationalism," in *Die Welt des Islams*, 61 (2021) pp. 72-112.

Talha Çicek, "Myth of the Unionist Triumvirate: The Formation of the CUP Factions and their Impact in Syria during the Great War," in *Syria in World War I: Politics, Economy, and Society*, ed. Talha Çiçek (New York: Routledge, 2016) pp. 9-36.

Spring Break, May 2 – May 6

Drafts of Final Papers due May 6!

Week 10, May 10

Revolutionary Paths out of Empire

Efraim Karsh and Inari Karsh, "Myth in the Desert, or Not the Great Arab Revolt," in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 33:2 (April 1997) pp. 267-312.

Rachel G. Hoffman, "The Global Red Revolution," in *Revolutionary World: Global Upheaval in the Modern World*, ed. David Motadel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021) pp. 130-51.

Michael Reynolds, "Buffers, Not Brethren: Young Turk Military Policy in the First World War and the Myth of Panturanism," in *Past & Present*, 203:1 (May 2009) pp. 137-79.

Abdulhamit Kırmızı, "After Empire, Before Nation: Competing Ideologies and the Bolshevik Moment of the Anatolian Revolution," in *Revolutions and Counter-Revolutions: 1917 and its Aftermath from a Global Perspective*, eds. Stefan Rinke and Michael Wildt (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2017) pp. 119-37.

Week 11, May 17

Post-Ottoman Revolutionary Trajectories

Erez Manela, "The Wilsonian Uprisings of 1919," in *Revolutionary World: Global Upheaval in the Modern World*, ed. David Motadel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021) pp. 152-74.

Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, "Vectors of Violence: Paramilitarism in Europe after the Great War, 1917-1923," in *The Journal of Modern History*, 83:3 (Sept. 2011) pp. 489-512.

Michael Provence, "Ottoman Modernity, Colonialism, and Insurgency in the Interwar Arab East," in *IJMES*, 43 (2011) pp. 205-25.

Jordi Tejel, "The Last Ottoman Rogues: The Kurdish-Armenian Alliance in Syria and the New State System in the Interwar Middle East," in *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires*, eds. Ramazan Hakkı Öztan and Alp Yenen (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021) pp. 355-82.

Week 12, May 24
Presentations

Presentations of final paper projects

Week 13, May 27 – June 11
Finals Week

Final Papers due June 11