

History 258 Fall 2007-08 FINAL EXAM

To complete this exam, you must answer **THREE** short answer questions and **ONE** long answer question. The exam is expected to take two hours, but you may use the full three hours if you would like. The exam will count for 30% of your final course grade. Make sure to “ground” your answers by identifying *when* (time period - e.g., early 1900s, 1940s, 1920s-1930s) an event/development occurred; *who* was involved (e.g., French mandate government; city dwellers); *where* it took place, *what* the event/development was, and *why* it happened (or what consequences it had, depending on the particular question).

SHORT ANSWER SECTION

Answer **THREE** of the following questions (20-25 minutes for each question).

1. Describe the amount and type of printed matter that an average man or woman would have encountered in Beirut, Damascus, or Jerusalem (your choice) at the turn of the century. Consider all types of printed material (newspapers, magazines, business cards, receipts, bank accounts, signs, etc.), and where (home, shop, library, etc.) he/she might have encountered them. Compare this with the amount and type of printed matter than an average man or woman would have encountered by the 1930s. What about people in rural areas?
2. Describe the history of radio frequency regulation, and explain why regulation of the airwaves was needed. What role did the one country – one frequency correspondence play in influencing how European governments in the 1930s thought of radio? Explain the role that radio frequency regulation in Europe played in encouraging Britain and France to establish radio stations for their mandate territories. Explain also why establishing radio stations helped Britain and France demonstrate to the League of Nations that they were meeting their responsibilities to prepare the mandate states for independence.
3. One of the major issues that scholars confront when analyzing the importance of newspapers and magazines in the Arab World from the late 1800s through the 1940s is determining how many people actually read them. Explain how literacy rates and cost (whether for an individual issue or a subscription) negatively impacted readership, while group reading practices of different kinds boosted readership. In your own assessment, how influential were newspapers and periodicals in the late 1800s, and how influential were they in the 1940s, in terms of the number of people reading them and their social/political impact?
4. During the mandate period, people around the region worked to build national cultures for their new nation-states. In Palestine, the contest between the Jewish community and the Palestinian community over whose national culture should dominate also took musical form. Explain how the Jewish community worked to create a “Jewish national music”, on a folk music and an art music level. What made this music Jewish? What made it national? Why the emphasis on folk music? How did the development of a Jewish national music fit into the Zionist argument that they were modernizing Palestine?
5. Recorded music was available for purchase in the Arab World starting in the early 1900s. Discuss how technological limitations and developments (size of records, acoustic versus microphone recording) influenced the way in which music developed in the first half of the 1900s, and how it influenced the way people listened. List some of the advantages and disadvantages of listening to music on a gramophone versus live or on the radio. How did this affect music in the Arab World, in terms of the emergence of star artists, preference for certain types of songs over others, singing style, and so on?

LONG ANSWER SECTION

Answer ONE of the following questions (30-40 minutes).

1. During the mandate period, movies and movie-going generated a great deal of excitement, but also anxiety. Using Damascus and Beirut as examples, discuss the ways in which the class, gender and age of movie-goers made cinemas and movie-going sites for criticism by different religious and political groups. Explain how the location, layout and lighting of cinemas, the time of movie screenings and the price of movie tickets played into these anxieties, and discuss how regulating cinemas and censoring movies became a political as well as a moral issue. How did groups like women and youth react to their exclusion from Lebanese and Syrian cinemas?

2. Early television broadcasts reached a very limited number of people, and early television sets had a number of technological drawbacks. Outline a history of early television, including the technical difficulties (broadcasting distance, reception issues, color and sound, resolution, screen size) that broadcasters, set makers and viewers faced. Explain how European and particularly British television broadcasting began, and how European experiences with radio influenced the way in which governments and broadcasters saw television. Discuss reasons why television broadcasts were not introduced to the Levant during the mandate period, including cost issues, World War II, and comparisons with other European countries.