

ANTHROPOLOGY 4020: GENDER IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Fall 2008

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Schusterman Visiting Professor

Tuesday 5:00PM-7:30

HUMN 135 Section 005

Course Description

Gender is one of the fundamental principles in the understanding of social structures. To understand social system we have to study the experiences and opportunities of men and women within a particular social system, not as separate entities but as participants in the socio-political arena where relationships defined by gender dichotomy, masculine-feminine power relation, domination, and subordination.

In recent decades, there has been growing interest in the study of the Middle Eastern societies and in particular in the study of Gender, where there is a large body of literature in a multidiscipline arena such as history, anthropology, sociology, and literature. This course introduces the students to the social structure of contemporary Middle Eastern societies. More specifically, it investigates the evolvement, changing position and the transformation of women position in recent history. It pays special attention to the influence of the state, religion, education and the rise of political Islam on gender-relations and on the family.

The course is divided into several sections: The first introduces the students to the Middle Eastern societies, and the social characteristics of the region, while paying special attention to the gender-relations. The second highlights the position of women and the changes in the family under the influences of religion. The third shows how religious fundamentalism and in particular Islam, attempts to reconstruct the traditional world and reshape the position of women. The fourth, emphasis the position of women in the modern states in the Middle East, and the impact of traditions, values and customs on education and opportunities for women. The fifth, addresses the position, civil and legal rights and the treatment of GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, bisexual and transvestite) in the Middle East. The last and concluding component, deals with the process of modernity and the influence of the West on the position of women in the Middle East.

The course format is lecture and class discussion. The sources for the course include textual material and visual material such as selected videotapes.

Office Hour

Thursday 12:00-2:00PM

Required Readings:

Fatma Muge Gocek and Shiva Balaghi, eds. (1994) *Reconstructing Gender in the Middle East: Tradition, Identity and Power*. New York: Columbia University Press ISBN 0-231-10123-6

Margaret L. Meriwether and Judith E. Tucker eds. (1999) *Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

ISBN 0-8133-2101-8

Mukhtar Mai (2006) *In the Name of Honor*. USA: Washington Square Press.

ISBN 1-4165-3229-3

Grading

Your grades will be composed of four components:

1. Class attendance and Participation 10%
2. Two reading assignments 20% (Review papers)
3. An essays (see guidelines) 40% (topic research)
4. Take-home exam (due on day of final) 30%

Requirements & Expectations

Students must be prepared for each class. Students are responsible for the preparation of all the material detailed in the syllabus below, as well as any additional texts and assignments that may be added during the semester. It is essential that all work must be completed and submitted on time. Extensions will be given only with the doctor's note.

Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodation because of disability, please submit a letter from the Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs be addresses. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities.

Contact: 303-492-8671. Info: can be found at www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices

Absences due to Religious Observances

Campus policy regarding religious observances states that faculty makes reasonable accommodation for those who wish to do so. Every effort will be made to deal reasonably and fairly with students who because of religious obligations experience conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance.

See http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Classroom Decorum

Students have responsibility for maintaining appropriate classroom behavior. Any behavior that is not in accord with these policies will be censured in accordance with university procedures. On campus "classroom behavior" policy see:

<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html>,

<http://www.colorado.edu/facultystaff/faculty-booklet.html>

All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this university. Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic and non-academic sanctions. Other information on the Honor Code can be found at

<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at

<http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode>

Class Schedule: 15 classes (*please note that changes may be made by instructor,*
8/26 Organizational Session and Introduction to the course

I Introduction

- 9/2** Gender Identity and Anthropology. Gocek and Balaghi 81-84 (Behar)
Mehrez Samia., Translating Gender. *Journal of the Middle East women studies* vol 3 no.1 (2007) 106-127
Meriwether and Tucker, Introduction, Meriwether and Tucker 1-24;
Ahmed Leila, *1992 women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of the Modern Debate*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. Chapter 9
The First Feminists, 169-188
Beck. Lois., Gender in the Muslim Middle East. *American Anthropologist*
Vol. 99, no 1 (1997) 155-7

II Gender Religion and the family

- 9/9** Gender and Religion in the Middle East and South East Asia, Meriwether and Tucker 177-203 (Hegland)
Efrati Noga., Negotiating rights in Iraq: women's status and the personal status law. *Middle East Journal* vol. 59 no 4 (2005) 577-95
Debating Islamic Family Law: Legal Texts and Social Practices, Meriwether and Tucker 141-176 (Moors)
- 9/16** El-Or Tamar (2000) Between Joy and Enslavement: Negotiations of Motherhood among Women Students, Their Teachers and the Text", in Boaz Shoshan, (ed.), *Discourse on Gender/ Gendered Discourse in the Middle East*. Connecticut: Westport, 37-55 (scanned)
Yona, Yossi,; Saporta, Ishak The wavering luck of girls: gender and pre-vocational education in Israel. *Journal of the Middle East women studies* vol.2 no.3 (2006) 71-101

III Islam and the Reconstruction of Tradition

- 9/23** **First Reading Assignment is due at the beginning of class**
Gender, Tradition, and History. Gocek and Balaghi 23-29 (Cole)
Kashani-Sabet, Firoozeh., Who is Fatima? Gender, Culture, and representation in Islam. *Journal of the Middle East women studies* vol.1 no.2 (2005) 1-24
Wearing the Hijab in Contemporary Morocco: Choice and Identity, Gocek and Balaghi 40-56 (Hessini)
- 9/30** **NO CLASS ROSH HASHANA** (another class will be scheduled)
Abu-Lughod Lila "Movie Stars and Islamic Moralism in Egypt", in Roger N. Lancaster and Micaela di Leonardo (eds.) *The Gender/ Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy*. New York and London: Routledge, pp. 502- 512 (scanned)

Ahmed Leila, *1992 women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of the Modern Debate*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. Chapter 8 The discourse of the Veil 144-168 (scanned)

Kressel, G.M. Shame and gender. *Anthropological quarterly* vol.5 no.1 (1992) 34-46

Arab Male Hebrew Female: The Lure of Metaphors. Gocek and Balaghi 167-173 (Shammas)

IV The reconstruction of Power: Women, politics and the state

10/7 Peteet Julie., "Women and National Politics in the Middle East", in B. Berberoglu (ed.), *Power and Stability in the Middle East*. pp. 136-156 (Scanned)

Where has All the Power Gone? Women and Politics in Popular Quarters of Cairo. Gocek and Balaghi: 174-200 (Singerman)

10/14 NO CLASS SUKKOT (another class will be scheduled)

Lamberger Khatib, Maja. The position and role of women in Jordan. *Glasnik slovenskega etnologskega Drustva* vol. 40 no. 1/2 (2000) 40-48

Notes from the Village: On the ethnographic construction of Women in Iran. Gocek and Balaghi, 86-99 (Friedl)

10/21 Mojab, Shahrzad; Gorman, Rachel. Dispersed nationalism: war, diaspora, and Kurdish women's organizing. *Journal of the Middle East women studies*. vol.3. no.1 (2007) 58-85

Sheikh Salah Al-Sawy "Fatwa by Influential Islamic American Jurist: Marriage of Muslim Women to Non-Muslim Man Forbidden and Invalid", in *Memri (Middle East Media Research Institute – Special Dispatch Series – No. 1735 October, 11 2007 www.islamonline.net*

Sa'ar Amalia., Lonely in Your firm grip: women in Israeli-Palestinian families. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (New Series) vol. 7, no. 4 (2001) 723-39

10/23 Second Reading Assignment is due at the beginning of class

Growing up in Israel: A Personal Perspective, Gocek and Balaghi 113-122 (Persico)

Herzog, Hanna Trisection in forces: gender, religion and the state- the case of state-run religious schools in Israel. *British journal of sociology* vol. 57, no.2 (2006) 241-262

V Male gender identity

10/28 Monterescu, Daniel. city of 'Strengers': the socio-cultural construction of manhood in Jaffa. *Journal of Mediterranean studies* vol.11, no.1 (2001) 159-88

Parker, Seymour, Parker, Hilda. Male gender identity in the Israeli kibbutz: reflections on 'protest masculinity'. *Ethos* vol. 20, no.3 (1992) 340-57

- 11/4** The Position and the Treatment of GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, bisexual and transvestite) in the Middle East (Students will be advised of the reading materials)

Introduction and history of GLBT in the Moslem world

The Civil and legal rights of GLBT in Israel

VI Conclusion: Modernization and the Future

- 11/11** Modernization, the State, and the Family in Middle East Women's Studies, Meriwether and Tucker 63-88 (Hatem)

Moghadam, Valentine M. Women's economic participation in the Middle East. What difference has the neoliberal policy turn made? *Journal of the Middle East women studies* vol.1 no.1 (2005) 110-46

- 11/18** Leila Ahmed., 1992 *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*, Yale University New Haven & London Chapter 11 The struggle for the Future, Ahmed: 208-234

11/24 Mon. - 11/26 Wed. Fall Break. No classes University open.

11/27 Thurs. – 11/28 Fri. Thanksgiving holiday. No classes University closed.

12/2 Essay is due at the beginning of class

"Arab Women: Out of the Shadows, into the world", in the www.economist.com, June 17 2004, pp 1-6

Badran, Margot., Between secular and Islamic feminism/s. Reflections on the Middle East and beyond. *Journal of the Middle East women studies* vol.1 no.1 (2005) 6-28

- 12/9** Najambadi, Afsaneh., Mapping transformations of sex, gender, and sexuality in Modern Iran. *Social analysis*, vol. 49 no. 2 (2005) 54-77

Weiner-Levy Naomi., The flagbearers: Israeli Druze women challenge traditional gender roles. *Anthropology and education quarterly* vol. 37, no. 3 (2006) 217-35

Faier Elizabeth., Looking intacting out: gender, modernity, and the (re) production of the Palestinian family. *Polar: political and legal anthropology review* vol. 20, no. 2 (1997) 1-15

12/13 – 12/18 Final exams for fall 2008

The Essay: Each student early on will select a topic to research throughout the semester on one of several groups of women within the Middle East. One part of the research will involve group work and presentations. The second part will consist of 10-12 pages research paper.

Groups of women: Egyptian, Iranian, North African, Palestinian, Turkish and Israeli Women.

Guidelines for reading and writing Summaries

In order to help you read understand and write the major arguments, and/or analysis, and/or the framework of the author or the article you should pay attention to the following:

What is the main argument?

How the author(s) substantiate her/his argument(s)/analysis etc?

What did you learn from the article?

How the article contribute to your understanding of the subject?

Summaries should be approximately 1200 words, 1.5 spaced, Time New Roman.

You can prepare these summaries in pairs, if you do please hand out one copy with both names on it. You may bring it to class or e-mail.

The papers for the two review will be allocated at the beginning of the term.