

ANTH 290B: ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

SPRING 2014 | TR 2:20-3:50PM | ASBURY 302

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Office: Asbury 205E

Open Office Hours: MW 1:30-3:30PM, and by appointment

OVERVIEW

This course is intended to serve as an introduction to a huge and unwieldy body of scholarship on a huge and unwieldy conceptual swath of the world. People in the West often find it convenient to use the term ‘the Middle East’ to summarize the thought, religion, and cultural practices of a massive number of people living across several continents and in very different circumstances. Such a vast collection of societies and communities cannot be addressed programmatically in a single course, but only thematically. We will therefore approach this material through thematic units designed to explore concepts important in the anthropological study of these places, rather than geographical terrain.

COURSE MATERIALS

You are expected to read all assignments in timely fashion; assignments are listed on the syllabus on the day by which they should be read. We will be reading eight books: six ethnographies, and two histories intend to provide essential background knowledge. We will supplement the books with a small number of articles. The books are:

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1999. *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and poetry in a Bedouin society*. Updated edition. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cleveland, William L., and Martin Bunton. 2013. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Fifth edition. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Deeb, Lara. 2006. *An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi'i Lebanon*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Esposito, John L. 2011. *Islam: The Straight Path*. Fourth edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Meneley, Anne. 1996. *Tournaments of Value: Sociability and Hierarchy in a Yemeni Town*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Özyürek, Esra. 2006. *Nostalgia for the Modern: State Secularism and Everyday Politics in Turkey*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Shannon, Jonathan H. 2006. *Among the Jasmine Trees: Music and Modernity in Contemporary Syria*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

All books will be available for purchase at the bookstore, and will also be on 2-hour reserves at ROW. All other readings will be placed on digital reserve at ROW.

EVALUATION AND ATTENDANCE

You have six papers to write designed to evaluate your comprehension of the concepts under study. Students often find that they are unused to both anthropological thinking and my grading standards; to remedy this dual challenge, you may drop the lowest paper score. I will assign and collect these papers entirely through Moodle, and will give you the prompts therein. All papers will be due on their respective dates at 5:00PM Eastern Time, except for the final paper, which will be due at 12:00PM.

Please note that I expect papers to be submitted in standard format:

- Three to four full pages in length
- Times New Roman 12-point font
- 1-inch margins on all four sides
- Paragraph indentations of 0.5 inch.
- No header

Students are required to attend all class sessions; since the course is discussion-based, it is imperative that students not miss class. We will present material only once, and I will not send discussion notes or other materials on an individual

basis. Those students who miss a class session are still responsible for keeping up with the material presented and discussed.

Active in-class participation is also a major component of the course. I expect everyone to come to class prepared to discuss the readings knowledgeably, and those who demonstrate that they have come to class unprepared to engage will lose points. I may sometimes call on you to hear your thoughts; do not be afraid to speak, and *please* do not think I am trying to single you out or embarrass you. Note well that questions about things you do not understand are **highly encouraged!** Participation is not about proving how much you understand already, but about learning in an active way. Coming to class with questions about the material is a great way to get a useful discussion going.

Structure of the final grade:

Participation	20%
Papers (5 x 16%)	80%

LATENESS POLICY

I do not accept any excuses for late work: all paper prompts are visible from the first week of class, and you have at least one week before the deadline during which you may submit a paper. (Most paper submission links activate eight days before the deadline.)

Turning in written work late will drag you down very fast. Since you must submit all written work through Moodle, you will be unable to slide on deadlines. I will allow students to submit a paper up to 24 hours past the formal deadline. If you are forced to submit your paper to me during this 24-hour late period, I will deduct ten points from its grade. This policy does not apply to the last paper, which will not be accepted late at all, and will be marked as receiving no credit. Hard copies will not be accepted at all for any paper.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As a matter of academic integrity, no plagiarism will be tolerated. Plagiarism is not merely a violation of university policy, but is also fundamentally a form of cheating that circumvents the learning process. Proper citation practices are key to demonstrating that you can engage with other people's ideas as you build your own. All written work should follow the citation formats detailed on the style sheet that I will distribute to the class.

Violations of academic integrity will carry severe consequences, reflected in your grade or in recommendations to be suspended or expelled from the university. Please consult the long (if incomplete) list of questionable practices to avoid at: <http://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/academic/policies/integrity/>

COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICA

I'll be frank here: I am dubious about the wisdom of using computers in classrooms, especially when people are supposed to engage with discussions. However, I recognize that many students now come to college acclimated to typing notes in class, and may even have the self-discipline not to zone out on Facebook, check their team's standing on ESPN, etc. As an experiment, I will allow the use of computers in class for note-taking purposes. If it becomes apparent to me that the computers are hindering the learning process more than helping, I will declare the experiment at an end and computers will be banned from that point on, unless I specifically tell you to bring them for a particular day.

The use of mobile phones is frowned upon during class, since they inevitably serve to distract the students using them, and often distract others around as well. Many of them also have the ability to record sound and therefore turn the class into a recording session, which circumvents the entire purpose of a discussion-oriented class. Please put such devices away for the duration of class. Ignoring this request will harm your participation grade significantly.

ABSENCES

Absences will not be excused. I am sympathetic to the reality that sometimes life intrudes upon one's studies, but our dependence upon engaged class discussion means that we must place a premium on being prompt and present. Every absence will count directly against the participation component of the final grade. Absence becomes a larger problem the more often it occurs: one absence in a whole semester will not damage your participation grade hugely, but a number of absences will. Any student who misses a total of eight class sessions will automatically fail the course.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

“DePauw University is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and University administered activities and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act and Amendments (ADAAA). Any student who feels she or he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or learning challenge is strongly encouraged to contact Pamela Roberts, Coordinator of Academic Success and Student Disability Services, for further information on how to receive accommodations and support. Academic Success and Student Disability Services is located in Harrison Hall, 302 A, [765-658-6267](tel:765-658-6267). It is the responsibility of the student to share the letter of accommodation with faculty and staff members. Accommodations will not be implemented until the faculty or staff member has received the official letter. Accommodations are not retroactive. It is the responsibility of the student to discuss implementation of accommodations with each faculty and staff member receiving the letter.”

See: <http://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/student-html/resources/disabilities/>

GOOD ADVICE:

Note well my open office hours. These are the times when my door is open and students may come to consult me with no prior appointment. If you cannot attend any of these hours due to other obligations, you are always welcome to email me to schedule an appointment at some other time. Much to my bafflement, some students seem to consider it a sign of weakness to ask for help. *I am here to help you!* If you are having trouble grasping the material even after we discuss it in class, do not wait until you have racked up half a semester’s worth of low grades to seek me out. Come talk to me, and I will do my best to clarify any class material puzzling you.

COURSE CALENDAR

Tuesday, January 28 – Syllabus review. Covering some basics of anthropology.

Thursday, January 30 – More basics of anthropology. Some basics of the Middle East.

Esposito Ch. 1: Founding of Islam

Cleveland/Bunton pp. 1-17, 23-29: Founding of Islam and spread of Islamic empires

Esposito Ch. 2: Early Islam and Sunni-Shi’a split

Esposito pp. 92-124: Sunni Islamic jurisprudence and Five Pillars

Unit 1: Language, expressive culture, and nationalisms

Tuesday, February 4

Cleveland/Bunton pp. 75-101, 137-159: Colonialism and origins of contemporary political borders

Ferguson, C.A. 1971. “Diglossia.” In *Language Structure and Language Use: Essays by Charles A. Ferguson*, ed. A.S. Dil, 1–26. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Reserves)

Haeri, Niloofar. 2003. *Sacred Language, Ordinary People: Dilemmas of Culture and Politics in Egypt*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Pp. 1-24, 113-141. (Reserves)

Thursday, February 6

Shannon pp. xv-51

Tuesday, February 11

Cleveland/Bunton pp. 414-424: Syria under Hafiz al-Asad

Shannon pp. 52-105

Thursday, February 13

Esposito pp. 124-134: Sufism

Shannon pp. 106-157

Friday, February 14

Paper 1 due today

Tuesday, February 18

Shannon pp. 158-201

Unit 2: Religion and secularism in politics

Thursday, February 20

Esposito pp. 168-184: 20th-century Islamism, esp. Muslim Brotherhood
Mahmood, Saba. 2001. "Feminist Theory, Embodiment and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival." *Cultural Anthropology* 16(2): 202–236. (Reserves)

Tuesday, February 25

Esposito pp. 134-139: Shi'i Islamic jurisprudence and religious practice
Esposito pp. 215-221: Shi'a Islam in Lebanon and the creation of Hizbullah
Cleveland/Bunton pp. 202-214: Creation of Lebanon and its confessional political system
Cleveland/Bunton pp. 386-388: Creation of Hizbullah
Cleveland/Bunton pp. 500-503: Hizbullah's rise in Lebanese politics

Thursday, February 27

Deeb pp. 1-66

Friday, February 28

Paper 2 due today

Tuesday, March 4

Deeb pp. 67-128

Thursday, March 6

Deeb pp. 129-203

Tuesday, March 11

Deeb pp. 204-232

Thursday, March 13

Cleveland/Bunton pp. 162-171: Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the creation of the Turkish Republic
Cleveland/Bunton pp. 487-494: The rise of AKP in Turkey
Özyürek pp. 1-64

Tuesday, March 18

Özyürek pp. 65-124

Thursday, March 20

Özyürek pp. 125-182

Friday, March 21

Paper 3 due today

March 22-30 – **Spring Recess**

Unit 3: Gender, class, and Islam

Tuesday, April 1

Mir-Hosseini, Ziba. 2006. "Muslim Women's Quest for Equality: Between Islamic Law and Feminism." *Critical Inquiry* 32 (4): 629–645. (Reserves)

Najmabadi, Afsaneh. 2000. "(Un)Veiling Feminism." *Social Text* 64 18(3): 29–45. (Reserves)

Thursday, April 3

Cleveland/Bunton pp. 393-402: Yemen and its political environs
Meneley pp. ix-59

Friday, April 4

Paper 4 due today

Tuesday, April 8

Meneley pp. 60-98

Thursday, April 10

Meneley pp. 99-140

Tuesday, April 15

Meneley pp. 141-194

Thursday, April 17

Aixelà, Yolanda. 2010. "Female Circumcision in Egypt. A Critical Approach." *The Scientific Journal of Humanistic Studies* 2 (2): 1–12. (Reserves)

Gordon, Daniel. 1991. "Female Circumcision and Genital Operations in Egypt and the Sudan: A Dilemma for Medical Anthropology." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 5 (1): 3–14. (Reserves)

Tuesday, April 22

Obermeyer, Carla Makhlouf. 1999. "Female Genital Surgeries: The Known, the Unknown, and the Unknowable." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 13 (1): 79–106. (Reserves)

Mackie, Gerry. 2003. "Female Genital Cutting: A Harmless Practice?" *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 17 (2): 135–158. (Reserves)

Obermeyer, Carla Makhlouf. 2003. "The Health Consequences of Female Circumcision: Science, Advocacy, and Standards of Evidence." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 17 (3): 394–412. (Reserves)

Thursday, April 24

- Moruzzi, Norma Claire. 2005. "Cutting through Culture: The Feminist Discourse on Female Circumcision." *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies* 14 (2): 203–220. (Reserves)
- Wade, Lisa. 2012. "Learning from 'Female Genital Mutilation': Lessons from 30 Years of Academic Discourse." *Ethnicities* 12 (1): 26–49. (Reserves)

Friday, April 25

Paper 5 due today

Tuesday, April 29

Abu-Lughod pp. xi-77

Thursday, May 1

Abu-Lughod pp. 78-134

Tuesday, May 6

Abu-Lughod pp. 134-207

Thursday, May 8

Abu-Lughod pp. 208-259

Tuesday, May 13

Paper 6 due today (in lieu of final exam) @ 12:00PM