



GEOG 447/ASIAN 447: GENDER IN THE MIDDLE EAST
TR 2:00-3:15, Saunders 204

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Tuesdays 11:00-1:00 and Thursdays 11:00-12:00

Gender relations and spaces are central to historical and contemporary cultural and political formations in the modern Middle East. Our knowledge and imaginations of this region are also mediated through gendered representations. In this course we will examine relationships of gender and geography in the modern Middle East. We will question how the representations of the Middle East are gendered and analyze such icons as the “veiled women” and “terrorist men.” What are the political implications of such representations? What kinds of political projects and discourses do they enable or serve? Moving from representations to material spaces, we will investigate the ways in which colonialism, as well as anti-colonial nationalist movements, attempts to create new kinds of feminine and masculine identities and spaces. We will then examine the implications of gendered constructions of national identity and modernity for the use of, mobility in and access to spaces of power. The topics we will discuss include the emergence of new femininities, masculinities, and sexual identifications, social movements, and the paradoxes of Islamism, globalization, and neoliberalism in various settings including Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Palestine, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia. Through the lens of gender, we will develop a new understanding of Middle Eastern geography and politics.

Objectives

The goals of this course include:

- (a) Developing a spatial approach to studying gender in the Middle East,
- (b) Providing a basic historical and geographical knowledge of the Middle East,
- (c) Developing critical analysis skills for understanding current social and political debates, changes and challenges concerning gender and sexuality across the Middle East,
- (d) Honing reading and oral communication skills by preparing discussion leading assignments and participating in class discussions,
- (e) Improving research and writing skills through assignments.

Course requirements:

Participation (20%): Students' active participation will be key to productive class discussions. Students are expected to come to class with a set of questions and ideas based on assigned readings. Students are expected to come to class regularly and on time. Even more important is active participation in class discussions. Attendance without participation will not receive full points at the end of the semester. Students will also have the opportunity to continue discussion outside of class, by posting further comments and questions on Sakai Discussion Board/blog.

Discussion leading (20%): Students will lead **two** classes during the semester. A sign up sheet will be circulated at the beginning of the semester for this purpose. As a discussion leader you will play an active role in introducing and analyzing that day's readings. In this role, you will be expected to formulate 3-4 questions that examine the topic at hand, to stimulate conversation about its connection to other readings, and to present supplementary materials to advance the analysis. The supplementary materials should include a 1-page hand out and a Powerpoint presentation that gives a summary of key points, questions, and brief information about the authors. A combination of relevant video clips, maps, or photos would be helpful to further the discussion as well.

Exams (30%): There will be two exams that aim to evaluate your understanding of course readings and class discussions. The exams will consist of short answer (definition, explanation of a concept) and short essay questions.

Research paper (30%): You can pick a topic of interest to you and of relevance to the course, conduct research, and write an analytical paper. This research paper is expected to demonstrate a deep engagement with the course materials, to effectively use a number of readings, as well as to help develop your independent research skills. The length of the paper should be up to 10 pages for undergraduate students and 15 pages for graduate students. We will complete this research in multiple steps. First step is to submit a 1-2 page proposal with a description of your topic, research question, preliminary argument/thesis and a short list of key sources.

The second step is to prepare an annotated bibliography and a revised proposal (15% of your grade).

Grading:

Participation	20%
Discussion leading	20%
Exams	30%
Research paper	30%

Readings:

Our readings will include a selection of articles and book chapters (available on e-reserves or Blackboard). In addition, we will read the following books:

- *Persepolis I&II*
- *Girls of Riyadh*
- *JMEWS Special Issue, Fall 2010: Muslim Women, Consumer Capitalism, and the Islamic Culture Industry*
(<http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublication?journalCode=jmiddeastwoms>
[tud](http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublication?journalCode=jmiddeastwoms)).

Important dates:

September 27	Research proposal due
October 11	Exam 1
November 8	Annotated bibliography and revised proposal due
December 4	Research paper due
December 8	Saturday, 12pm: Final Exam

Resources for the Course:

UNC libraries: Davis (the main library) and the House Undergraduate Library have many useful resources for this course: <http://www.lib.unc.edu/>

The Writing Center: The Writing Center is a very important resource particularly for your assignments. I encourage all of you to become familiar with their services. Information on those services and many useful ideas on research and writing are at WWW.UNC.edu/depts/wcweb/.

Special Needs Students:

If you have any special needs, please talk to me during the first two weeks of the semester. I will be happy to work with you and/or the relevant centers on campus to accommodate your needs.

Schedule

MODULE I: ORIENTALISM AND COLONIALISM

This module examines the role of gender and sexuality in Orientalism and colonialism. How was (and is) the Middle East represented and understood by Western Europe in gendered and sexualized ways? How have such representations enabled and furthered European colonization? We will also discuss the critiques of imperialist tendencies and assumptions within Western feminism towards the “Third World” or the Middle East.

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION

August 21: Introduction: Why Study Gender and Space in the Middle East?

August 23: “Arab Spring” and Women: Breaking Down Stereotypes?

Please bring a news article that deals with a gender issue in the Middle East. I will ask you to share your article with the class.

<http://www.thenation.com/article/160179/arab-spring-women>

http://www.ifex.org/middle_east_north_africa/2011/05/25/arab_spring_women_targeted/

WEEK 2: SPACE, GENDER, AND IMPERIALISM

August 28: Gender and Geography

Linda McDowell, 1999, “Introduction: Place and Gender,” in *Gender, Identity, and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies*, pp. 1-33. The University of Minnesota Press.

August 30: ‘Are We All Women?’: The Question of the Transnational and the Imperial in Feminism

Chandra Mohanty, 1988, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses,” *Feminist Review*, 30, 65-88. (e-reserve)

Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?” Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and its Others”, *American Anthropologist*, 104, 3, pp. 783-790.

Saba Mahmood and Charles Hirschkind, 2002, “Feminism, the Taliban and the politics of insurgency,” <http://fathom.lib.uchicago.edu/1/777777190136/>

WEEK 3: ORIENTALISM, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

September 4: Gendering Orientalism and Colonialism

Edward Said, “Introduction”, from *Orientalism*

September 6: Visual Representations as the ‘Fertilizers of the Colonial Vision’ --[STUDENT LED DISCUSSIONS BEGIN]

Malek Alloula, 1986, “The Orient as Stereotype and Phantasm”, “Women from the Outside” and “Women’s Prisons”, in *The Colonial Harem*. (University of Minnesota Press; translated by Myrna Godzich and Wlad Godzich)

Joseph Boone, 1995, “Vacation Cruises; or, The Homoerotics of Orientalism,” *PMLA*, 110: 1, 89-107 (reprinted in Reina Lewis and Sara Mills eds. *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, pp. 460-486)

WEEK 4: ORIENTALISM CONTINUED

September 11: Western women's travel writing

Lady Mary Montagu, selections from *Turkish Embassy Letters*.

Harriet Martineau, *Eastern life: past and present*.

Lisa Lowe, Chapter 2, "Travel Narratives and Orientalism: Montagu and Montesquieu", *Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991, pp. 30-72.

September 13: Harem as gendered space: historical perspectives vs. stereotypes

Leslie Pierce, Introduction. *The Imperial Harem*.

Irvin Cemil Schick, "The harem as gendered space and the spatial production of gender" in Marilyn Booth ed. *Harem Histories*, pp.69-84.

WEEK 5: COLONIALISM AND GENDER

September 18: Colonial Paternalism: French Syria

Elizabeth Thompson, Chapter 2 ("Soldiers and Patriarchs: The Pillars of Colonial Paternalism"), in *Colonial Citizens*

September 20: Colonizing the Domestic Space, Decolonization, and Gender: French Algeria

Julia Clancy-Smith, "Islam, Gender, and Identities in the Making of French Algeria, 1930-1962," in Julia Clancy-Smith ed. *Domesticating the Empire*

Zeynep Celik, "The Indigenous Home" (available as e-book:

<http://webcat.lib.unc.edu/search/acelik/acelik/1,4,13,B/l856~4006330&FF=acelik+zeynep&8,,9,1,0>)

Film: The Battle of Algiers

MODULE II: NATIONALISM, REVOLUTION, WAR

How have nationalist movements, including those of decolonization, constructed the new nation and gender roles? What are the ideal femininities and masculinities that they have formulated? What role women have played in revolution and war and how have they been impacted?

WEEK 6: NATIONALISM, GENDER, AND SPACE

September 25: Nationalism and Women: Turkey

Deniz Kandiyoti, "End of Empire: Islam, Nationalism, and Women in Turkey," in Reina Lewis and Sara Mills eds. *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, pp. 263-284. Routledge. (original: 1991, in Deniz Kandiyoti ed. *Women, Islam, and the State*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press)

September 27: Nation-Building in the Home: Turkey

Sibel Bozdoğan, "Architecture of Revolution", *Modernism and Nation-Building I*

Meltem Gürel, 2009, "Defining and Living Out the Interior: The 'Modern' Apartment and the 'Urban Housewife in Turkey during the 1950s and 1960s," *Gender, Place and Culture*, 16:6, 703-72 (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09663690903279153>)

Research paper proposal due

WEEK 7: NATIONALISM CONTINUED: PALESTINE AND ISRAEL

October 2: Nationalism, Femininity, and Masculinity

Tamar Mayer, "From Zero to Hero: Masculinity in Jewish Nationalism", in Esther Fuchs ed. *Israeli Women's Studies: A Reader*, pp. 96-117. Rutgers University Press.

Simona Sharoni, "Homefront as Battlefield"

Film: My Israel

October 4: Gender Perspectives on the Palestine/Israel Conflict

Penny Johnson, 2001, "Where Have all the Women (and Men) Gone? Reflections on Gender and the Second Palestinian Intifada," *Feminist Review*, 69, pp. 21-43.

Film: Rana's Wedding

WEEK 8: GENDER AND REVOLUTION

October 9: Gender and Revolution: Iran

Persepolis

Snapshots of Women's Movement in Iran:

<http://iml.jou.ufl.edu/projects/Fall06/Sanam/timeline.html>

NPR: "Despite odds women's movement persists in Iran" (February 1, 2009):

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=100039579>

October 11: Women and War: Iraq

Nadje al-Ali and Nicola Pratt, 2010, *What Kind of Liberation? Women and the Occupation of Iraq*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Introduction, Chapter 1 and 2.

Exam 1

WEEK 9: Men and War

October 16: Masculinities and War: Lebanon

Haugbolle, Sune. 2012. The (little) militia man: memory and militarized masculinity in Lebanon. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*. 8, 1 (Winter 2012): 115-139,141.

October 18: Fall break

MODULE III: NEW PERSPECTIVES: THE YOUTH, MUSLIM SUBJECTS, SEXUALITIES, COMMODITIES

This module introduces some of the most recent research trends in Middle East women's studies, including a new interest in understanding the recent uprisings across the Middle East, new formations of Islamic piety, questions about sexuality (especially homosexuality and gay/lesbian identities), and the rise of consumerism and commodification.

WEEK 10

October 23: New Public Visibilities

Nilufer Gole, 2002, "Islam in public: new visibilities and new imaginaries," *Public Culture*, 14, 1, 173-

Dorothea Shulz, 2011, "Renewal and enlightenment: Muslim women's biographic narratives of reform in Mali," *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 41, 1, 93-123.

October 25: No class—research paper work day

WEEK 11: NEW MUSLIM SUBJECTS

October 30: Piety and women's movement--Egypt

Sherine Hafez, 2011, "Women developing women: Islamic approaches to poverty alleviation in Egypt," *Feminist Review*, 97, 56-73.

Saba Mahmood, 2001, "Feminist theory, embodiment, and the docile agent: some reflections on the Egyptian Islamic revival," *Cultural Anthropology*, 16, 202-

November 1: Women and Mosque Spaces: Women Preachers in Turkey

Mona Hassan, 2011. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 43, 03, 451-473.
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0020743811000614>

WEEK 12: SEXUALITIES

November 6: Sexuality in Medieval Middle East

Sahar Amer, 2009, "Medieval Arab Lesbians and Lesbian-Like Women," *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 18:2, pp. 215-236.

Joseph Massad, 200, "Re-Orienting Desire: The Gay International and the Arab World," *Public Culture*, 14:2, pp. 361-386.

Sahar Amer, 2010, "Joseph Massad and the alleged violation of human rights," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 16, 4, 646-664.

Film: Jihad for Love

November 8: Sexuality and tourism

Jared McCormick, 2011, "Hairy chest, will travel: tourism, identity, and sexuality in the Levant," *JMEWS*, 7, 3, 71-97.

Jessica Jacobs, 2009, "Have sex will travel: romantic "sex" tourism and women negotiating modernity in Sinai," *Gender, Place, and Culture*, 16, 1, 43-61.

Annotated Bibliography and Revised Proposal Due

WEEK 13: CONSUMER CAPITALISM, ISLAM, AND WOMEN

November 13: Consumer Capitalism and Muslim Women

Journal of Middle East Women's Studies, 2010, 6, 3, Marketing Muslim Women Special Issue. Introduction.

November 15: New Muslim Women's Lifestyle Magazines

Reina Lewis, Carla Jones articles in *JMEWS* Marketing Muslim Women special issue.

Week 14

November 20: New 'Islamic' Fashion

Banu Gökarıksel and Anna Secor article in *JMEWS*; 2010, "Islamic-ness in the life of a commodity," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*

November 22: Thanksgiving holiday

Week 15

November 27: Literary representations of Muslim women

Girls of Riyadh

Marilyn Booth article in *JMEWS*

November 29: Arab Spring

Sherine Hafez, 2012. No longer a bargain: women, masculinity, and the Egyptian uprising. *American Ethnologist*, vol. 39, issue 1, 37- 42.

Megjan Massoumi and Nezar Al Sayyad, 2012. Religious fundamentalisms in the city: reflections on the Arab Spring. *Journal of International Affairs*, 65, 2, 31-

Journal of International Affairs. 65.2 (Spring-Summer 2012): p31.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/04/23/why_do_they_hate_us

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/04/24/debating_the_war_on_women?page=0,5

Week 6**December 4: Current and future challenges**

Research paper due

December 8 Saturday, 12pm: Final Exam