NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY - WINTER 2016

GENDER & SEXUALITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SOCIOL 376 – GNDR ST 382 – MENA 390-3

Tues & Thurs: 3.30-4.50 @ Locy 111

Dr. Ayça Alemdaroğlu
ayca@norhtwestern.edu
Office hours: Wednesday 11-12 pm
Scott Hall 20

TA: Aydın Özipek
aydinozipek2018@u.northwestern.edu
Office hours: By appointment
Course Description
This course explores the construction and experience of gender and sexuality in the Middle East. Drawing on the historical, sociological and anthropological research in the region, the course aims to question the stereotypes about the subordination of ‘Muslim’ women and to offer a systematic reading and an analytical discussion of the political, economic and cultural structures that inform femininity and masculinity in the region. The course will start with the examination of women in Islamic sources, then will move on to nationalist and modernization movements in the 19th and 20th centuries. Gender relations, women’s and men’s lives in contemporary Egypt, Turkey and Iran will be a central theme of the course. In this framework, we will also pay special attention to Islamist mobilization, family, sexuality, neoliberalism, women’s labor and the experiences of LGBT. Finally, we will discuss the role of women in recent uprisings and social change.

Course objectives
At the end of this course, the students will be able to:
- Develop an interdisciplinary and comparative understanding of gender and sexuality in the Middle East
- Know the main historical periods and social factors that play an important role in the construction of gender and sexuality in Egypt, Iran and Turkey
- Evaluate the merits of common representations of the Middle East and its people in North America and Europe.

Course Requirements and Grading Policy
<table>
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<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<td>Participation + Reading responses</td>
<td>70 pts</td>
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<td>Exam</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
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<td>Book review</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
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Participation
Your participation will be evaluated on the basis of your contribution to class discussions and your effectiveness in leading group discussions. Students will take turns coming up with discussion points and questions for each class. Discussion questions and comments should be thoughtful, provocative, should refer to specific passages in the text(s) and should reflect a close engagement with the text(s). Depending on the class size, you will be asked to lead the group discussion between 1-3 times during the term. We will talk about the best ways of leading the class discussion in the first class. Everyone is expected to come to class having read the assigned material carefully.

Response Papers
In order to facilitate class discussion and learning, you will also be required to write response papers for each class except on February 18, February 25 and March 3. Responses are due 10 am of the marked date. Reading responses should be typed 12 pt., single-spaced and limited to a SINGLE PAGE.
Each response paper submission is worth 2 pts. Your responses papers will not be graded for content during the term. However, if your submission is inadequate, your TA will talk to you about the ways in which you can improve it. At the end of the quarter, response papers will be evaluated on the basis of each student’s progress throughout the term in addressing complex, conflicting and thought-provoking matters (we will give examples of this in the classroom).

If you have a major excuse and miss the deadline for submission, please contact your TA. If you miss it without any notification, you will get no points for the missing paper. However, failure to complete two response papers will result in a failing grade for the quarter.

Consider the following questions while writing your responses
   1) How does the reading(s) contribute to your understanding of the topic? How different, complementary or contradictory are readings in comparison to what you know earlier?
   2) What is the main argument?
   3) What evidence was provided and what concepts are utilized for these main arguments?
   4) What is your evaluation of the strength and weaknesses of the main argument(s)? Are there points that you disagree? What questions do you think remained unanswered about the topic?
   5) Is there anything that surprised you in the readings?
   6) What are questions or issues that are worth of discussing further in the class?

Exam
You will also be given a short (probably a take-home) exam in which you will be expected to write a cumulative synthesis of material and issues covered in the course. The date and content of the exam will be announced during the term.

Book Review
Please select one of the following books and write a review (1200-1300 words) focusing on gender issues and using theories and concepts that you have learned in this course. Due February 18, 2015.

“Dare to Disappoint” by Özge Samancı
“Persepolis” by Marjane Satrapi
“Women at Zero” Nawal El Saadawi
**Weekly Work Load**

You will have 35 pages of reading on average for each class. From time to time, you might be also asked to view a video, listen to a podcast or read a news article. After you do the readings, writing response papers should not take longer than 1 hr. If it takes longer, please come to talk to me, or your TA about how to write more efficiently.

**Course Policies**

Attendance
Attendance is required at all class meetings. We may take attendance.

On Time Arrivals and Departures
Class will start and end on time. Tardiness is a distraction to the class and to instructors, so please be on time. If you come late, please be discrete. Leaving early is also a distraction and should be avoided. We reserve the right to mark students absent who habitually arrive particularly late or leave particularly early.

**Weekly Schedule and Readings**

**W1 1/5**
Introduction

**W1 1/7**
Orientalist and colonial legacies

Leila Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* Pp. 783-790

Homa Hoodfar, *The Veil in their minds and on our heads: The Persistence of Colonial Images of Muslim women* pp. 5-18.

**W2 1/12**
Orientalist and colonial legacies continued


Film Screening: “They Call Me Muslim” (2006, 27 minutes long, a film by Diana Ferrero)

**W2 1/14**
Gender and Islam in transition: Pre-modern and Modern Histories

Interview with Leila Ahmed
http://download.publicradio.org/podcast/speakingoffaith/20061207_muslimwomen.mp3?_kip_ipx=1006078156-1295221492

* Nikki Keddie, The Past and Present of Women in the Muslim World,

W3-1/19

Modernization and gender politics


Margot Badran, Egyptian Feminism in a nationalist century
http://www.meditteraneas.org/article.php3?id_article=178


W3-1/21

Women’s legal status

Rana, Allam, In Egypt, the Law itself is an Enemy of Women’s Rights, short blog piece
http://www.juancole.com/2015/02/itself-womens-rights.html

Meltem Muftuler Bac, 2011. Gender Equality in Turkey, 14 pages

Valentine M. Moghadam
Women in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Legal Status, Social Positions, and Collective Action

* Zuhal Yeﬂilyurt Gündüz The Women’s Movement in Turkey: From Tanzimat towards European Union Membership

*Gender Inequality and Discrimination: The Case of Iranian Women, Iran Human Rights Documentation Center Report
W4-1/26 Feminism

Nukhet Sirman, 1989. Feminism in Turkey: A Short History. New Perspectives on Turkey, 33 pages


W4-1/28 Islamist Feminism

Screening: Feminism Inshallah: A History Of Arab Feminism
A film by Feriel Ben Mahmoud France, 2014, 52 minutes, Color, DVD, Arabic, French, Subtitled

Janet Afary, Portraits of two Islamist women: Escape from freedom or from tradition? 47-77

W5-2/4 Piety and empowerment


Interview with Saba Mahomood,
http://thelightinhereyesmovie.com/resources/interview-saba-mahmood/

Samah Selim, Review: Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject


W5-2/6 Islamic movements and its discontents

Valentine M. Moghadam, Islamic Feminism and Its Discontents: Toward a Resolution of the Debate 1135-1171

Frontline Interview with Amina Wadud
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/muslims/interviews/wadud.html

**Women’s labor**


Arlene Elowe Macleod, Transforming Women’s Identity” in D. Singerman and H Hoodfar eds. *Development, change, and gender in Cairo: a view from the household*. 27-51


The Egyptian Economy and the Women [http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Templates/Articles/tmpArticles.aspx?CatID=839#.Vn6gsoSYbME](http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Templates/Articles/tmpArticles.aspx?CatID=839#.Vn6gsoSYbME)


W6-2/11 The Familial

https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/703/2/Feminist_analysis_of_killings_in_turkey.PDF


W7-2/16 Masculinity

Farha Ghannam, 2013, Live or Die Like a Man: Gender Dynamics in Urban Egypt, Stanford University Press. 59-107

W7-2/18 Masculinity continued NO RESPONSE PAPER

Screening: Two Girls by Kutlug Ataman 107 min

Salih Can Aciksoz, In Vitro nationalism: Masculintiy, Diability, and Assisted Reproduction in War-Torn Turkey. 14 pages

* Paul Amar, Middle East Masculinity Studies: Discourses of "Men in Crisis," Industries of Gender in Revolution, Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies, 36-70

W8-2/23 Sexuality


Afary, There Are No Real Virgins in Tehran – Part I of the Dialogue with Nawal El Saadawi,

Afary, Women’s Rights in Iran – Part II of the Dialogue with Nawal el Saadawi

Afary, Tehran, the city of love,
http://janetafary.com/articles/tehran-city-of-love/
'Temporary Marriage' and the Economy of Pleasure,  

Janet Afary, Recreating Virginity in Iran, Guardian, May 12th, 2009  
http://www.janetafary.com/articles/recreating-virginity-in-iran/#more-475

W8 - 2/25  
Sexuality continued – NO RESPONSE PAPER

Kutlug Atamans's visit (filmmaker/artist from Turkey)  
http://www.kutlugataman.com/site/main


* Heba Aziz El-Kholy, Defiance and compliance: negotiating gender in low-income Cairo, 167-191 (Conjugal arrangements and sexuality).


W9-3/1LBTQ

Screening: A Jihad for Love, 2007, 81 min. Parvez Sharma (available at NU streaming? and Netflix for instant watching)  
Examines the lives of gay, lesbian, and transgendered Muslims in twelve countries as they attempt to reconcile their faith with their sexuality.

Tarik Bereket and Barry D. Adam, The Emergence of Gay Identities in Contemporary Turkey, Sexualities 2006 9: 131-151  
http://sex.sagepub.com/content/9/2/131.full.pdf+html

* Kandiyoti, D. 2002. 'Pink card blues: Trouble and Strife at the Crossroads of Gender,' in D. Kandiyoti and A. Saktanber (eds.) Fragments of Culture, Rutgers University Press. 274-299

The Safra Project  
http://www.safraproject.org/aboutus.htm
Gay in Iran (podcast)  http://en.iranwire.com/features/6574/

KaosGL
http://www.kaosgl.com/home.php

9- 3/3  Gender politics and uprisings – NO RESPONSE PAPER

Diane Singerman Youth, Gender, and Dignity in the Egyptian Uprising, Journal of Middle East Women's Studies

Screening: Kismet


W10-3/8  Gender politics and uprisings continued

Janet Afary, When Women Fear to Tread: Sexual Violence and the Egyptian Revolution

V Tahmasebi - Birgani, Green Women of Iran: The Role of the Women's Movement During and After Iran's Presidential Election of 2009, Constellations, Volume 17, Issue 1, pages 78–86, March 2010

Pinar Tremblay, Turkish laws fail to protect women's right to choose
http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/03/turkish-womens-right-to-choose-law-fails.html#ixzz3vKwHUTIJ

Zeynep Kurtulus Korkman and Salih Can Aciksoz
“Erdogan’s Masculinity and the Language of the Gezi Resistance”

* Articles on the revolution and counter-revolution in Cultural Anthropology


W10-3/10 Wrap-up

* Suggested readings.