

NES 375
ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
Fall 2008 | Department of Near Eastern Studies

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Class Hours: MWF 1:00-1:50

Location: Chavez 304

Office Location: Marshall Building 454

Office Hours: W: 2:30-5:00

DESCRIPTION

Over the past centuries, the Middle East has attracted Western travelers, diplomats, journalists, and scholars. This fascination produced a plethora of literature on Middle Eastern peoples, religions, and cultures. Drawing on anthropological theory as well as ethnographic studies from North Africa and the Middle East, we will explore ethnographic themes, which have been at the center of these works such as poetic practices, tribalism, honor, Islam, and gender issues. To begin with, we will study and analyze the ways in which Middle Eastern societies have been represented in Western literature and art. In the process, we will focus on different examples of ethnographic representations of Middle Eastern societies as alternative methods of understanding social and cultural complexities. Our primary goal is to highlight the thematic, theoretical, and methodological approaches and contributions of Middle Eastern ethnographies to anthropological debates about power, religion, gender, social organization, urbanism, religious identity, colonialism, and nationalism.

OBJECTIVES

This course is designed (1) to introduce students to the field of Middle Eastern anthropology, (2) to acquaint students with different methodological and ethnographic approaches to the study of the Middle East, (3) and to equip students with systematic anthropological tools to analyze Middle Eastern societies and cultures.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Dale F. Eickelman. *The Middle East and Central Asia. An Anthropological Approach*. Fourth Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002.
- Edward Said. *Orientalism*. Vintage Books, 1979.
- Michael Gilson. *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East*. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001.
- Lila Abu-Lughod. *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Katherine E. Hoffman. *We Share: Walls Language, Land, and gender in Berber Morocco*. Blackwell, 2008.
- Susan Slymowics. *The Performance of Human Rights in Morocco*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Additional readings will be available on electronic reserve at *Desire2Learn* by logging in at the following address: <http://d2l.arizona.edu>.

REQUIREMENTS

This course is structured around weekly readings, which deal with different themes. Since students have different backgrounds and levels of knowledge about Middle Eastern politics, societies, and peoples, the instructor will provide lectures that contextualize the readings and frame them in regional, political, historical and cultural contexts. The students are responsible for doing the weekly readings with the aim to participate in class. Attendance is mandatory.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Students are expected to finish the following assignments, which will determine their final grade: (1) a book review; (2) a regional/thematic genealogical chart that would give an overview of the scholarship and the scholars of certain regions/themes within the Middle East. This can include a region, a country or a theme (for instance North Africa, the Gulf, Palestine/Israel, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Minorities, gender etc.); (3) a bibliographic entries essay will count as a mid-term and will be the basis of the (4) final paper. Class participation and attendance will also count in the evaluation of each student. Students are expected to complete the following assignments in accordance with the University of Arizona code of Academic Integrity. Plagiarism is **STEALING** what is not yours. **DO NOT GIVE ME A PLAGIARIZED WORK.**

Class Preparation/Participation	10%
Book Review (3-5 page)	10%
Regional/Thematic Genealogical Chart	20%
Bibliographic Entries Essay (4 pages)	25%
Final Paper (10-15 pages)	35%

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

Any student who needs special accommodation is advised to contact me privately to discuss his/her needs.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week One

August 25: Overview of class structure, requirements, and content.

I. FOUNDATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT MIDDLE EAST

A. EARLY ENCOUNTERS: GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETIES OF EUROPE

August 27-29:

- Dale F. Eickelman. Intellectual Predecessors East and West. *In: Eickelman, The Middle East and Central Asia An Anthropological Approach*. Pp. 22-43.
- Timothy Mitchell. The World as Exhibition. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31:217-36, 1989.
- Donald Vernon McKay. Colonialism and the French Geographical Movement 1871-1881. *Geographic Review* 33 (2):214-232.

B. ORIENTAL TRADITION AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Week Two

September 1: No CLASS

September 3-5:

- Said, Edward. Introduction. *In: Orientalism*. Pp. 1-28. New York: Vintage Books,
- Muhammed A. Al-Da'mi. Introduction the Roots of an Idea: The Nineteenth Century and Its Legacy. Pp. 1-23. *In: Arabian Mirrors and Western Soothsayers: Nineteenth-century Literacy and Approaches to Arab-Islamic History*. New York: Peter Lang.
- John M. Efron. Orientalism and the Jewish Historical Gaze. Pp. 80-93. *In: Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar, eds. Orientalism and the Jews*.

II. ETHNOGRAPHIC WRITING AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

Week Three

September 8-10-12:

- Erik Cohen. Recent Anthropological Studies of Middle Eastern Communities and Ethnic Groups. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 6:315-347, 1977.
- Robert A. Fernea and James M. Malarkey. Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa: A Critical Assessment. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 4:183-206, 1975.

III. INSIDER AND OUTSIDER PERSPECTIVES

Week Four

September 15-17-19:

- Michael Gilsean. An Anthropologist's Introduction . *In: Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East*. New York: I.B. Tauris. Pp. 9-26, 2001.
- Aomar Boum. Southern Moroccan Jewry between the Colonial Manufacture of Knowledge and the Postcolonial Historiographical Silence. *In: Daniel Schroeter and Emily Gottreich, eds. Rethinking Jewish Culture and Society in North Africa*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, forthcoming.
- Katherine Hoffman. "On Fieldwork Methods and Movements: Song is Good Speech." pp. 31-45. *In: We Share Walls: Language Land and Gender in Berber Morocco*. Malden, MA: Blakwell, 2008.

- Lila Abu-Lughod. Guest and Daughter. pp. 1-35. *In: Abu-Lughod, Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society.*

IV. THEMES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF ETHNOGRAPHIC MEANINGS

Week Five

September 22-24-26:

A. Tribal Relations and Politics of Identity

- Dale F. Eickelman. What is a tribe? pp. 115-139. *In: Eickelman, The Middle East and Central Asia An Anthropological Approach.*
- Lila Abu-Lughod. Identity in Relationship. pp. 39-77. *In: Abu-Lughod, Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society.*

Week Six

September 22; October 1-3:

B. Personal and Family Relationships

- Lila Abu-Lughod. Honor and the Virtues of Autonomy. pp. 78-167. *In: Abu-Lughod, Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society.*

Bibliographic Entries Essay

Week Seven

October 6-8-10:

C. Formation and Transformation of Space

- Dale F. Eickelman. Cities in Their Place. *In: The Middle East and Central Asia An Anthropological Approach.* Pp. 84-114.
- Michael Gilson. pp. 164-191. *In: Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East.*
- Michael Gilson. pp. 192-214. *In: Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East.*

Week Eight

October 13-15-17:

D. Poetry and Gender

- Lila Abu-Lughod. Discourses on Sentiment. pp. 171-271. *In: Abu-Lughod, Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society.*

Week Nine

October 20-22-24:

E. Religious Minorities

- Michael Gilson. The Community of Suffering and the World Reversed. pp. 55-74. *In: Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East.* New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001.
- Henriette Dahan-Kalev. "You're So Pretty – You Don't Look Moroccan." *Israel Studies* 6(1):1-13, 2001.

Regional Genealogical Chart DUE

Week Ten

October 27-29-31:

F. Ethnic Minorities

- Katherine Hoffman. *We Share Walls: Language Land and Gender in Berber Morocco*. Malden, MA: Blakwell, 2008. pp. 81-143.

Week Eleven

November 3-5-7:

G. Popular Islam and Sufi Practices

- Michael Gilson. The Operations of Grace. pp. 75-94. *In: Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East*. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001.
- Gegory Starrett. The Political Economy of Religious Commodities in Cairo. *American Anthropologist* 97(1):51-68, 1995.
- Michael Gilson. The World Turned Inside Out: Forms of Islam in Egypt. pp. 215-250. *In: Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East*. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001.
- Brian Silverstein. Disciplines of Presence in Modern Turkey: Discourse, Companionship and the Mass mediation of Islamic Practice. *Cultural Anthropology* 23(1):118-153, 2008.

Week Twelve

November 10-12-14:

H. Islamic Schooling and Educational Institutions

- Michael Gilson. The Men of Learning and Authority. pp. 27-54. *In: Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East*. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001.
- Aomar Boum. The Political Coherence of Educational Incoherence: The Consequences of Educational Specialization in a Southern Moroccan Community. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 39(2):205-223, 2008.
- Katherine Hoffman. *We Share Walls: Language Land and Gender in Berber Morocco*. Malden, MA: Blakwell, 2008. pp. 49-79.

Book Review Due

Week Thirteen

November 17-19-21:

I. Media

- Augustus Richard Norton. The New media, Civic Pluralism, and the Slowly Retreating State. pp. 19-28. *In: New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*. eds., Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson. Indiana University Press, 1999.

- Katherine Hoffman. Mediating the Countryside: Purists and Pundits on Tashelhit Radio. pp. 195-227. *In: We Share Walls: Language Land and Gender in Berber Morocco*. Malden, MA: Blakwell, 2008.

Week Fourteen

November 24-26:

November 28: NO CLASS

J. Political Islam

- Michael Gilsenan. Everywhere and Nowhere: Forms of Islam in North Africa. pp. 142-163. *In: Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East*. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001.

Week Fifteen

December 1-3-5

K. National Politics and Human Rights

- Susan Slyomovics. The Argument from Silence: Morocco's Truth commission and Women Political Prisoners. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 1(3):73-95, 2005.
- Susan Slyomovics. Self-Determination as Self-Definition: The Case of Morocco. *In: Hurst Hannum and Eileen F. Babbitt, eds. Negotiating Self-Determination*. pp. 135-157. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006.

Week Sixteen

December 8-10

- Susan Slyomovics. *The Performance of Human Rights in Morocco*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.

Final Paper Due