

The University of Texas at Austin – Department of Anthropology

Spring 2011

ANT 324L • Cities of the Middle East

Unique Days	Time	Location	Instructor
31300	Tuesday/Thursday	3:30 PM-5:00 PM	SAC 4.174 Sofian Merabet

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Office Hours in SAC 5.164: F 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. or by appointment

Course Description:

This advanced undergraduate course deals with the anthropological and sociological analysis of space, with a special emphasis on urban theory and culture in the Middle East. It does not provide an inclusive overview over the extensive literature on the subject, but attempts at communicating important concepts and philosophies that have been at the forefront of important debates within the disciplines of anthropology/sociology and Urban Studies. This includes the close reading of social scientific texts, but also of fiction, including two novels and an “urban memoir,” as well as through feature films and a documentary. Further, the material to be read will enable us to assess the impact of colonial policies on cities in geographical areas as diverse as North Africa, the Levant, and Turkey. Next to examining some of the major debates in qualitative social science, the course will critically consider how the issues raised in class can be applied comparatively, especially in terms of differing understandings of what constitutes cities in today’s global world and the cultural practices of daily-life that are performed in them.

Required Books: (in alphabetical order)

Books (ordered at the *University Co-Op*, www.universitycoop.com, 2246 Guadalupe St. Austin, (512) 476-7211):

Alameddine, Rabih (1998) *Koolaid: The Art of War*. Picador. ISBN: 0-312-20658-5

El Khalil, Zena (2009) *Beirut, I love You: A Memoir*. Saqi Books. ISBN: 978-0-86356-415-4

Ghannam, Farha (2002) *Remaking the Modern: Space, Relocation, and the Politics of Identity in a Global Cairo*. University of California Press. ISBN: 0-520-23046-9

Pamuk, Orhan (2004) *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. Vintage. ISBN: 978-1-4000-3388-1

Sawalha, Aseel (2010) *Reconstructing Beirut: Memory and Space in a Postwar Arab City*. The University of Texas Press. ISBN: 978-0-292-72187-6

- **The rest of the readings will be scanned and posted on Blackboard!**

Films:

- *Pépé le Moko* by Julien Duvivier (1937, 94 mins.)
- *The Battle of Algiers* by Gillo Pontecorvo (1966, 123 mins.)
- *Cairo as told by Chahine* by Youssef Chahine (1991, 24 mins.)
- *Hamam: The Turkish Bath* by Ferzan Özpetek (1997, 96 mins.)
- *West Beirut* by Ziyad Doueiri (1998, 105 mins.)

Course Requirements for Registered Students:

The class relies on the intellectual commitment and active participation of all students. It will be run primarily as general discussions with some lectures. In order for the course to be effective, all students must have the reading assignments completed and ready for in-depth discussion for each class. Regular attendance is required. *Mere attendance in class, however, does not constitute participation.* You must come to class having carefully read all materials and be prepared to discuss, question, and argue about issues raised in the readings. It will be beneficial for you to take excerpts/notes on any material that you find enlightening, controversial, or objectionable. You should also take notes in class on themes, key terms, and debates we discuss. These note-taking strategies will be crucial when you write your response papers. In short:

- **Attend classes.**
- **Do all assigned readings (while taking excerpts/notes!) by the date indicated on the syllabus and participate actively in the general class discussion.**
- **Regular 10-minute oral presentations on the weekly readings to be assigned to two students each class. They are intended to launch the general class discussions.**
- **Four (4) 2-page (single-spaced/12 point) NO MORE, NO LESS! critical response papers to be handed in on time and covering a theoretical question based on the assigned readings (assignment to be specified in class and posted on blackboard).**

1) The goal of the 10 minutes oral presentations is two-fold: one, identify and explain the argument(s) that the author is making, and two, provide your own take on that argument. Begin with a short summary of the work and then focus on the author's argument(s). Try to be concise in all parts of your analysis. An outline can help to remain focused on your analysis and avoid summary or irrelevant description. Following is a sample outline for your assignment:

- I. Introduction (includes the author's and your argument[s])
- II. Short summary of the text (focus on one or two central aspects of the work)
- III. Development and substantiation of your critique

2) The writing assignments are designed to develop critical reading, analytical, and writing skills. Evaluation criteria include: critical and integrative analysis of texts, clarity of thought, ability to synthesize readings and class discussions into your own argument, and ability to formulate a theoretical grounding for it.

Anyone plagiarizing will first be given an "F" (Fail) and a report will be forwarded to the appropriate university authorities.

Grading Procedure:

- 4 response papers: 80%.
- Presentations: 10%.
- Regular attendance/participation: 10%.

Please note that the instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives.

Reading Schedule: (this schedule is tentative and subject to possible revision)

Week 1:

- Tuesday, January 18th Introduction to the course
- Thursday, January 20th Leïla Vignal "The Emergence of a Consumer Society in the Middle East: Evidence from Cairo, Damascus and Beirut" in Drieskens, Barbara , Franck Mermier and Heiko Wimmen (eds.) (2007) *Cities of the South: Citizenship and Exclusion in the 21st Century*. Saqi Books, pp. 68-81

Week 2:

- Tuesday, January 25th Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2 in Ghannam, Farha (2002) *Remaking the Modern: Space, Relocation, and the Politics of Identity in a Global Cairo*. University of California Press, pp. 1-66.
- Thursday, January 27th Film: *Cairo as told by Chahine* by Youssef Chahine
Chapter 3 in Ghannam.

Week 3:

- Tuesday, February 1st Chapters 4 and 5 in Ghannam.
First Response Paper due!
- Thursday, February 3rd Chapter 6 and Conclusion in Ghannam.

Week 4:

- Tuesday, February 8th Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2 in Sawalha, Aseel (2010) *Reconstructing Beirut: Memory and Space in a Postwar Arab City*. The University of Texas Press, pp. 1-49.
- Thursday, February 10th Chapters 3 and 4 in Sawalha.

Week 5:

- Tuesday, February 15th Chapters 5 and 6 and Afterword in Sawalha.
- Thursday, February 17th Film: *West Beirut* by Ziyad Doueiri (1998, 105 mins.)

Week 6:

- Tuesday, February 22nd Chapters 1-12 in El Khalil, Zena (2009) *Beirut, I love You: A Memoir*. Saqi Books.
Second Response Paper due!
- Thursday, February 24th Chapters 13-26 in El Khalil

Week 7:

- Tuesday, March 1st Lara Deeb “Al-Dahiyya: Sight, Sound, Season” in Khalaf, Samir and Roseanne Saad Khalaf, eds. (2009) *Arab Society and Culture: An Essential Reader*. Saqi Books pp. 343-54
- Thursday, March 3rd Alameddine, Rabih (1998) *Koolaid: The Art of War*.

Week 8:

- Tuesday, March 8th Alameddine, Rabih (1998) *Koolaid: The Art of War*.
- Thursday, March 10th Varzi, Roxanne “Visionary States: Inhabiting the City, Inhabiting the Mind” in Varzi Roxanne (2006) *Warring Souls: Youth, Media, and Martyrdom in Post-Revolutionary Iran*, pp. 106-130.

Week 9: Spring Break

Week 10:

- Tuesday, March 22nd Çelik, Zeynep “A Lingering Obsession: The Houses of Algiers in French Colonial Discourse” in Çelik, Zeynep, Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Terpak (2009) *Walls of Algiers: Narratives of the City through Text and Image*. University of Washington Press, pp. 134-160.
Third Response Paper due!
- Thursday, March 24th Film: *Pépé le Moko* by Julien Duvivier (1937, 94 mins.)

Week 11:

- Tuesday, March 29th Breitbart, Eric “Representing Algiers on Film” in Çelik, Zeynep, Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Terpak (2009) *Walls of Algiers: Narratives of the City through Text and Image*. University of Washington Press, pp. 161-176.
- Thursday, March 31st Film: *The Battle of Algiers* by Gillo Pontecorvo (1966, 123 mins.)

Week 12:

- Tuesday, April 5th Wright, Gwendolyn “Morocco: Modernization and Preservation” in Wright, Gwendolyn (1991) *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism*. University of Chicago Press, pp. 85-160
- Thursday, April 7th Öncü, Ayşe “The Politics of Istanbul’s Ottoman Heritage in the Era of Globalism” in Drieskens, Barbara , Franck Mermier and Heiko Wimmen (eds.) (2007) *Cities of the South: Citizenship and Exclusion in the 21st Century*. Saqi Books, pp. 234-264

Week 13:

- Tuesday, April 12th Pamuk, Orhan (2004) *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. Vintage. Chapter One to Chapter Seven.
- Thursday, April 14th Pamuk, Orhan (2004) *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. Vintage. Chapter Eight to Chapter Seventeen.

Week 14:

- Tuesday, April 19th Pamuk, Orhan (2004) *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. Vintage. Chapter Eighteen to Chapter Twenty-Three.
Fourth Response Paper due!
- Thursday, April 21st Pamuk, Orhan (2004) *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. Vintage. Chapter Twenty-Four to Chapter Thirty-Two.

Week 15:

- Tuesday, April 26th Pamuk, Orhan (2004) *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. Vintage. Chapter Thirty-Three to Chapter Thirty-Seven.
- Thursday, April 28th Film: *Hamam: The Turkish Bath* by Ferzan Özpetek (1997, 96 mins.)

Week 16:

- Tuesday, May 3rd Final discussions.
- Thursday, May 5th Final discussions.

Emergency Evacuation Policy:

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.

In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors.

Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line/BCAL: 232-5050

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Additional Information under: <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency/>