The University of Texas at Austin – Department of Anthropology

Spring 2013

ANT 391 • *Gender and Masculinities in the Middle East*

Instructor: Sofian Merabet

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Office Hours: TH 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. or by appointment in SAC 5.164

Unique Numbers: 31475/41810/41965/47505 Time: Tuesday 2:00 PM-5:00 PM
Location: SAC 4.118

The subject matter of this graduate seminar is the analysis of gender and masculinities in the Middle East. While the methodological focus of the class will be an anthropological one, an interdisciplinary attention will be given to such concepts as sexuality, power, and desire. Running the gamut of anthropology, history, and fictional literature, the readings on which the seminar is based focus mostly on Arab and Turkish culture, and include writings on Israeli society. While the course does not provide an inclusive overview over the extensive body of work on the subject of gender and masculinities, it attempts to communicate important theoretical concepts and understandings that are at the forefront of current debates within the social sciences. This includes the close reading of newly published monographs on Middle Eastern societies, but also novelistic writing published over the last couple of years on the subject of sexuality, authority, and violence in the region. Next to examining some of the major theoretical discussions in gender/queer studies around issues of securitization, counterterrorism, and (homo)nationalism, the seminar will consider critically how the issues raised in class can be contextualized in terms of differing understandings of what constitutes gender and gender identities in the contemporary world.

Required Texts: [listed alphabetically by the author and ordered through the *University Co-Op*, www.universitycoop.com, 2246 Guadalupe St, Austin, (512) 476-7211]

Brockett, Gavin D. (2011) *How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk: Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of a Muslim National Identity*, UT Press, ISBN: 978-0-292-74400-4

Hafez, Sherine (2011) *An Islam of Her Own: Reconsidering Religion and Secularism in Women's Islamic Movements*, NYU Press, ISBN: 9780814773048

Hasso, Frances (2010) *Consuming Desires: Family Crisis and the State in the Middle East*, Stanford University Press, ISBN: 978-0804761567

Hammer, Juliane (2012) *American Muslim Women, Religious Authority, and Activism: More Than a Prayer*, UT Press, ISBN: 978-0-292-73555-2

Hochberg, Gil Z. (2007) *In Spite of Partition: Jews, Arabs, and the Limits of Separatist Imagination*, Princeton University Press, ISBN: 9780691128757

Kanaaneh, Rhoda Ann (2009) *Surrounded: Palestinian Soldiers in the Israeli Military*, Stanford University Press, 9780804758581

Khoury, Elias (2012) *As Though She Were Sleeping*, translated from the Arabic by Marilyn Booth, Archipelago Books, ISBN 978-1-935744-02-3

Puar, Jasbir K. (2007) *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*, Duke University Press, ISBN: 978-0822341147

Course Requirements for Registered Graduate Students:

The class relies on the intellectual commitment and active participation of all students. It will be run primarily as discussions within a seminar format. 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. 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 tackle. These note-taking strategies will be crucial when you write your research/term paper. In short:

I. Do all assigned readings (while taking excerpts/notes!) by the date indicated on the syllabus and participate actively in the general class discussion.

II. Regular two 15-minute presentations on the weekly readings to be assigned to students. They are intended to launch the general seminar discussions. The goal of the 15-minute 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 oral presentation:

1. Introduction (includes the author's and your argument[s]).
2. Short summary of the text (focus on one or two central aspects of the work).
3. Development and substantiation of your critique based on a set of key questions to be submitted to the class for wider discussion.

III. Two to three-page description of the research/term paper ("Project Proposal") to be distributed and shared in class with peers for feedback on **Tuesday, March 19th**. An updated version will be submitted to the instructor on **Tuesday, March 26th**.

IV. 10-minute presentations on the respective final research project during the two last meetings of the semester.

V. 15 to 20-page (no more no less!) term paper on any relevant topic dealing with the study of gender and masculinities in the Middle East due on **Friday, May 3rd**. Focused topics that raise a central research issue or query are best. Avoid general or overview topics. You **must** include/discuss at least 25% of the previously assigned readings in your term paper.

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

Grading Procedure:

- Term paper: 70%.
- General participation and presentations of weekly readings: 20%.
- Presentations of own work (in process as well as final): 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: Gender and Masculinity Studies in the Middle East

- Tuesday, January 15th — Introduction to the seminar

Week 2: New Domestic Relationships and the Responses they Provoke (1)

- Tuesday, January 22nd — - "Introduction," "1. Legal Governmentality and the National Family," and "2. National Families in Crisis" in Hasso, Frances (2010) *Consuming Desires: Family Crisis and the State in the Middle East*, Stanford University Press, pp. 1-98

Week 3: New Domestic Relationships and the Responses they Provoke (2)

- Tuesday, January 29th — - "3. Transnational 'Invasions' and Emerging Selves and Desires," "4. Improving the National Family," and "Conclusion" in Hasso, Frances (2010) *Consuming Desires: Family Crisis and the State in the Middle East*, Stanford University Press, pp. 99-173

Week 4: Religion, Secularism, and the Feminist Subject (1)

- Tuesday, February 5th — - "1. Introducing Desiring Subjects," "2. Writing Religion: Islam and Subjectivity," "3. Women's Islamic Movements in the Making," and "4. An Islam of Her Own: Narratives of Activism" in Hafez, Sherine (2011) *An Islam of Her Own: Reconsidering Religion and Secularism in Women's Islamic Movements*, NYU Press, pp. 1-100

Week 5: Religion, Secularism, and the Feminist Subject (2)

- Tuesday, February 12th — - "5. Desires for Ideal Womanhood," "6. Development and Social Change: Mehmeit," and "7. Reconsidering Women's Desires in Islamic Movements" in Hafez, Sherine (2011) *An Islam of Her Own: Reconsidering Religion and Secularism in Women's Islamic Movements*, NYU Press, pp. 101-62

Week 6: Female Muslim Intellectual Production in the US (1)

- Tuesday, February 19th — - "Introduction," "1. A Woman-Led Friday Prayer: March 18, 2005," "2. Women Leading Prayers: Tracing the Debate," "3. Gender Justice and Qur'anic Exegesis," and "4. History, Women's Rights, and Islamic Law" in Hammer, Juliane (2012) *American Muslim Women, Religious Authority, and Activism: More Than a Prayer*, UT Press, pp. 1-99

Week 7: Female Muslim Intellectual Production in the US (2)

- Tuesday, February 26th — - "5. Authority, Tradition, and Community," "6. Space, Leadership, and Voice," "7. Media, Representation(s), Politics," "8. Memoirs, Narratives, and Marketing," and "9.

Covers and Other Matters: Concluding Thoughts" in Hammer, Juliane (2012) *American Muslim Women, Religious Authority, and Activism: More Than a Prayer*, UT Press, 100-207

Week 8: *Fictional Excursus:* Gender, Violence, and Identity in Lebanon and Palestine

- Tuesday, March 5th — - Khoury, Elias (2012) *As Though She Were Sleeping*, translated from the Arabic by Marilyn Booth, Archipelago Books

Week 9: **Spring Break**

- Monday, March 12th — **No class**

Week 10: Ethno-religious Segregation and its Pitfalls

- Tuesday, March 19th — - Hochberg, Gil Z. (2007) *In Spite of Partition: Jews, Arabs, and the Limits of Separatist Imagination*, Princeton University Press, pp. 1-72
Two to three-Page Term Paper "Project Proposal" to be distributed and presented in class

Week 11: Palestinian-Israeli Masculinity Between Security and Citizenship

- Tuesday, March 26th — - Kanaaneh, Rhoda Ann (2009) *Surrounded: Palestinian Soldiers in the Israeli Military*, Stanford University Press
Updated two to three-Page Term Paper "Project Proposal" to be submitted to the instructor

Week 12: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Face of Securitization (1)

- Tuesday, April 2nd — - "Preface: Tactics, Strategies, Logistics," "Introduction: Homonationalism and Biopolitics," "1. The Sexuality of Terrorism," and "2. Abu Ghraib and U.S. Sexual Exceptionalism" in Puar, Jasbir K. (2007) *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*, Duke University Press, pp. ix-xxviii and 1-113

Week 13: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Face of Securitization (2)

- Tuesday, April 16th — - "3. Intimate Control, Infinite Detention: Rereading the *Lawrence* Case," "4. 'The Turban is not a Hat': Queer Diaspora and Practices of Profiling," and "Conclusion: Queer Times, Terrorist Assemblages" in Puar, Jasbir K. (2007) *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*, Duke University Press, pp. 114-227

Week 14: The Historical Process of Identifying as a Turkish Citizen (1)

- Tuesday, April 23rd — - "Introduction," " Chapter 1. Imagining the Secular Nation: Mustafa Kemal and the Creation of Modern Turkey," "Chapter 2. Narrating the Nation: Print Culture and the Nationalist Historical Narrative," and "Chapter 3. Provincial Newspapers and the Emergence of a National Print Culture" in Brockett, Gavin D. (2011) *How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk: Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of a Muslim National Identity*, UT Press, pp. 1-112
Student Presentations on Final Paper Projects (1)

Week 15: The Historical Process of Identifying as a Turkish Citizen (2)

- Tuesday, April 30th — - "Chapter 4. Religious Print Media and the National Print Culture," "Chapter 5. Muslim Turks against Russian Communists: The Turkish Nation in the Emerging Cold War World," "Chapter 6. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Mehmed the Conqueror: Negotiating a National Historical Narrative," "Chapter 7. Religious Reactionaries or Muslim Turks?: Print Culture and the Negotiation of National Identity," and "Conclusion: A Muslim National Identity in Modern Turkey" in Brockett, Gavin D. (2011) *How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk: Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of a Muslim National Identity*, UT Press, pp. 113-227
Student Presentations on Final Paper Projects (2)

Final Papers due as an email attachment on Friday, May 3rd