

**ANTHROPOLOGY 193A:  
THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST: CULTURES, CONTEXTS,  
CONTESTATIONS**

**SPRING 2011, 4.000 CREDITS  
UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC  
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
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Class Meets: MWF 11 am – 12:30 pm, George Wilson Hall  
Office Hours: MW 3:30 pm – 5 pm, GWH/Dean's Conference Room

How do Palestinians and Israelis conceptualize the ideal polity? How do Muslims understand the roles of women and men? How are historical experiences related to the collective memory of a community, and how does memory shape contemporary social life in the Middle East? How are local histories, societies, and cultures related to global processes of politics, economics, and culture? How do modern Middle Eastern peoples see their own identities and how and why do these conceptions differ from Western discourses about the region? In this seminar, we engage these questions by reading some important recent ethnographies (anthropological monographs) emerging from the Middle East region in the past few years.

Students are encouraged to think critically about and beyond both popular Western images of the Middle East and supposed boundaries between nations and civilizations. Particularly emphasized are the interconnections – political, cultural, etc. – between East and West, South and North.

***COURSE OBJECTIVES***

After taking this course, students will be able to:

- Appreciate the diversity of the cultures, social forms, languages, religions, states, and economies that fall within the modern Middle East
- Grasp the role of macro-politics, especially those relating to empire and West–East power differentials, in shaping the daily lives, outlooks, and intellectual and cultural dynamics of the modern Middle East.

- Critically evaluate stereotypes both of the "Orient" and of the "Occident," and how these stereotypes relate to the political agendas of states and other institutions of power.
- Appreciate the transnational, trans-regional, and global intersections of culture, intellect, and politics connecting the modern Middle East with other regions.
- Write in appropriate analytical and scholarly prose.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Required Texts**

Lila Abu-Lughod (2005), *Dramas of Nationhood: The Politics of Television in Egypt*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Nadje Sadig Ali (2008), *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present*. New York: Zed Books.

Augustus Richard Norton (2009), *Hezbollah: A Short History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Dan Rabinowitz and Khawla Abu Bakr (2005), *Coffins on Our Shoulders: The Experience of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lucia Volk (2010), *Memorials and Martyrs in Modern Lebanon*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Other readings will be posted on the course Sakai site. Students should use their Pacific ID and password to log in at <https://pacific.rsmart.com/xsl-portal>. The course site is found under the heading "ANTH 193A 01 STK." The readings are found at the "Resources" link.

### **Recommended Text**

Dan Smith (2008), *The State of the Middle East: An Atlas of Conflict and Resolution*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Berkeley: U. of

California Press.

**Map Exercise: 25 points**

Students are to complete a map exercise. Instructions will accompany the exercise.

**Weekly Reflection Papers: 15 points each X 14 weeks = 210 points**

Due each Monday in-class. 300 - 500 words each. These are an opportunity to discuss the most interesting, challenging, inspiring, etc., aspects of the readings or discussions of the week. No question is a bad question. Think of these as similar to a journal, an opportunity to articulate your own thoughts about a theme or a reading and ask further questions.

**Research Paper: 250 points**

The course will culminate in a final or term paper.

- the final paper should be approx. 15 pp. double-spaced.
- unlike the reflection papers, the final paper should be based on the student's own research of a theme or problem formulated by the student in consultation with the instructor. A sign-up sheet for appointments will be handed out in class. Rubrics will be handed out during semester.

**Attendance and Participation: 100 points**

Attendance is mandatory. More than two unexcused absences will result in a reduction of the final course grade (the penalty to be determined by the instructor). Class participation will be graded on the basis on your attendance, your verbal participation in small and large group discussions, and your evident preparedness for class. Just showing up for class every day will earn you a grade of a "C" for participation. Earning a higher grade requires active engagement with the material of the class.

**GRADE SCALE (%)**

95 - 100 = A	75 - 78 = C+
90 - 94 = A-	70 - 74 = C
87 - 89 = B+	60 - 69 = D
84 - 86 = B	< 60 = F
79 - 83 = B	

## **INTERESTING AND USEFUL WEBSITES**

I've found these to be excellent. Some are guides to current events and daily life in the Middle East and neighboring regions. Others, e.g., Democracy Now, Foreign Policy Magazine, Glenn Greenwald, Juan Cole's Informed Comment, and Tom Dispatch, are particularly good at highlighting the contours and realities of U.S. Middle East policies.

- \* The Arabist: A Website on Arab Politics and Culture: <http://www.arabist.net/>
- \* Chapati Mystery: <http://www.chapatimystery.com/>
- \* (Beirut) Daily Star: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/>
- \* Democracy Now! <http://www.democracynow.org/>
- \* Foreign Policy Magazine: <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/>
- \* Glenn Greenwald @ Salon.com  
[www.salon.com/news/opinion/glenn\\_greenwald/index.html](http://www.salon.com/news/opinion/glenn_greenwald/index.html)
- \* Ha'artez (Israel): <http://www.haaretz.com/>
- \* Informed Comment: <http://www.juancole.com/>
- \* Inside Iraq: <http://washingtonbureau.typepad.com/iraq/>
- \* The Iranian: <http://iranian.com/>
- \* Jadaliyya: M.E. Politics/Economics/Culture/History/Law: <http://www.jadaliyya.com/>
- \* The National (United Arab Emirates):  
<http://www.thenational.ae>
- \* Middle East Report: <http://www.merip.org/>
- \* Pajhwok Afghan News: <http://www.pajhwok.com/>
- \* Syria Comment: <http://facultystaff.ou.edu/L/Joshua.M.Landis-1/syriablog/>
- \* Tom Dispatch: <http://www.tomdispatch.com/>

## **COURSE AGENDA**

### **Week 1, Jan 10 - 14:**

Course Introduction

For Wed: read, Rashid Khalidi (2004), *Resurrecting Empire*, pp. 74 - 117. (Sakai).

For Fri: read Khalidi, *Resurrecting Empire*, pp. 118 - 151 (Sakai).

Friday: Map exercise assigned. Due in-class Wed, Jan 19.

### **Week 2, Jan. 19 - 21:**

**Monday Jan 17, 2011 = Martin Luther King Holiday, no class**

**Due Wed. Jan. 19: Map Exercise**

For Mon: Read Mahmood Mamdani (2002), "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism." *American Anthropologist* 104(3):766 - 775. (Sakai).

For Wed: Read Catherine Lutz (2009), "Bases, Empire, and Global Response," pp. 1 - 46 in Catherine Lutz, ed., *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle Against U.S. Military Posts*. New York: NYU Press. (Sakai).

For Fri: Read David Graeber (2006), "Beyond Power/Knowledge: An Exploration of the Relation of Power, Ignorance, and Stupidity." Lecture, London School of Economics, 25 May. (Sakai).

### **Week 3, Jan. 24 - 28:**

Mon: Read Abu-Lughod, *Dramas of Nationhood*, pp. 3 - 56

Wed: Abu-Lughod, *Dramas*, pp. 57 - 80

Fri: Abu-Lughod, *Dramas*, pp. 81 - 110

Week 4, Jan. 31 – Feb. 4:

Mon: Abu-Lughod, *Dramas*, pp. 111 – 134

Wed: Abu-Lughod, *Dramas*, pp. 135 – 162

Fri: Abu-Lughod, *Dramas*, pp. 164 – 192

Week 5, Feb. 7 – Feb. 11:

Mon: Abu-Lughod, *Dramas*, pp. 193 – 246

Wed: Volk, *Memorials and Martyrs*, pp. 1 – 38

Fri: Volk, *Memorials and Martyrs*, 39 – 77

Week 6, Feb. 14 – Feb. 18:

Mon: Sign-up for discussion of research paper; rubrics handed out.

Mon: Volk, *Memorials and Martyrs*, pp. 78 – 114

Wed: Volk, *Memorials and Martyrs*, pp. 115 – 154

Fri: Volk, *Memorials and Martyrs*, pp. 155 – 188

Week 7, Feb. 21 – 25:

**Mon. Feb 21 = President's Day Holiday, No Class.**

Mon: Volk, *Memorials*, pp. 189 – 202; Stephen Graham (2005), "Switching Cities Off: Urban Infrastructure and U.S. Air Power." *City* 9(2): 169 – 194. (Sakai).

Wed: Nadje Ali, *Iraqi Women*, pp. 1 – 13

Fri: Nadje Ali, *Iraqi Women*, 14 – 55

Week 8, Feb. 28 – March 4:

Mon: Ali, *Iraqi Women*, pp. 56 – 108

Wed. + Fri: Ali, *Iraqi Women*, 109 – 146

**MARCH 7 – 11 = SPRING BREAK**

Week 9, March 14 – March 18:

Mon: Ali, *Iraqi Women*, pp. 147 – 170

Wed + Fri: Ali, *Iraqi Women*, pp. 171 – 213

Week 10, March 21 – March 25:

Mon + Wed: Ali, *Iraqi Women*, pp. 214 – 271

Wed: Kai Bird, "The Hebrew Republic," *The Nation*, 10 May 2010, <http://www.thenation.com/article/hebrew-republic>

Fri: Rabinowitz and Abu-Bakr, *Coffins on our Shoulders* pp. 1 – 18

Week 11, March 28 – April 1:

Mon: Rabinowitz and Abu-Bakr, *Coffins on our Shoulders*, pp. 19 – 40

Wed: Rabinowitz and Abu-Bakr, *Coffins on our Shoulders*, pp. 41 – 62

Fri: Rabinowitz and Abu-Bakr, *Coffins on our Shoulders*, pp. pp. 63 – 98

Week 12, April 4 – April 8:

***Prof Kanna is in Italy for a conference, April 3 – 9, please continue reading.***

Assignment for the Week: Rabinowitz and Abu-Bakr, *Coffins on our Shoulders*, pp. 99 – 184

Mon, April 4: film screening of Ines Hofmann Kanna (2007), *(Un)Veiled: Muslim Women Talk About Hejab*, with discussion led by Hofmann Kanna

Wed, April 6: film screening, Eran Riklis (2004), *Syrian Bride*

Fri, April 8: Finish *Syrian Bride*.

Week 13, April 11 – April 13:

Mon: Charles Hirschkind (1997), "What is Political Islam?"  
<http://www.merip.org/mer/mer205/hirschk.htm>

Wed: Norton, *Hezbollah*, pp. 1 – 46

**APRIL 15 = PACIFIC DAY, NO CLASS.**

Week 14, April 18 – April 22:

Mon: Norton, *Hezbollah*, pp. 47 – 68

Wed: Norton, *Hezbollah*, pp. 69 – 112

Fri: Norton, *Hezbollah*, pp. 113 – 144

Week 15, April 25 – 27:

Mon: Norton, *Hezbollah*, pp. 145 – 172

Wed: Film Screening: James Longley (2006), *Iraq in Fragments*

Fri: Finish *Iraq in Fragments*, Class Review