

**MES.40 DRAFT SYLLABUS**  
as of 8Jul11

**Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies 2011-2012**

**MES.40: Middle Eastern and Islamic History**

**Political Anthropology of the Middle East and Islam**

| <i>Course Instructor</i>                           | <i>Location</i> | <i>Time</i>             |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Dr. Umut Yildirim<br>umutyildirim@sabanciuniv.edu> | <b>TBA</b>      |                         |
| Dr. Lori Allen<br>laa29@cam.ac.uk                  |                 | Wednesdays, 10-11:30 a. |

**Course Aims:**

This course studies the anthropology's approach to politics in the Middle East, including political Islam.

Drawing on anthropological concepts and approaches, we will investigate questions of how to understand and analyze the state, bureaucracies, how different forms of authority and power are legitimized and resisted, how Islam shapes politics, how media representations are a form of politics, and why human rights has come to be such a predominant moral-political language and practice within the Middle East and beyond. We will explore Islam, "human rights," the state, and "democracy" primarily as categories and forms of social and political practice, rather than as normative sets of rules and laws.

**Teaching & Course Requirements:**

The course will consist of one 2-hour meeting each week and five supervisions (two in the Michaelmas and Lent terms, one in Easter term) during which students will review their essays and discuss their research projects. Instructors will arrange supervisions with students. The course will be run as a discussion seminar, and its success depends on the active and enthusiastic participation of all students.

**\* Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss** the readings. Students are expected to keep up to date on current politics in the region (starting with the useful links listed below). Announcements of changes in required readings as well as distribution of short additional readings may occur throughout the year.

Readings, assignments and updates will be posted on CamTools under the course heading: [MES40\\_PolitAnth\\_ME:2011\\_12](#) . **It is your responsibility to ensure that you are enlisted in the CamTools course website and**

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**receiving messages** distributed through it. Readings will be available on CamTools, online, or in the Faculty Library.

**Study Guides:** Many of you will not have previous exposure to anthropology and its specific methods and kinds of texts. I highly recommend that you review the following brief study guides to help make your work more efficient. Note that additional resources for supplemental reading and research are listed at the end of this syllabus.

### Harvard Guide to Reading and Writing Social Anthropology

[sites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic649702.files/Anthro\\_booklet\\_final\\_3.2.pdf](http://sites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic649702.files/Anthro_booklet_final_3.2.pdf)

**MIT Guide to Reading Social Science: How to work through long reading assignments** <http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/anthropology/21a-110-anthropological-theory-spring-2003/study-materials/>

**UC Transferrable Skills:** <http://www.skills.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/>

### \*Ethnographies:

In addition to articles and chapters, we will be reading several ethnographies in full and large portions of a few others. They will be the focus of class discussions in the second and third terms, and will be the primary texts on which you will be examined. One or two copies will be available in the Faculty library. In order to ensure you have access to these texts, it is strongly recommended that you either purchase your own copy, or ask your college library to have one or more copies on hand.

- Ewing, Katherine Pratt. 2008. *Stolen Honor: Stigmatizing Muslim Men in Berlin*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press
- Feldman, Ilana. 2008. *Governing Gaza: Bureaucracy, Authority, and the Work of Rule, 1917–1967*. Duke University Press.
- McIntosh, Janet. 2009. *The Edge of Islam: Power, Personhood, and Ethnoreligious Boundaries on the Kenya Coast*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Ozyurek, Esra. 2006. *Nostalgia for the Modern: State Secularism and Everyday Politics in Turkey*. Duke University Press.
- Wedeen, Lisa. 2008. *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [sections TBA]

### Background Reading:

- Cleveland, William L. 2009. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Fourth Edition. Westview Press.
- Smith, Charles D. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Esposito, John. 2005. *Islam: The Straight Path*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Goodale, Mark. 2009. *Human Rights: An Anthropological Reader*. Chichester,

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U.K.

- Middle East Research and Information Project. *Middle East Report*.  
<http://www.merip.org/>

### Current Politics:

[www.merip.org](http://www.merip.org)     <http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/>

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/>     <http://www.jadaliyya.com/>

### Form and Conduct:

#### a) *Essays*

During the year, students are required to submit three essays of 7-10 pages (not to exceed 3000 words each) on topics that will be suggested (2 during Michaelmas and 1 in Lent). Essays must be typed, double spaced, proofread, and in conformity with the Chicago style of citation appropriate for anthropology or history. Alternatively, follow the American Anthropological Association's style guide for in-text citations and bibliographic forms, which can be found at: [http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style\\_guide.pdf](http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf). See especially pages 10-14. Citational style must be consistent throughout. Essays must be submitted in TWO forms: one paper copy left in the envelope outside my office, Rm. 217, AND posted in your Drop Box on CamTools. Dates for the submission of essays are as follows:

Michaelmas

Lent

Easter

**TBA**

#### b) *Exam: Final Research Projects*

The course-work that constitutes this paper assessment consists of one research essay, of between 6,000 and 7,500 words, including footnotes and excluding bibliography. Each student will develop the topic of the essay in consultation with the instructor. A one to two- page topic and paper outline will be due during the first class session of Lent Term. One supervision during Lent Term and one during Easter Term will be dedicated to discussing the research project. Two copies of the project shall be submitted to the Programmes Administrator in the Faculty Office so as to arrive not later than the third Friday of full Easter Term, **date**.

**Plagiarism in any form, including internet downloads, is a serious offense and will result in notification of the appropriate college authorities, and possible failure of this paper.** Please visit: the Undergraduate Handbook, pp.70-71.

[http://www.ames.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/ug\\_handbook\\_0910.pdf#page=62](http://www.ames.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/ug_handbook_0910.pdf#page=62)

Research projects will consist of critical interpretive anthropological analyses of politics in the Middle East, using primary materials (media, historical documents, interviews) and secondary scholarship. Research papers must draw

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on readings assigned for class as well as outside research. Further details will be announced during the course. *There will be no separate final exam.*

### **Week 1: Political Anthropology of the Middle-East: Introducing Key Terms**

The first week introduces key terms in political anthropology to incite critical reflection on the various ways in which the Middle East became an object of knowledge for diverse schools in anthropology.

Marc Swartz, Victor Turner, Arthur Tuden, "Political Anthropology," 102-109. In *The Anthropology of Politics: a reader in ethnography, theory, and critique* (ed) Joan Vincent.

Gledhill, Ch. 1, "Locating the political: a political anthropology for today," 1-22.

Eickelman, Dale. 1998. Anthropology, The Middle East & Central Asia. In *The Middle East and Central Asia. An Anthropological Approach*. 1998. Upper Saddle River, NJ.: Prentice Hall

Abu-Lughod, Lila. "Anthropology's Orient: The Boundaries of Theory on the Arab World" pp 81-131.

### **Week 2: Imagining the Middle East I: Lineages, Segments, and the Culturalist School**

The seminar considers theories on segmentation and lineages while attending to anthropological approaches developed by the culturalist school in order to assess contested ways in which the politics in the Middle-East came to be conceptualized by anthropologists.

Gellner, Ernest. 1972a. Introduction. In Gellner, E., and Micaud, C. (eds.), *Arabs and Berbers: From Tribe to Nation in North Africa* (pp. 11-21). London: Duckworth.

Gellner, Ernest. 1981c. Saints and their Descendants. In Gellner, E. *Muslim Society* (pp. 207-213). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stirling, Paul. 1970. *The Turkish Village*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. Ch 12.

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Yalçın-Heckmann, Lale. 1990. "Kurdish Tribal Organization and Local Political Processes." In *Turkish State, Turkish Society*. Eds. Nükhet Sirman and Andrew Finkel. Pp: 289-310.

Geertz, Clifford. 1979. "Suq: the bazaar economy in Sefrou", In *Meaning and order in Moroccan society (eds) Clifford Geertz/ Hildred Geertz/ Lawrence Rosen: Three essays in cultural analysis*.pp.123-313

### **Week 3: Imagining the Middle-East II: Lineages, Segments, and the Culturalist School and the Critiques**

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1989. "Zones of Theory in the Anthropology of the Arab World," *Annual Review of Anthropology*.18:267-306.

Hammoudi, Abdellah. 1996. Segmentarity, Social Stratification, Political Power and Sainthood: Reflections on Gellner's Theses. In Hall, J. A., and Jarvie, I. (eds.), *The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner* (pp. 265-289). Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Rabinow, Paul. 2007 [1977]. *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*, with a foreword by Robert N. Bellah ; afterword by Pierre Bourdieu. Ch 1 and Ch 4. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hart, Kimberley. 2009. "The Orthodoxization of Ritual Practice in Western Anatolia." *American Ethnologist*. 36 (4): 735-749.

Mounira, Charrad, 2000. "Lineage Versus Individual in Tunisia and Morocco". In *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*. P 777-88. , Syracuse: Syracuse U. P.

### **Week 4: Colonialism in the Middle East**

The seminar explores the ways in which anthropologists contributed to the understanding of authoritative classifications both in the colonised fields we study and in terms of the expert knowledge we produce about the Middle East. How are the subjects of colonialism constituted in anthropological writing? What does post-colonial understandings of belonging bring to the conceptualisation of the Middle East? What kind of expert practices were employed by colonial regimes that aimed to establish and reinforce their rules in the Middle East?

Gledhill, Ch. 4, "The political anthropology of colonialism: a study of domination and resistance," 67-91.

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Said, Edward. 1989. "Representing the Colonized: Anthropology's Interlocutors," *Critical Inquiry* 15(2): 205-225.

El Shakry, Omnia. Introduction. In *The Great Social Laboratory: Subjects of Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Egypt*. Stanford University Press,

Mitchell, Timothy. 2002. *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* University of California Press. Ch 3.

Alloula, Malek. 1986. *The Colonial Harem: Images of Subconscious Eroticism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. Ch 10.

### **Week 5: Everyday Life of Militarism in the Middle East**

The seminar explores everyday settings through which military regimes sustain themselves. What does it mean to feel "normal" under military rule? What kind of subjectivities and relations do occupied places give rise to? How do military conflicts influence the ways in which we remember the past and dream about the future? What kind of economies do conflicts generate?

Navaro-Yashin, Yael 2003. "Life is Dead Here": Sensing the Political in No Man's Land" *Anthropological Theory* 3(1): 107-125.

Allen, Lori. 2008. "Getting by the Occupation: How Violence Became Normal during the Second Palestinian Intifada." *Cultural Anthropology* 23(3): 453-487.

Peleikis, Anja. 2006. The Making and Unmaking of Memories: The Case of a Multi-Confessional Village in Lebanon. In *Memory and Violence in the Middle East and North Africa*, by Ussama Makdisi and Paul A. Silverstein eds. Indiana University Press.

Smith, Barbara. 2008. Kurdish Refugee Reception Centers in Greece: Home Displaced. *Visual Anthropology Review*, 24 (1): 78-93.

### **Week 6: Anti-Colonial Struggles, Uprising, and Revolt**

The seminar aims to stimulate reflection on recent events in the Middle East by exploring the anthropological stakes surrounding the notion of resistance. It considers how anthropological studies of anti-colonial struggles and revolts might help us to understand the quality of the recent developments in countries such as Tunisia, Yemen, Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Palestine. How have anthropologists conceptualised the notion of resistance? How can we anthropologically account for the social relations and subjectivities that revolutionary change brings about?

Ch. 17 [Vincent reader] – Jean and John Comaroff, "Of Revelation and

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Revolution,” 203-212

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1990. The Romance of Resistance: Tracing Transformations of Power through Bedouin Women. *American Ethnologist* 17(1):41-55.

Ben-Ari, Eyal 1989 Masks and Soldiering: The Israeli Army and the Palestinian Uprising. *Cultural Anthropology* 4(4):372-389.

Hirschkind, Charles, and Saba Mahmood. 2002. Feminism, the Taliban, and the Politics of Counter-Insurgency. *Anthropological Quarterly, Volume* 75(2): 107-122.

Borneman, J. 2011. Oedipal Roots of Revolt in the Middle East. *Anthropology News*. Volume 52 (5).

## Week 7: The Gender of Silence and Invisibility

Week 7 takes up the issue of gender by attending to the political stakes surrounding the act of “speaking out” while reconsidering the notion of invisibility.

Spivak, G. 1988. Can the Subaltern Speak? In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press. 271-313.

Altınay, Ayşe Gül and Türkyılmaz, Yektan, “Unraveling layers of gendered silencing: converted Armenian survivors of the 1915 catastrophe ” *Untold Histories of the Middle East: Recovering Voices from the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Singer, Amy and Neumann , Christoph K. and Somel, Selçuk Akşin (eds.), London and New York: Routledge 2011, 25-53

Fernea, E. W. 2002. The Post-colonial Middle-East. In *Remembering Childhood in the Middle East. Memoirs from a Century of Change* (ed) Fernea, Elizabeth Warnock. Austin: U of Texas P.

White, J. 2005. “The Paradox of the New Islamic Woman in Turkey”, in *Gender, Religion and Change in the Middle East*, ed. by Inger Marie Okkenhaig and Ingvild Flakerud, Oxford: Berg, 2005, pp. 123-135.

Deeb, Lara. 2006. An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi'i Lebanon. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Ch 6.

## **Week 8: Unpacking “Islamism”**

The final seminar of this term considers the issue of “Islamism” and explores how Islam is discussed and lived as opposed to secularism. What kind of counter-publics does the notion of Islamism create on the ground?

Ismail, Salwa. 2006. *Political Life in Cairo’s New Quarters: Encountering the Everyday State*. Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press. Ch 1, 2, and 3.

Hirschkind, Charles 2001 *Religious Reason and Civic Virtue: An Islamic Counterpublic*. *Cultural Anthropology* 16(1):3-34.

## **LENT TERM**

### **Week 9: Idea of an Anthropology of Islam**

Agrama, Hussein. 2010. “Ethics, Authority, Tradition: Towards an Anthropology of the *Fatwa*.” *American Ethnologist*, v. 37(1): 2-18.

Asad, Talal. “The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam”, *Occasional Papers, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies*, Washington, DC, Georgetown University, 1986.

Schielke, Samuli. "Second Thoughts about the Anthropology of Islam, or how to make Sense of Grand Schemes in Everyday Life." *ZMO working papers*, Vol. 2 (2010). [http://www.zmo.de/publikationen/WorkingPapers/schielke\\_2010.pdf](http://www.zmo.de/publikationen/WorkingPapers/schielke_2010.pdf)

Hashmi, S.H., ed.: *Islamic Political Ethics: Civil Society, Pluralism, and Conflict*.

### **Weeks 10-11: Islam in Other Places**

McIntosh, Janet. 2009. *The Edge of Islam: Power, Personhood, and Ethnoreligious Boundaries on the Kenya Coast*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

### **Week 12: Muslims in Other Places/ Migration**

Ewing, Katherine Pratt. 2008. *Stolen Honor: Stigmatizing Muslim Men in Berlin*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

### **Week 13: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism**

\*Convention relating to the Status of Refugees  
[http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/o\\_c\\_ref.htm](http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/o_c_ref.htm)

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\*Feldman, Ilana. 2007. "Difficult Distinctions: Refugee Law, Humanitarian Practice, and Political Identification in Gaza." *Cultural Anthropology* 22(1): 129-69.

\*Mallki, Liisa. 1996. "Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization." *Cultural Anthropology* 11(3): 377-404.

\*Ticktin, Miriam. 2006. "Where Ethics and Politics Meet: The Violence of Humanitarianism in France." *American Ethnologist* 33(1): 33-49.

Middle East Report. 2007. *Displaced*. Issue 244 — Fall 2007

Blecher, Robert. 2005 "Citizens without Sovereignty: Transfer and Ethnic Cleansing in Israel." *Society for Comparative Study of Society and History* 47(4): 725-754.

Human Rights Watch. *Iraq: From a Flood to a Trickle Neighboring States Stop Iraqis Fleeing War and Persecution*.

<http://hrw.org/backgrounder/refugees/iraq0407/>

### Week 14: Political Testimony

Fassin, Didier. 2008. "The Humanitarian Politics of Testimony: Subjectification through Trauma in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." *Cultural Anthropology* 23(3 ): 531-558

Allan, Diana K. 2007. The Politics of Witness: Remembering and Forgetting 1948 in Shatila Camp. Ch.10 in *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and The Claims of Memory*. Eds. Ahmad H. Sa'di and Lila Abu-Lughod. New York: Columbia University

### Week 15: The Politics of Human Rights

Osanloo, Arzoo. 2006. "The Measure of Mercy: Islamic Justice, Sovereign Power, and Human Rights in Iran." *Cultural Anthropology* 21(4): 570-602.

Allen, Lori. 2009. "Martyr Bodies in the Media: Human Rights, Aesthetics, and The Politics of Immediation in the Palestinian *Intifada*." *American Ethnologist* 36(1):161-180.

Sontag, Susan. *Regarding the Pain of Others*.

### Week 16: Mediating the State

Winegar, Jessica. 2006. "Cultural Sovereignty in a Global Art Economy: Egyptian Cultural Policy and the New Western Interest in Art from the Middle East." *Cultural Anthropology* 21(2):173-204.

Bishara, Amahl. 2008. "Watching U.S. Television from the Palestinian Street:

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The Media, the State, and Representational Interventions.” *Cultural Anthropology* 23(3):488–530.

“Nasser 56/Cairo 96: Reimagining Egypt’s Lost Community,” Joel Gordon, pp. 161-181 in *Approaches to Popular Culture in the Middle East and Beyond*.

→Background reading:

Nanda & Warms Ch 14, Creative Expression

Sharma, Aradhana and Akhil Gupta. *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*. (Blackwell Readers in Anthropology).

→→Film: *Nasser 56*.

Review: <http://www.arteeast.org/>

“ArteEast presents the works of contemporary artists from the Middle East, North Africa and their diasporas to a wide audience in order to foster a more complex understanding of the regions’ arts and cultures and to encourage artistic excellence.”

## EASTER TERM

### Week 17: Secularism, the State, and Neoliberalism

\*Ozyurek, Esra. 2006. *Nostalgia for the Modern: State Secularism and Everyday Politics in Turkey*. Duke University Press.

Harvey, David. 2007. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press.

Klein, Naomi. 2007. *Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. Metropolitan Books.

Hanieh, Adam. 2011. *Capitalism and Class in the Gulf Arab States*.

Collins, Williams, DiLionardo. 2008. *New Landscapes of Inequality: Neoliberalism and the Erosion of Democracy in America*.

### Week 18: Bureaucracy and the State

Feldman, Ilana. 2008. *Governing Gaza: Bureaucracy, Authority, and the Work of Rule, 1917–1967*. Duke University Press. [sections TBA]

Josiah McC. Heyman. 1995. “Putting Power in the Anthropology of Bureaucracy: The Immigration and Naturalization Service at the Mexico-United States Border.” *Current Anthropology* 36(2):261-287 .

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Herzfeld, Michael. 1995. Comment on J. Heyman, "Putting Power into the Anthropology of Bureaucracy," *Current Anthropology* 36(2): 281-282.

### **Week 19: Democracy and Deliberation**

Wedeen, Lisa. 2008. *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [sections TBA]

Paley, Julia. 2002. "Toward an Anthropology of Democracy." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31:469-496.

Cultural Anthropology Virtual Issue: Democracy, Voting & Elections  
<http://www.culanth.org/?q=node/173>

### **Week 20: Critical States, Critiques of States**

Hamdy, Sherine F. 2008. "When the State and Your Kidneys Fail: Political Etiologies in an Egyptian Dialysis Ward." *American Ethnologist* 35(4): 553 – 569.

Ethnographies of Neoliberalism by Carol J. Greenhouse