

AET1
ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES TRIPOS PART IB

Middle Eastern Studies

Friday 6 June 2014 13.30 – 16.30

Paper MES 20

Contemporary Middle Eastern Politics and Society

Answer **three** questions.

Answer **each** question in a **separate** answer booklet.

All questions carry equal marks.

Write your number **not** your name on the cover sheet of **each** answer booklet.

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

8 Page Answer Book x 3
Rough Work Pad

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

None

You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed that you may do so by the Invigilator.

Answer **three** of the following questions

1 What is the ethnographic method? Analyze its benefits and drawbacks as a social scientific methodology for doing research in the contemporary Middle East.

2 Analyze the role of political conflict in the construction of gender in at least two of the following cases: Palestinian *shebab* during the first intifada; Israeli men in the army; women in Zabid, Yemen; Palestinian women after the *Nakba*; Muslim women under colonial or post-colonial conditions.

3 Discuss to what extent the concept of 'hegemony' is useful for illuminating how state power functions in two of the following cases: in Turkey, as discussed by Ozyurek; in Hafez al-Asad's Syria, as discussed by Wedeen; in orientalist attitudes of the West to the Middle East and Islam, as discussed by Said; in the case of Israel as an occupying power over Palestinians; among Syrian migrants to Lebanon.

4 Class - as an identity and as an analytical term for a social category - plays a significant role in anthropological analyses of Palestine/Israel, Syrians in Lebanon, Zabid, Yemen, Cairo, and Turkey. Discuss the role of class hierarchies in political dynamics in at least two ethnographic cases.

5 Discuss the construction and performance of national identity in at least two of the following cases: Palestine, Israel, Egypt, Turkey. Authors you may wish to draw on include Bishara, Allen, Penslar, Winegar, Peterson, Ozyurek.

6 Drawing on at least two ethnographic cases, explain how violence comes to be imbued with ethical meaning and social value.

7 Does the removal of Muhammad Mursi's government from power in July 2013 signal the end of the Islamic revival in Egypt? Discuss, drawing on your knowledge of ethnographic readings in the course.

8 What does an anthropological approach contribute to our knowledge of "Islamic ethics" in the Middle East?

END OF PAPER