

SYLLABUS  
SPRING 2017  
GENDER IN THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Katrina Yeaw  
[key6@georgetown.edu](mailto:key6@georgetown.edu)

office: xxx

Hours: xxx, and by appointment

CLASS TIME: xxx

LOCATION: xxx

### DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This course aims to provide the student with an overview of the history of gender and women in the Middle East and North Africa from 1750 until the present. The course will begin by looking at the history of women in the Ottoman and Qajar Empires, focusing on women in the law, public and private space, and sexuality in the early modern period. The class will then evaluate the impact of industrial capitalism and European imperial expansion on ideas of femininity, masculinity and sexuality in the Middle East, as well as the intersection between discourses of modernity, reform and citizenship. It will analyze the role of women in mass political movements, from anti-colonial to revolutionary, and the impact of ideologies of mass liberation, including nationalism, socialism, feminism and political Islam, on gender.

This course will introduce students to some of the current debates on women in the region. It will provide a specific area studies focus for students in Gender Studies, but also offer a gendered understanding of prevailing trends for those students interested in Middle Eastern history. While grounded in history, this course is interdisciplinary in scope, with readings from history, literature, religious studies, anthropology, and sociology. Students will also be introduced to a variety of historical voices by reading primary sources produced in the periods which we are studying, including novels, memoirs, articles, speeches and political manifestos. Finally, this course seeks to dispel myths and stereotypes about women in the region through a more nuanced understanding of major cultural, social, economic and political trends that shaped their lives and the ways in which they reacted to these changes..

The assignments for this class are designed to help students meet the learning goals for the semester. Students will develop their writing and analytical skills and deepen their knowledge of the role of women in the modern history of the Middle East and North Africa through writing two primary source short papers, a midterm and final exam. In addition, students will have the opportunity to develop their oral communication skills through regular in-class discussions.

### READINGS

Textbook:

William Cleveland and Martin Burton, *A History of the Modern Middle East (optional)*

Novels and Memoirs:

Ghazālī, Zaynab. *Return of the Pharaoh: memoir in Nasir's prison*. Leicester: Islamic Foundation 1994.

Khalīfah, Saḥar. *Wild Thorns*. New York: Interlink Books, 2000.

Mahfūz, Najīb. *Palace Walk*. New York: Doubleday, 1990.

Şālih, al-Ṭayyib. *Season of Migration to the North*. London: Heinemann Educational, 1969.  
Shaykh, Ḥanān, and Catherine Cobham. *Beirut Blues*. St Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 1995.

Blackboard:

The additional readings are available on the course blackboard (BB) site.

#### GRADE REQUIREMENTS

1.	Map quiz	5%
2.	First short paper	15%
3.	Second short paper	20%
4.	Midterm exam	20%
5.	Final exam	20%
6.	Participation	20%

#### ATTENDANCE

Attendance at all class meetings is essential. Each student is allowed a single unexcused absence during the course of the semester. Any additional unexcused absences will result in a significant drop in the overall participation grade. In the case of health or family emergency, additional absences may be excused with proper documentation. Tardiness is disruptive to the learning environment so please do your best to arrive on time for class. Any student arriving more than 15 minutes late will be counted as absent for the day.

#### PARTICIPATION

Each student is expected to adequately prepare for each class. Those students who attend class but do not participate in the discussions will receive an overall participation grade of a C. Some people may feel uncomfortable speaking before groups. If you are struggling to participate in class, please come speak with me privately. For extra points towards your participation grade, you may do a 2-3 minute presentation at the beginning of class on a current events article that addresses an issue that we are discussing in class.

#### PAPER GUIDELINES

The primary source short papers are essays analyzing primary sources we will read in class, drawing on context from class lectures and other assigned readings as appropriate. These papers give you an opportunity to think like an academic: how do we use the raw material of history – documentary sources in this case – to learn something about the past? You have five chances to write these papers and you must write two. Papers must be handed in at the beginning of discussion. If you do not attend discussion section that day, you may not hand in a paper. These short papers should reflect careful analysis of the readings and should demonstrate that you have done all the readings for that day and are familiar with other relevant course readings. You should therefore use all appropriate evidence for the topic but should not use outside reading. Please note that additional topics will not be given and failure to complete both papers will result in a failing grade. Please plan accordingly.

Each paper is a maximum of 1500 words (about six double-spaced pages). Please provide a word count at the end of the paper. Citations should be in footnotes and should follow the guide here: <https://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/research-guides/turabian-footnote-guide>

## MAP QUIZ

This class will not make sense if you do not have a solid working knowledge of the geography of the region. Therefore, there will be a map quiz during the third class on the political and physical geography of the Middle East and North Africa. The terms for the quiz will be provided the first day of class.

## MIDTERM AND FINAL

The midterm and final are take-home essays (1500 words) that will address issues of historical interpretation of major events and processes. They should follow the citation guide linked above.

## GRADING:

Written assignments will be evaluated on five criteria: thesis, structure and organization, evidence, idea development and grammar and spelling.

An A paper consistently, clearly and effectively communicates its purpose to its audience in all areas of writing. It has a strong focus, solid development, and is coherent in terms of organization and style. The ideas are also well thought-out and original.

A B paper has minor deficiencies in no more than two of the five areas. For example, it lacks some coherence in terms of organization or has minor errors in grammar and spelling.

A C paper has minor deficiencies in three or more areas or a major deficiency in any of the four areas that reduces clarity.

A D paper has major problems with either the thesis, structure and/or style and fails to communicate its purpose to the audience.

A F paper fails to meet the requirements of the assignment

## CLASS SCHEDULE:

### WEEK 1

JAN 17: INTRODUCTION

JAN 19: WOMEN AND ORIENTALISM

Edward Said, "Introduction" from *Orientalism*.

Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?"

### WEEK 2

JAN 24: WOMEN IN ISLAM

Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam* (Ch. 3-5).

MAP QUIZ

JAN 26: GENDER IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Madeline C. Zilfi, "Introduction" in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*.

Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire* (Ch. 3-4).

### WEEK 3

#### JAN 31: IMPERIAL HAREM

Douglas Scott Brookes, "The Concubine Filizten" in *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher*.

#### FIRST PAPER OPTION

#### FEB 2: GENDER AND THE LAW

Judith E. Tucker, "The Fullness of Affection: Mothering in the Islamic Law of Ottoman Syria and Palestine." in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*.

Margaret L. Meriwether, "Women and Waqf Revisited: The Case of Aleppo, 1770– 1840." in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*.

### WEEK 4

#### FEB 7: WOMEN AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Dina Rizk Khoury, "Slippers at the Entrance or Behind Closed Doors" in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*.

Kemal Silay, "Singing His Words: Ottoman Women Poets and the Power of Patriarchy" in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*.

#### FEB 9: SEXUALITY IN THE EARLY MODERN MIDDLE EAST

Yaron Ben-Naeh, "Moshko the Jew and His Gay Friends: Same-Sex Sexual Relations in Ottoman Jewish Society."

Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Moustaches and Men without Beards* (Ch. 3)

Elyse Semerdjian, "Sinful professions: illegal occupations of women in Ottoman Aleppo, Syria."

### WEEK 5

#### FEB 14: COLONIAL IMAGES

Phillipa Levine, "Introduction," in *Gender and Empire*.

Julia Clancy-Smith, "Islam, Gender and Identities in the Making of Colonial Algeria."

Yael Simpson Fletcher, "'Irresistible Seductions': Gendered Representations of Colonial Algeria around 1930."

#### FEB 16: GENDER AND MEDICINE

Khaled Fahmy, "Women, Medicine, and Power in Nineteenth Century Egypt" in *Remaking Women*.

Omnia El Shakry, "Body Politics: Gender, Production and Modernity" in *The Great Social Laboratory*.

### WEEK 6

#### FEB 21: GENDER REFORMERS

From Akram Fouad Khater, *Sources in the History of the Modern Middle East*:

"Qasim Amin Argues for the Emancipation of Women, 1900."

"Articles in Iranian Magazines Emphasize the Link Between the Education of Girls and the Advancement of Iranian Society, 1907"

"Bahithat al-Badiya Advocates Greater Educational and Economic Rights for Egyptian Women, 1909."

#### SECOND PAPER OPTION

FEB 23: MASCULINITY AND NATIONALISM

Najīb Maḥfūz, *Palace Walk*. (excerpt)

WEEK 7

FEB 28: WOMEN AND NATIONALISM

Beth Baron, *Egypt as a Woman: Nationalism, Gender, and Politics* (Ch. 5-6).

MAR 2: INDEPENDENT STATES

Jenny B. White, "State Feminism, Modernization, and the Turkish Republican Woman."

Mansoureh Ettehadieh, "The Origins and Development of the Women's Movement in Iran, 1906-41" in *Women in Iran*.

WEEK 8

MAR 7: THE MANDATE PERIOD

Elizabeth Thompson, "Gendering the Public: Spatial Boundaries of the Colonial Civic Order" in *Colonial Citizens*.

From Khater, *Sources in the history of the modern Middle East*: "Women and the Vote in Syria: A Parliamentary Debate About the Relationship Between Gender and Citizenship in the Proposed State. April 25, 1920."

MAR 9: ZIONISM

Gerald M. Berg, "Zionism's Gender: Hannah Meisel and the Founding of the Agricultural Schools for Young Women."

Sheila H. Katz, *Women and Gender in Early Jewish and Palestinian Nationalism* (Ch 6).

MIDTERM DUE

WEEK 9

MARCH 11- 19: SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10

MAR 21: PALESTINIAN NATIONALISM

Joseph Massad, "Conceiving the Masculine: Gender and Palestinian Nationalism."

Ellen Fleischmann, *The Nation and its "New" Women: The Palestinian Women's Movement, 1920-1948* (Ch. 3).

MAR 23: MASCULINITY AND THE MILITARY

Joseph A. Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan* (Ch. 4).

WEEK 11

MAR 28: WOMEN IN THE ALGERIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Frantz Fanon, "Algeria Unveiled."

The Battle of Algiers (film, 1966) (available on YouTube).

MAR 30: GENDER AND THE LEGACY OF COLONIALISM

al-Ṭayyib Ṣālih, *Season of Migration to the North*.

THIRD PAPER OPTION

## WEEK 12

### APR 4: GENDER AND CITIZENSHIP

Suad Joseph, "Gendering Citizenship in the Middle East" in *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*.

Nadje Sadig Al-Ali, "Living with the Baath." *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present*.

From Khater, *Sources in the History of the Modern Middle East*: "Iraq's Saddam Hussein Proclaims History as a Tool for Educating the Masses About the Revolution and Comments on the Role of Women in the Revolution."

### APR 6: WOMEN AND WORK

Malek Abisaab, "'Qati' Arzaq min Qali al-A'naq': Gendered Boundaries and Class, Tobacco Women's Struggle, 1960-1965" in *Militant Women of a Fragile Nation* (Ch. 6).

## WEEK 13

### APR 11: GENDER AND OCCUPATION

Saḥar Khalīfah, *Wild Thorns*.

### APR 13: GENDER AND POLITICAL ISLAM

Zaynab Ghazālī, *Return of the Pharaoh: Memoir in Nasir's Prison. Leicester: Islamic Foundation* (excerpts).

OPTIONAL: Lamia Rustum Shehadeh, "Women in the Discourse of Sayyid Qutb."

## WEEK 14

### APR 18: FEMINISM IN THE ARAB WORLD

Nawāl al-Sa'dāwī, "Islamic Fundamentalism and Women" in *The Nawal El Saadawi Reader*, 93-99.

Nawāl al-Sa'dāwī, "Why Keep Asking Me About My Identity?" in *The Nawal El Saadawi Reader*, 117-133.

Nawāl al-Sa'dāwī, "Women in Resistance: The Arab World" in *The Nawal El Saadawi Reader*, 255-261.

### FOURTH PAPER TOPIC

### APR 20: ISLAMIC FEMINISM

Valentine Moghadam, "Islamic Feminism and Its Discontents: Toward a Resolution of the Debate."

Haleh Afshar, "Islam and Feminism: An Analysis of Political Strategies."

## WEEK 15

### APR 25: GENDER AND REVOLUTION

Minoo Moallem, *Between Warrior Brother and Veiled Sister* (Ch. 3-4).

### APR 27: WAR AND LITERATURE

Hanān al-Shaykh, *Beirut Blues*.

## WEEK 16

### MAY 2: GENDER AND SEXUALITY AT THE END OF THE 20TH CENTURY

From Akram Fouad Khater, *Sources in the History of the Modern Middle East*:

“The Arab Women's Court Vows to Resist Violence Against Women, 1995.”

“Internet Discussion of Marriage and Education for Saudi Women, 1996.”

“Journalist Lilian Liang Discusses Homosexuality in Egypt, 1999.”

### FIFTH PAPER TOPIC

### MAY 4: WOMEN AND ISLAMIC REVIVALISM

Lara Deeb, *An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi‘i Lebanon*. (Intro, Ch. 1,3.)

### FINAL EXAM DUE DURING EXAM PERIOD

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Afshar, Haleh. “Islam and Feminism: An analysis of Political Strategies” in: Yamani, M. (ed.) *Feminism and Islam*. New York University Press, 1996, 197-217.

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