

**POLI138D: Gender & Politics/Middle East**  
**Winter 2020**  
**Tuesday 5:00p-7:50p**  
**CENTR 214**

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**Course Description:**

The Middle East often appears in the Western imaginary as a region associated only with Islam (which has become such a contentious subject and term worldwide) as religion and Arabic ethnicity and culture. However, the region encompasses a wide diversity of people and cultures, being home to multiethnic communities.

Since colonial times, the politics of the Middle East have largely been shaped by external interference, particularly determined by the economic and political agendas of powerful countries in the West as well as the Ottomans. This reflects in the internal politics of individual Middle Eastern countries aside from the region as a whole. This has led to the creation of political chaos and turmoil in the region. Proxy wars fueled by religious and cultural reasons have been waged on the soil of this ethnically diverse land. In particular, the rise of a socially engineered, polarizing version of Islam (the Wahhabi version) after the Cold War has become the main instrument of that. Post-1930, most peaceful social justice movements such as the labor movement, progressive left and women's rights ones have been suppressed ruthlessly by totalitarian governments thereby leading to the virtual destruction of democratic institutions in this region. The power of these authoritarian regimes has manifestly increased as a result.

This course will inquire into the specific reasons for the development of such social formations in this region. Topics of our collective inquiry will include the issue of militarized patriarchal male dominance, sanctions against women's participation and presence within the public sphere, the commodification of women's bodies and their treatment as property, forcible veiling, jihadist policies towards men and women; women's participation in jihadist movements; criminalization of homosexuality, and the polarizing nature of gendered division of labor and roles played by men and women in society.

**Objectives of the course:**

This course will take a close look at the nuances of the social, political, and economic lives of people in the Middle East. Specifically, it will put emphasis on the deepening divisions between the genders in the region. Therefore, the course should be understood as a scholarly inquiry into the mechanics of the region through the lens of a gender-based politic. If we are to borrow a medical metaphor, this course should be considered as a biopsy of the region through which we will aim to understand how the power relations and political powers manifest in the body politic, traditional gendered roles imposed on women and men, the suppression of free sexuality, oppressive reproductive policies, the intertwined nature of religious traditions and politics. Thus, the course material is organized in a way that allows us to ask and discuss a number of questions such as, but not limited to, the following:

- How we could and should analyze the Middle East in an appropriate gender-based category?
- How have nationalism, colonialism, and globalization influenced gendered body politic as well as human rights in the Middle East?
- How are power and resistance defined and functions in the Middle Eastern context?
- How do resistance movements influence the hegemonic gender relations?
- How have notions and practices of honor, gender and sexuality been constructed in the Middle East?
- How did the rise of nation-states continue and alter these processes?
- How did misogynistic practices sanctioned by religious institutions find traction in the region?
- What kind of relationship exists between gendered body politic and militarism in the region?

**Student Preparation and attendance:** Students should read assigned materials before the class meets in order to take full advantage of lectures, discussions, and in-class exercises. To do well in this class, you must attend class, take good notes on lectures, discussions, films, and readings, and actively participate in class discussions, simulations, and small group exercises. Lectures do not repeat the readings; therefore, it is essential that you take your own notes on the readings and discussions as well the lectures. Taking reading notes is an excellent way to prepare for class and for exams.

The class is designed to foster interactive engagement and to acknowledge the interdependent nature of learning and therefore your attendance is absolutely critical. If you must be absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you have missed. Please arrange with another class member to take notes for you and to meet with you to pass on as much information as she or he can. Also, make sure you have completed all of the assigned work.

**Reading responses :** In order to facilitate discussion and encourage thoughtful reading, you will be asked to write an informal response to the readings for any five weeks in which readings are assigned. These should be about two pages long (double spaced, 12---point font). You should

attempt to summarize significant points or contributions that the author is making and briefly include some of your own reactions to the reading (e.g., what you found interesting, problematic, etc.). Since there are multiple readings assigned, you should address each of the readings but can keep your comments about each reading brief.

Reading responses will be due shortly before the class in which the reading will be discussed. They will be submitted through Canvas. The reading responses will cumulatively be worth 20% of your course grade. If you are absent from class you may turn in your reading response for that week's reading(s) before the next class. Otherwise extensions will only be granted by permission of the instructor.

### **Oral presentations and group documentary:**

You are expected to have two in-class film evaluations and your final documentary to be presented in the class (as group).

In two in-class film evaluations, film evaluations will be 15-20 minutes and 10 minutes will be given for the questions and discussions. All films must be watched by all students before the class presentations. In these presentations, you are expected to use the readings of the course to analyze the film(s) through a gender-based perspective. The grading will be at your preparation, content analysis and presentation style.

The group documentary project will be 15-20 minutes and 10-15 minutes for the questions and discussion. The documentary will be a summary of the gender situation in the Middle East that covered during the course. The grading will be at your preparation, creativity, used method(s) and presentation style. Further explanation will be made in the class.

### **The Final:**

The final will be based on all course readings, theories and films that covered throughout the semester, and your personal evaluation of the gender and dominant body politic in the region is required.

The 50% of grading will be made by the class participants, the remaining 50% will be done by the instructor.

The class schedule and assigned readings are subject to change. You will be notified of all changes in advance.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please review what constitutes violations of the University's policies. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty include loosely rephrasing online resources and claiming them as your own. It also

includes borrowing the logic of another’s argument without proper credit to the author. If you are in any doubt about how to use sources or what kinds of citation are appropriate, please consult me. As per UCSD policy, no form of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, etc.) will be tolerated. Please read the details of this policy at <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating---Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2>.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:** According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended, 2008), each student with a disability has the right to request services to accommodate his/her disability. If you are a student with a documented disability or believe you may have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact to the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#) (OSD).

**Resources to Support Student Learning:**

**Library Help, eReserves and research tools:** <https://library.ucsd.edu/ask-us/triton-ed.html>

**Writing Hub:** <https://commons.ucsd.edu/students/writing/index.html>

**Supplemental**

**Instruction:** [https://commons.ucsd.edu/students/supplemental\\_instruction/index.html](https://commons.ucsd.edu/students/supplemental_instruction/index.html)

**Tutoring:** <https://commons.ucsd.edu/students/math-chemistry-tutoring/index.html>

**Mental Health Services:** <https://caps.ucsd.edu>

**Community Centers:** Learn about the different ways UC San Diego explores, supports, and celebrates the many cultures that make up our diverse community. <https://students.ucsd.edu/student-life/diversity/index.html>

**Accessibility:** Students needing accommodations due to a disability should provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Please present AFA letters both to me and the OSD Liaison for Political Science (Joanna Peralta: [joperalt@ucsd.edu](mailto:joperalt@ucsd.edu)) as soon as possible so that accommodations may be arranged. OSD contact for further information: <https://disabilities.ucsd.edu/>; [osd@ucsd.edu](mailto:osd@ucsd.edu) | 858. 534.4382

**Grading and Assignments**

Participation and in class activities	20 %
Reading response (5 weeks)	20 %
1 Essay (5-7 pages, 12 points, including bibliography)	15 %
Film presentations (2 film presentations, -5 points each- and the middle East group documentary 15 points)	25 %
The Final	20 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Week I: January 7, 2020	Introduction to the course What is the Middle East? Where is the Middle East?
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Week 2: Jan. 14, 2020	Reading of theories and the Middle East	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Said, Orientalism, Introduction (Introduction)</li> <li>2. Fatmir Haskaj “From biopower to necroeconomies: Neoliberalism, biopower and death economies”, Philosophy and Social Criticism</li> <li>3. Timothy Mitchell (2009). Carbon Democracy, Economy and Society, Vol.38, No.3, 399-432,</li> </ol>	
Week 3: Jan 21, 2020	Gender theory and body politic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ruth, Sheila (2001); “Patriarchy, Sexism, and Masculinity,” in <i>Issues in Feminism</i>, Fifth Edition, Mayfield Publishing Co., London-Toronto, pp. 61-74.</li> <li>2. Zehra F. Arat, (2000); Women’s Rights in Islam, Revisiting Quranic Rights, In Human Rights, New Perspectives and New Realities. Ed. Adamantia Pollis &amp; Peter Schwab USA, Lynne Reinner Pub. p.69-93</li> <li>3. Mounira M. Charrad, Gender in the Middle East: Islam, State, Agency Department of Sociology, University of Texas at Austin,</li> </ol>	
Week 4: January 28, 2020	Turkey	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Serpil Çakır, (2007), Feminism and Feminist History-Writing in Turkey: The Discovery of Ottoman Feminism, <i>Aspasia</i>, Volume 1, 2007: 61–83</li> <li>2. Umut Erel &amp; Necla Acik, (2019), Enacting intersectional multilayered citizenship: Kurdish women’s politics, Gender, Place &amp; Culture, DOI:10.1080/0966369X.2019.1596883.</li> <li>3. Gul Ozyegin, Virginal Facades Sexual Freedom and Guilt among Young Turkish Women,</li> </ol>	

		European Journal of Women studies <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506808101761">doi: 10.1177/1350506808101761</a>	
Week 5: February 4, 2020	Iran	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Homa Hoodfar &amp; Shadi Sadr (2010), Islamic Politics and Women's Quest for Gender Equality in Iran, Third World Quarterly, 31:6, 885-903, DOI: 10.1080/01436597.2010.502717</li> <li>2. Shahla Haeri, (1992), Temporary Marriage and the State in Iran: An Islamic Discourse on Female Sexuality, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Social Research, Vol. 59, No. 1, Religion and Politics (SPRING 1992), pp. 201-223 <a href="https://www.jstor.org/stable/40970689">https://www.jstor.org/stable/40970689</a>.</li> <li>3. Sanders, Paula. 1993. "Gendering the Ungendered Body: Hermaphrodites in Medieval Islamic Law." In <i>Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender</i>, eds. Nikki R. Keddie and Beth Baron. Yale University Press. <i>Online resource</i></li> </ol>	
Week 6: February 11, 2020	Iraq/Syria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sarah Smiles(2008), On The Margins: Women, National Boundaries, and Conflicts in Saddam's Iraq Global Studies in Culture and Power.</li> <li>2. Tami Amanda Jacoby, "Jihadi brides at the intersections of contemporary feminism", <i>New Political Science</i>, 37:4, 525-542,</li> <li>3. Pinar Tank, Kurdish Women in Rojava: From Resistance to Reconstruction, <i>International Journal for the Study of Modern Islam</i>,</li> </ol>	I Essay, due Feb. 18, 2020.

		brill.com/wdi, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway.	
Week 7: February 18, 2020	Israel/Palestine/Saudi Arabia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Marwan M. Kraidy, (2012) The Revolutionary Body Politic: Preliminary Thoughts on a Neglected Medium in the Arab Uprisings, the Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication 5, 66–74</li> <li>2. Abdelwahab Baubdiba Abdu Khal, “Festivities of Violence: Circumcision and the Making of Men”, in Imagined masculinities : male identity and culture in the modern Middle East, ed. Mai Ghaṣṣūb &amp; Emma Sinclair-Webb, pp.20-32.</li> <li>3. Mai Ghaṣṣūb, “Chewing Gum, Insatiable Women and Foreign Enemies, Male Fears and Arab Media”, in <i>Imagined masculinities : male identity and culture in the modern Middle East</i>, ed. Mai Ghaṣṣūb &amp; Emma Sinclair-Webb, pp.225-235 (2000), London .</li> </ol>	I Essay return.
Week 8: February 25, 2020	Turkey and Iran	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>The Stoning of Soraya</b> (2009) Director: Cyrus Nowrasteh, 1h 56m Persian/USA. (Course Reserve).</li> <li>2. <b>Time for Drunken Horses</b>,(2000), Bahman Gohbadi, 1h 25m. Kurdish/Iran (Course Reserve).</li> <li>3. <b>Mustang: When Girls Just Want to Have Fun</b>” (2015), Director: Deniz Gamze Erguven, 1h 37m,Turkey. (Netflix)</li> <li>4. <b>Güneşi Gördüm</b> (I saw the sun), (2009), Mahsun Kirmizigul, 2h. (Youtube). <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ZipkW5ZgQY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ZipkW5ZgQY</a></li> <li>5. <b>Turtles can Fly</b> (2005), Director: Bahman Gobadi, 1h 38m. Kurdish/Iraq. (Course Reserve).</li> </ol>	
Week 9:	Iraq/Syria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. <b>Leyla M</b>, (2016), Mike de Jong, 1h 50m, Nederlands. (Netflix)</li> </ol>	

<p>March 3, 2020</p>	<p>Israel/Palestine/Saudi Arabia</p>	<p>7. <b>The Silence of the Palace</b> (1995) Moufida Tlatli, 2h 9m, Tunisia (Youtube).</p> <p>8. <b>Late Marriage</b>, (2001) Director: Dover Kosashvili, 1h 42m, Israel. (Course Reserve).</p> <p>9. <b>Wajda</b> (2012), Haifaa al-Mansour-Saudi Arabia. (Course Reserve).</p> <p><b>Amra and the Second Marriage</b>, (2018), Mahmoud Sabbagh, 1h 36m. (Palestine). (Course Reserve).</p>	
<p>Week 10: March 10, 2020</p>		<p>Final Documentary presentations.</p>	