

# The University Of North Texas

## Department Of Anthropology

**Course: Anth. 3500**

**Instructor: Dr. Mahmoud Sadri**

**Semester: Fall 2015**

**Time and place: 6:30-9:20, Chem. 352**

**Office location: TWU, CFO, Rm. 312**

**Office hours: Monday, 3-6 PM and by appointment**

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## SYLLABUS

### **Course Objectives:**

Upon the completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Recognize narrative approaches to the study of the Middle East and to distinguish them from anthropological approaches.
2. Analyze the current events in the Middle East with the use of the systematic social scientific perspectives so they can better understand and analyze a culture not their own. Encouraging active engagement in the discussion of current cultural and political developments in the area.
3. Recall and apply information presented in the course of the semester to dispel the prevalent stereotypes and misperceptions of the area.

### **Method of Assessment:**

1. The first objective will be achieved by requiring a final Paper comprised of a systematic comparison between Anthropological Narratives, Fictional Narratives, and textbook information. 35% of the grade.
2. The second objective will be achieved by free discussion of daily news from the Middle East during the first half hour of every class. Student attendance and participation in these discussions are mandatory. Each student will bring at least one news item to class from the previous week and teams of students choose themes to be discussed in class. 15% of the grade.
3. The third objective will be achieved by weekly Quizzes 50%

### **Required Readings:**

- Bates and Rassam, Peoples and Cultures of the Middle East, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, latest edition. (pacme for short) Other recommended works introduced throughout the syllabus.
- Elizabeth Warnock Fernea, Guests of the Sheik, New York, Anchor Books, 1969, 1989 (GS for short)
- A Work of fiction from one of the three major cultures of the Middle East: Arabic, Persian, or Turkish. Further information will be furnished in class.
- Class handouts and on-line resources.

### **Recommended Readings:**

– Dale Eickelman, The Middle East and Central Asia: An Anthropological Approach, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1981, 1998 (meca for short)

**Recommended Web-sites:**

<http://gulf2000.columbia.edu> ; <http://www.payvand.com/> ; <http://www.gooya.com>

**Schedule of classes:**

**SECTION I. Geography, History, and Demographics of the Middle East**

Week 1 Aug. 27

*-Introduction: Geo-politics of the Middle East*

Readings: pacme, ch. 1

Recommended: meca, ch. 1, Other sources: John Perry, The Middle East: Fourteen Islamic Centuries, Arthur Goldschmidt, A Concise History of the Middle East, John Weeks, The Demography of Islamic Nations, Population Bulletin, Vol 43, no. 4, December 1988

**SECTION II. RELIGION: Islam, The Doctrine, and the Culture**

Week 2 Sep.3

*Islam: the Doctrine*

Readings: pacme ch.2

Recommended: Seid Hossain Nasr, Idea and Reality of Islam, Other sources: Mohammad Ayoub, Islam, Faith and Practice, Charles Kurzman, (ed.) Liberal Islam

Week 3 Sep.10

*Islam: the Culture*

Readings: pacme ch.3

Recommended: meca ch. 10, Other sources: Francis Robinson, (ed.) Cambridge Illustrated History of Islamic World, El Zein, "Beyond Ideology and Theology: The Search For The Anthropology of Islam" in: Annual Review of Anthropology, vol 6, 1977

**SECTION III: ETHNICITY AND HETERODOX RELIGIONS**

Week 4 Sep.17

*Ethnic and Religious groups*

Readings: pacme, ch. 4

Recommended: Omran and Roudi, The Middle East Population Puzzle, Lindholm, "The New Middle Eastern Ethnography" in: J. Roy, Anthropol. Inst. 1995

**SECTION IV: PATTERNS OF RESIDENCE AND LIFE: Nomads, Peasants, Urbanites**

Week 5 Sep. 24

*Pastoral and Nomadic life*

Readings: pacme, ch. 5

Recommended: meca, ch. 4 Other sources: Nina Swidler: "Sedentarization and Modes of Economic Integration in the Middle East" in: When Nomads Settle, Lois Beck, "Women among Qashqa'i Nomadic Pastoralists in Iran" in: Women in the Muslim World, Irons and Hudson, (ed.) Perspectives on Nomadism,

Week 6 Oct. 1

*Village Life*

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Readings: pacme, ch. 6

Recommended: meca ch. 3 Other sources: Lutfiyya, "Islam and Village Culture", Urban Immigrants and the Revolution" in: Iranian Studies, vol XIII, no.9 1980.

### Week 7 Oct. 8

*Urban Life*

Readings: pacme, ch. 7

Recommended: meca, ch. 5 Other sources: Lapidus, Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages, V. F. Costello, Urbanization in the Middle East

### Week 8 Oct. 15

Narrative film session

## **SECTION V: Family and Kinship Structure**

### Week 9 Oct. 22

*Marriage and Family*

Readings: pacme, ch. 8

Recommended: ch. 7

### Week 10 Oct. 29

*Women's Roles*

Readings: pacme, ch. 9

Recommended: Elizabeth Warnock Fenea, Middle East Muslim Women Speak, Barbara Aswad, "Women, Class and Power: Examples from the Hatay, Turkey" in: Women in the Muslim World, Leila Ahmed, Women and Gender In Islam, Sherifa Luhur, Revealing Reveiling: Islamist Gender Ideology in Contemporary Egypt, Fatima Mernissi, The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Right in Islam

## **SECTION VI: Challenges of a Changing World:**

### Week 11 Nov. 5

*Local power structures*

Readings: Excerpts from: The Modern Middle East

Recommended: meca, ch. 11

### Week 12 Nov.12

*Living History*

Readings: Excerpts from: The Modern Middle East

Recommended: Nikki Keddie, "Is There a Middle East?" in Int. J. Middle East Stud. 4 (1973) 255-271; Carl Brown, "The Middle East: Patterns of Change 1947-1987" in: Middle East Journal, vol 41, no. 1, Winter 1987

### Week 13 Nov. 19

*Politics and Economy*

Readings: Excerpts from: The Modern Middle East

Recommended: Clifford Geertz, Islam Observed, Roy Mottahedeh, Mantle of the Prophet, Michael Fischer, Iran: From Religious Dissent to Revolution

Nov.26 Thanksgiving holiday

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Week 15 Dec. 3 **Wrapping up**

*Culture and Future:*

Readings: Excerpts from: The Modern Middle East

**Final papers due**

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### Disability Policy

Anthropology does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's disability as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The program provides adjustment and aids to individuals with disabilities in the program and its activities.

**Final paper**

**The assigned final paper must incorporate the following:**

**I. Summary of two books:**

**First: A Summary of Guests of the Sheikh**

1. Summarize and critically analyze Guests of the Sheik
2. Recount at least one episode in which the author realizes how East and West misunderstand each other
3. How are the “rites of passage”: (birth, marriage, death) celebrated? How do they compare to the Western celebration of similar events?

**Second: A Summary of a Middle Eastern novel**

Summarize and critically analyze one novel from the list of novels provided below. As you prepare to write your summary, it would be helpful if you explore at some of the following areas:

Emotional lives, Daily preoccupations, Gender and sexuality, Friendships, Status, Treatment of children and adolescents in the family, Class distinctions, Body image, family structures, Religious practices, Political life, Encounter with the West, Extremism, Poverty.

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**II. Comparison of the three sources:**

--Find three parallels/differences between Guests of the Sheik, The novel of your choice, and one of our texts: People and Cultures of the Middle East and Modern Middle East

**Paper Format:**

Papers must be typed, double spaced, with a cover page (no folders), and 7 - 10 pages long. Projects must include references (including page numbers) in the endnotes.

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**Choice of Novels:**

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Beside Standard choices for the papers that include one of the following:

<u>Naghib Mahfouz, “Palace Walk”</u>	Arabic
<u>Orhan Pamuk, “Snow”</u>	Turkish
<u>Dolatabadi, “Missing Salouch”</u>	Persian

I am offering other selections for people who may want more choices.

**Arabic**

Egyptian,	Ala Al Aswani, <u>Yacoubian Building</u>
Lebanese,	Elias Khoury, <u>Gate of the Son</u>
Saudi Arabian,	Rajaa Alsanea, <u>Girls of Riyadh</u>
Iraqi,	Mahmoud Said, <u>Saddam City</u>
Palestinian,	Kanafani, <u>Men in the Sun, Palestine’s Children</u>
	Sahar Khalifeh, <u>Wild Thorns</u>
Christian- Palestinian,	Emile Habiby, <u>The Secret Life of Saeed the Pessoptimist</u>
Libyan,	Ibrahim al-Koni, <u>Gold Dust</u>

**Turkish**

Shafik Alif, Bastard of Istanbul  
Yashar Kemal, Anatolian Tales  
Orhan Pamuk, the Black Book

**Persian**

Sadiq Hedayat, Stray Dog, Blind Owl  
Shahrnush Parsipur, Censoring an Iranian Love Story  
Goli Taraghi, Winter Sleep