

**FALL 2011**

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES 217  
RELIGION AND SEXUALITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST  
Wednesdays 5:30- 8:15  
HSSB 2252**

PROFESSOR JANET AFARY

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-3 pm and by appointments

This course looks at premodern patterns of sexuality in Sunni and Shi'i Muslim Middle East. Topics include the different types of heterosexual and same-sex relations including the institutions of marriage, slave concubinage, harem life, and status-defined homosexuality. Readings examine attitudes towards the body in Islamic culture; sexual pleasure and birth control; slavery, prostitution, and concubinage; temporary marriage in Shi'i communities; and same-sex relations in medieval Arabic, Turkish, and Persian literature.

Khuri, Fuad. *The Body in Islamic Culture*. London: Saqi Books, 2001.

Musallam, Basim. *Sex and Society in Islam: Birth Control Before the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge University Press. Latest edition.

Bouhdiba, Abdelwahab. *Sexuality in Islam*. London: Saqi Books, 1998.

Haeri, Shahla. *Law of Desire: Temporary Marriage in Shi'i Iran*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1989.

El-Rouayheb, Khaled. *Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World: 1500-1800*. University of Chicago Press, 2005

Ze'evi, Dror. *Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East*. University of California Press, 2006.

**These articles should also be downloaded from the server:**

Mirzai, Behnaz A. "Qajar Haram: Imagination or Reality?" pp. 77-87 in eds. Mirzai, Ismael Musah Montana and Paul E. Lovejoy, *Slavery, Islam and Diaspora*. Africa World Press, 2009.

Tucker, Judith E. "Woman as Wife and Man as Husband: Making the Marital Bargain," pp. 38-83 in *Women, Family, and Gender in Islamic Law*. Cambridge UP, 2008.

Zarinebaf, Fariba. "Prostitution and the Vice Trade," pp. 86-111 in *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul, 1700-1800*. UC Press, 2011.

Zilfi, Madeline C. "Telling the Ottoman Slave Story," pp. 96-152 in *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire: The Design of Difference*. Cambridge UP, 2010.

Matthee, Rudi, "From the Battlefield to the Harem: Did women's seclusion increase from Early to the Late Safavid Times?" Pp. 97-120 in *New Perspectives on Safavid Iran: Empire and Society*. Routledge, 2011.

**Course Requirements**

1. Seminar Membership

Membership in the seminar involves participation in its discussions and debates. Each week two students will be assigned to facilitate discussion. Each will turn in a summary/commentary on the assigned readings to the instructors by email before class. In class they will help the instructors facilitate discussion. Other students are also expected to write a short critical comment or question on the readings, which will be distributed by email before the seminar

begins. This allows everybody to have a stake in the discussion and for the instructors to gauge students' level of understanding of the materials. Students will be evaluated based on their written and oral contribution to the seminar, their ability to engage other students and the faculty in the discussions. One half of your grade will be based on the quality of your participation.

## 2. Essay

Students have the choice to write an independent research project on a theme related to the material covered in class, or to write a synthetic essay on a topic of their choosing based on the assigned readings. One half of your grade will be based on the quality of this essay.

Please note the following:

§ Students are expected and required to be present at every class session and to be prepared for class. If you know that you will have trouble arriving to class on time and/or staying for the entire session, I strongly counsel you not to enroll in the course.

§ All cellular phones, pagers, and alarms must be turned off during class.

§ Class sessions will be discussion focused. Please bring appropriate readings and texts to class with you. Give yourself sufficient time to complete the reading and prepare before coming to class. Moreover, give yourself sufficient time to understand assignment guidelines, to complete writing assignments accordingly, and to seek help early if you are having difficulties.

## **DATES AND ASSIGNMENTS**

WEEK 1 (September 28)

Lecture: Paradigm Shifts from Medieval to Modern Times  
Film: Color of Love

WEEK 2 (October 5)

Khuri, Fuad. *The Body in Islamic Culture*.

WEEK 3 (October 12)

Bouhdiba, Abdelwahab. *Sexuality in Islam*.

WEEK 4 (October 19)

Musallam, Basim. *Sex and Society in Islam*

WEEK 5 (October 26)

Haeri, Shahla. *Law of Desire*

WEEK 6 (November 2)

Mirzai, Behnaz A. "Qajar Haram: Imagination or Reality?"  
Tucker, Judith E. "Woman as Wife and Man as Husband:  
Making the Marital Bargain"

WEEK 7 (November 9)

Zilfi, Madeline C. "Telling the Ottoman Slave Story"  
Zarinebaf, Fariba. "Prostitution and the Vice Trade"  
Matthee, "From the battlefield to the Harem"

WEEK 8 (November 16)

El-Rouayheb, Khaled. *Before Homosexuality in the Arab-  
Islamic World*

WEEK 9 (November 23) Library Research

WEEK 10 (November 30):

Ze'evi, Dror. *Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle  
East*. And DISCUSSION OF YOUR PAPERS

DECEMBER 6: PAPERS ARE DUE

## **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Ahmed, Leila. *Women and Gender in Islam*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Badran, Margot. *Feminists, Islam and the Nation: Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.
- Charrad, Mounira. *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.
- Bamdad, Badr al-Muluk. *From Darkness Into Light: Women's Emancipation in Iran*. Hicksville, NY: Exposition Press, 1977.
- Biale, Rachel. *Women and Jewish Law: The Essential Texts, Their History, and Their Relevance for Today*. New York: Schocken Books, 1995.
- Farman Farmaian, Sattareh and Dona Munker. *Daughter of Persia*. New York: Anchor Books, 1993.
- El-Rouayheb, Khaled. *Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World, 1500-1800*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Friedl, Erika. *Women of Deh Koh; Lives in an Iranian Village*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989.
- Haeri, Shahla. *Law of Desire: Temporary Marriage in Shi'i Iran*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1989.
- Keddie, Nikki R. *Women in the Middle East*. Princeton: Princeton University Press,

2007.

Keddie, Nikki R. and Beth Baron, eds. *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.

Lerner, Gerda. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Mabro, Judy. *Veiled Half-Truths: Western Travellers' Perceptions of Middle Eastern Women*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1996.

Malti-Douglas, Fedwa. "Narration & Desire: Shahrzad," from *Woman's Body, Woman's Word: Gender and Discourse in Arabo-Islamic Writing*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Mirzai, Ismael, Musah Montana, and Paul E. Lovejoy, eds. *Slavery, Islam and Diaspora*. Africa World Press, 2009.

Mernissi, Fatima. *Islam and Democracy: Fear of the Modern World*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub Co, 1992.

Mernissi, Fatima. *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub Co, 1992.

Musallam, Basim. *Sex and Society in Islam: Birth Control Before the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Nafisi, Azar. *Reading Lolita in Tehran*. New York: Random House, 2003.

Peirce, Leslie P. *The Imperial Harem*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Shaarawi, Huda. *Harem Years: The Memoirs of an Egyptian Feminist*. New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1987.

Spellberg, D.A. *Politics, Gender, and the Islamic Past: The Legacy of 'Aisha Bint Abi Bakr*. New York: Columbia University Press: 1994.

Stowasser, Barbara F. *Women in the Qur'an: Traditions and Interpretation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Thompson, Elizabeth. *Colonial Citizens*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Tucker, Judith. *Women in Nineteenth-Century Egypt*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Tucker, Judith E. *Women, Family, and Gender in Islamic Law*. Cambridge UP, 2008.

Walther, Wiebke. *Women in Islam: From Medieval to Modern Times*. Princeton: M. Wiener Pub, 1993.

Zarinebaf, Fariba. *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul, 1700-1800*. UC Press, 2011.

Zilfi, Madeline C. *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire: The Design of Difference*. Cambridge UP, 2010.