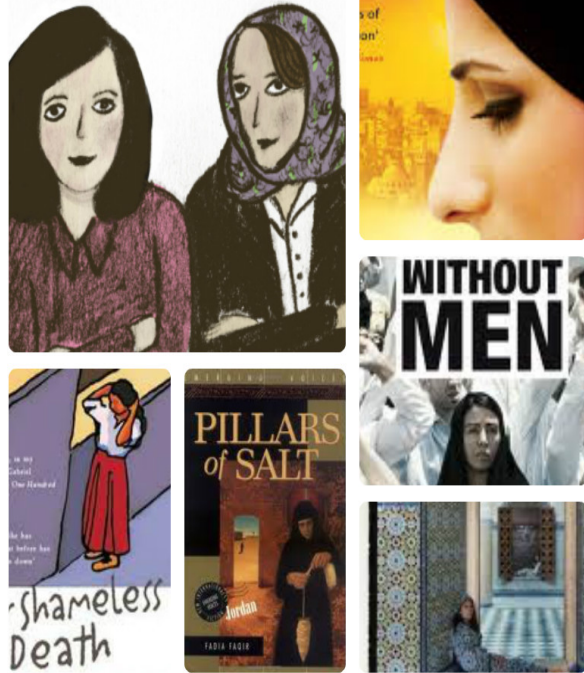


**SPECIAL TOPICS:
MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN
WRITERS
ENGLISH 4955/WMST 4950
Spring 2014
TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS
5:30-6:45**

**Dr. CLAUDIA YAGHOOBI
OFFICE: A&S 3-08
OFFICE HOURS: W 1:00-3:00, F
12:00-2:00 or by appt.
EMAIL: claudia.yaghoobi@gcsu.edu**



COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will examine works by Middle Eastern women writers from Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, Morocco, Jordan and Iran. In order to have a firm grasp on the context within which each work has been created, we will explore the political, economic, historical, religious and socio-cultural aspects of each region as well. In order to approach these writings in a more effective, useful and nuanced manner, we will be reading various journal articles, speeches and short stories written by women since 1860s. We will discuss the conception of Middle Eastern and Islamic feminism, and the problematics of examining and studying Middle Eastern women within a Western academic discourse. Our discussion will focus on, among other things, Middle Eastern women and education; women and writing; women and feminism; women and the west; women and nationalism; women and colonialism; women and diaspora; women and patriarchy; women and sexuality; and women and religion. All readings are in English.

REQUIRED BOOKS

- Al-Shaykh, Hanan. *Women of Sand and Myrrh*. Trans. Catherine Cobham. New York: Anchor Books, 1992. ISBN 978-0-385-42358-8
- Faqir, Fadia. *Pillars of Salt*. New York: Interlink Books, 2007. ISBN 978-1-566-56253-9
- Mernissi, Fatima. *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood*. Cambridge: Perseus Press, 1994. 978-0-201-48937-8

- Tekin, Latife. *Dear Shameless Death*. Trans. Saliha Paker and Mel Kenne. London: Marion Boyars, 2001. 978-0-7145-3054-9
- Parsipur, Shahrnush. *Women Without Men*. Trans. Kamran Talattof and Jocelyn Sharlet. New York: Feminist Press at CUNY, 2010. ISBN 978-1-558-61452-9
- Pirzad, Zoya. *Things We Left Unsaid*. trans. Franklin Lewis. London: Oneworld Publications, 2013. ISBN 978-1-85168-967-5
- All other readings will be available through GeorgiaVIEW D2L.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- **Class Participation and attendance (100 points):** class discussions and activities will give you the opportunity to discuss the material. Bring your books and any additional assignment to each class. Keep up with the readings and be ready to discuss the material. Class participation means more than physical attendance.
- **Discussion Leading – (100 points):** during the semester, each student will be assigned twice to lead the discussion of the day. Bring a few questions and your responses.
- **Two Close-reading papers due on March 13th and May 1st – (200 points):** during the semester, each student will close-read a passage/quote which they find interesting, inspiring, shocking, etc. from the readings of the course. Type the passage on top of your paper and your close reading of it in two pages; upload it online on GeorgiaVIEW D2L at the end of the day.
- **Group Presentations (100 points):** You will be provided with a worksheet for this assignment; with your group members, you will choose one of the books, pick a role, and meet with your group and with me. You may have power point presentation, show video clips, or etc. Upload your presentation online on GeorgiaVIEW D2L at the end of the day you present it.
- **Participation in GeorgiaVIEW D2L forums (5 commentaries + 5 responses) 200 points:**
For each of the five regions in the Middle East, you should post the following to the GeorgiaVIEW D2L forum by the Sunday following the end of that book:
 - 1) A 200-word commentary about each book. Your posts do not need to be masterpieces, but you should try to offer some original observations rather than simply restating something mentioned in lecture or discussion. Think of this as an opportunity to begin working out ideas for your papers.
 - 2) A 150-word response to one of your classmates' comments. Do not simply say you agree or disagree: explain yourself and elaborate.
- **February 9, 2014: Morocco**
- **February 23, 2014: Lebanon**
- **March 16, 2014: Turkey**

- **April 6, 2014: Jordan**
- **May 4, 2014: Iran**
- **Midterm exam (100 points)** – take-home essay questions, upload on GeorgiaVIEW D2L
- **Take-home Cumulative Final exam – (100 points)**
- **Final paper – (100 points) -- due on April 17, 2014** – should be a 7000-8000 word paper.

CLASS POLICIES

- Attendance is mandatory, as is punctuality. More than three absences will lower your total grade by half a grade; excused absence allowed in case of serious medical condition if verified by note from physician. More than six absences will result in a failing grade for the semester.
- Late papers or e-mailed assignments will not be accepted.
- If you wish to discuss your grades, please meet with me during my office hours. Grades will not be discussed in class or through e-mail. Feel free to utilize my office hours to discuss papers.
- You are required to bring your books and assigned readings to class. You may also have them on your computer.
- Respect others, do not talk when someone else is talking, do not offend others by your language (be mindful that others may be of a different class, gender, religion, race, or ability set than you).
- Homework assignments should be typed, 12 point, Times New Roman font; 1-inch margins; double-spaced; no late assignments.
- You may use e-Books, but for your papers I need you to cite the page number from a paper copy.
- Please turn off your cellphones.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week One

Tuesday, January 14, 2014: Introduction to Middle Eastern Women Writers; who they are/why they write

Thursday, January 16, 2014: Literary Salons and Women, Women's Education, Women in Public Sphere, Women and Arab Cultural Renaissance

The following articles are available on GeorgiaVIEW D2L:

- Badran, Margot. "Competing Agenda: Feminists, Islam, and the State in Nineteenth- And Twentieth-Century Egypt." *Feminism in Islam: Secular and Religious Convergences*. Oxford: OneWorld Publications, 2009. 17-54.
- Badawi, Jamal A. "The Status of Women in Islam." 1971
- Shihab Nye, Naomi. "A Letter from Naomi Shihab Nye, Arab-American Poet: To Any Would-Be Terrorists." 2001

- Cohen, Lori and Leyna Peery. “Unveiling Students’ Perceptions about Women in Islam.” *The English Journal*, 95. 3 (Jan., 2006): 20-6.

Suggested Reading:

- Ahmed, Leila. “The Struggle for the Future.” *Women and Gender in Islam*. New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1992. 208- 234.

Week Two

Tuesday, January 21, 2014: Orientalism, Middle East and Western Perceptions of it
The following articles are available on GeorgiaVIEW D2L:

- Said, Edward. “From the Introduction to *Orientalism*.” *The Critical Tradition*. ed. David Richter. Boston, NY: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2007. 1801-1814.
- Abou El Naga, Shereen. “New Politics, Old Identities: Arab Women in (Their) English Words.” *Agenda* 54 (2002): 60-73.
- Golley, Nawar al-Hassan. “Is Feminism relevant to Arab women?” *Third World Quarterly* 25. 3 (2004): 521-536.

Suggested Readings:

- Edward Said: “Reflections on Exile”
- Gayatri Spivak: “Can the Subaltern Speak?”

Thursday, January 23, 2014: The Intersection of Nationalism, Colonialism and Feminism
Excerpts from: Badran Margot, and Miriam Cooke. Eds. *Opening the Gates: An Anthology of Arab Feminist Writing*. 2nd ed. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 2004.

- al-Taimuriya, Aisha. “Family Reform 1894” (129-133)
- Musa, Nabawiya. “The Difference Between Men and Women 1920” (257-269)
- Nabarawi, Saiza. “Double Standard 1925” (279-281)
- Shaarawi, Huda. “Pan-Arab Feminism 1944” (337-340) and “Farewell, Bethrotal, Wedding 1945” (41-48)
- Aflatun, Inja. “We Egyptian Women 1949” (343-351)
- Shafiq, Duriya. “Islam and the Constitutional Right of Women 1952” (352-356)
- Said, Amina. “Feast of Unveiling 1973” (357-362)
- Rifaat, Alifa. “Who’ll be the man,” “Honor 1981” (72-83)

Week Three

Tuesday, January 28, 2014: Women’s rejection of traditions in Palestine, Syria, Morocco and Iraq

Excerpts from: Badran Margot, and Miriam Cooke. Eds. *Opening the Gates: An Anthology of Arab Feminist Writing*. 2nd ed. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 2004.

- Djebar, Assia. “Introduction to Nawal al-Saadawi’s *Ferdauous* 1983” (386-393)
- Fawwaz, Zainab. “Fair and Equal Treatment 1891” (220-226)
- Nawfal, Hind. “The Dawn of the Arabic Women’s Press 1892” (215-219)

- Saad, Shirley. "Amina 1985" (49-53)
- Chaibia, "My Life 1985" (328-331)
- Azzam, Samira. "The Protected One 1967" (54-56)
- Idelbi, Ulfa. "Seventy Years Later 1970" (57-62)
- Author Unknown, "The Lady and Her Five Suitors." *The Thousand and One Nights*, 1954

MOROCCO

Thursday, January 30, 2014

- Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass* (1-81)
- Matthes, Melissa, and Esilim Sitam. "Shahrazad's Sisters: Storytelling and Politics in the Memoirs of Mernissi, El Saadawi and Ashrawi." *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics* 19, Gender and Knowledge: Contribution of Gender Perspectives to Intellectual Formations (1999): 68-96.

Suggested Reading:

- Abdo, Diya. "Uncovering the Harem in the Classroom: Tania Kamal-Eldin's "Covered: The Hejab in Cairo, Egypt" and "Hollywood Harems" within the Context of a Course on Arab Women Writers." *Women's Studies Quarterly* 30. 1/2, Looking Across the Lens: Women's Studies and Film (Spring - Summer, 2002): 227-238.

Week Four

Tuesday, February 4, 2014:

- Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass* (82-155)

Suggested Reading:

- Mernissi, Fatima. "Muslim Women and Fundamentalism." *Middle East Report* 153, Islam and the State (Jul. - Aug., 1988): 8-11.

Thursday, February 6, 2014:

- Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass* (156-242)

Suggested Reading:

- Mernissi, Fatima. "Women, Saints, and Sanctuaries." *Signs* 3. 1, Women and National Development: The Complexities of Change (Autumn, 1977): 101-112.

Week Five

Tuesday, February 11, 2014:

Group Presentation: *Dreams of Trespass*

LEBANON

Thursday, February 13, 2014:

- Al-Shaykh, *Women of Sand and Myrrh* (3-97)

Suggested Readings:

- Driss, Hager Ben. "Women Narrating the Gulf: A Gulf of Their Own." *Journal of Arabic Literature* 36. 2 (2005): 152-171.
- Joseph, Suad. "Patriarchy and Development in the Arab World." *Gender and Development* 4. 2 (Jun., 1996): 14-19.

Week Six

Tuesday, February 18, 2014:

- Al-Shaykh, *Women of Sand and Myrrh* (98-185)
- Larson, Charles R. "The Fiction of Hanan Al-Shaykh, Reluctant Feminist." *World Literature Today* 65. 1 (Winter, 1991): 14-17.

Thursday, February 20, 2014: NO CLASS

Week Seven

Tuesday, February 25, 2014:

- Al-Shaykh, *Women of Sand and Myrrh* (186-280)
- Adams, Ann Marie. "Writing Self, Writing Nation: Imagined Geographies in the Fiction of Hanan al-Shaykh." *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 20. 2, Women Writing Across the World (Autumn, 2001): 201-216.

Thursday, February 27, 2014:

Group Presentation: *Women of Sand and Myrrh*

TURKEY

Week Eight

Tuesday, March 4, 2014:

- Tekin, *Dear Shameless Death* (Introduction, 19-81)

Suggested Readings:

- Freely, Maureen. "The Prison Imaginary in Turkish Literature." *World Literature Today* 83. 6 (Nov. - Dec., 2009): 46-50.

Thursday, March 6, 2014:

- Tekin, *Dear Shameless Death* (82-160)
- Guneli Gun. "The Woman in the Darkroom: Contemporary Women Writers in Turkey" *World Literature Today* 60:275-9 Spring 86.

Suggested Reading:

- Mikhail, Mona N. "Middle Eastern Literature and the Conditions of Modernity: An Introduction." *World Literature Today* 60. 2, Literatures of the Middle East: A Fertile Crescent (Spring, 1986): 197-199.

Week Nine

Tuesday, March 11, 2014:

- Tekin, *Dear Shameless Death* (160-236)

Suggested Reading:

- Dino, Guzine, and Joan Grimbert. "The Turkish Peasant Novel, or the Anatolian Theme." *World Literature Today* 60. 2, Literatures of the Middle East: A Fertile Crescent (Spring, 1986): 266-275.

Thursday, March 13, 2014:

Group Presentation: *Dear Shameless Death*

Week Ten

Tuesday, March 18: Spring Break

Thursday, March 20: Spring Break

JORDAN

Week Eleven

Tuesday, March 25, 2014:

- Faqir, *Pillars of Salt* (1-70)

Suggested Reading:

- Sharoni, Simona. "Women and Gender in Middle East Studies: Trends, Prospects and Challenges." *Middle East Report* 205, Middle East Studies Networks: The Politics of a Field (Oct. - Dec., 1997): 27-29.

Thursday, March 27, 2014:

- Faqir, *Pillars of Salt* (71-142)

Suggested Reading:

- Faqir, Fadia. "Engendering Democracy and Islam in the Arab World." *Third World Quarterly* 18. 1 (Mar., 1997): 165-174.

Week Twelve

Tuesday, April 1, 2014:

- Faqir, *Pillars of Salt* (143-227)

Suggested Reading:

- Faqir, Fadia. "Intrafamily Femicide in Defence of Honour: The Case of Jordan." *Third World Quarterly* 22. 1 (Feb., 2001): 65-82.

Thursday, April 3, 2014:

- **Group Presentation:** *Pillars of Salt*

IRAN**Week Thirteen****Tuesday, April 8, 2014:**

- Afary, Janet. "On the Origins of Feminism in Early 20th-century Iran." *Journal of Women's History* 1.2 (Fall 1989): 65-87.
- Yaghoobi, Claudia. "'Shifting Sexual Ideology and Women's Responses: Iran between 1850-2010,'" Homa Hoodfar and Anissa Lucas-Helie, eds. *Sexuality in Muslim Contexts: Restrictions and Resistance*, Zed Books, 2012. 52-80.

Suggested Readings:

- Afary, Janet. "Steering between Scylla and Charybdis: Shifting Gender Roles in Twentieth Century Iran." *NWSA Journal* 8. 1, Global Perspectives (Spring, 1996): 28-49.
- Karim, Persis M. and Nasrin Rahimieh. "Introduction: Writing Iranian Americans into the American Literature Canon." *MELUS* 33. 2, Iranian American Literature (Summer, 2008): 7-16.

Thursday, April 10, 2014:

- Parsipur, *Women Without Men* (1-81)

Suggested Reading:

- Kamran Talattof. "Iranian Women's Literature: From Pre-revolutionary Social Discourse to Postrevolutionary Feminism." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29. 4, (November, 1997): 531-558.

Week Fourteen**Tuesday, April 15, 2014:**

- Parsipur, *Women Without Men* (82-179)
- Nafisi, Azar. "The Quest for the "Real" Woman in the Iranian Novel." *Social Research* 70. 3, Islam: The Public and Private Spheres (fall 2003): 981-1000.

Suggested Readings:

- Talattof, Kamran. "Breaking Taboos in Iranian Women's Literature: The Work of Shahrnush Parsipur." *World Literature Today* 78. 3/4 (Sep. - Dec., 2004): 43-46.

Thursday, April 17, 2014:

- **Group Presentation:** *Women Without Men*

Week Fifteen

Tuesday, April 22, 2014:

- *Things We Left Unsaid* (1-103)

Suggested Reading:

- Milani, Farzaneh. "Sheherazade Unveiled: Post-Revolutionary Iranian Women Writers." *Stories by Iranian Women Since the Revolution*. Trans. Soraya Sullivan. Austin, Texas: UT Austin, 1991. (1-15)

Thursday, April 24, 2014:

- *Things We Left Unsaid* (104-208)

Week Sixteen

Tuesday, April 29, 2014:

- *Things We Left Unsaid* (209-334)

Thursday, May 1, 2014:

- **Group Presentation:** *Things We Left Unsaid*

Week Seventeen – Final Exams

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

➤ Religious Observance Policy

Students are permitted to miss class in observance of religious holidays and other activities observed by a religious group of which the student is a member without academic penalty. Exercising of one's rights under this policy is subject to the GC Honor Code. Students who miss class in observance of a religious holiday or event are required to make up the coursework missed as a result from the absence. The nature of the make-up assignments and the deadline for completion of such assignments are at the sole discretion of the instructor. Failure to follow the prescribed procedures voids all student rights under this policy.

➤ Assistance for Student Needs Related to Disability

If you have a disability as described by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, you may be eligible to receive accommodations to assist in programmatic and physical accessibility. Disability Services, a unit of GCSU Office of Institutional Equality and Diversity, can assist you in formulating a reasonable accommodation plan and in providing support in developing appropriate accommodations to ensure equal access to all GCSU programs and facilities. Course requirements will not be waived, but accommodations may assist you in meeting the requirements. For documentation requirements and for additional information, we

recommend that you contact Disability Services located in Maxwell Student Union at 478-445-5931 or 478-455-4233.

➤ **Student Opinion Survey Statement**

Given the technological sophistication of Georgia College students, the student opinion survey is being delivered through an online process. Your constructive feedback plays an indispensable role in shaping quality education at Georgia College. All responses are completely confidential and your name is not stored with your responses in any way. In addition, instructors will not see any results of the opinion survey until after final grades are submitted to the university. An invitation to complete the online opinion survey is distributed to students near the end of the semester. Your participation in this very important process is greatly appreciated.

➤ **Academic Honesty**

The integrity of students and their written and oral work is a critical component of the academic process. The submission of another's work as one's own is plagiarism and will be dealt with using the procedures outlined in the GC Catalog.

<http://catalog.gcsu.edu/ugrad/student-academic-dishonesty.htm>

Remember that allowing another student to copy one's own work violates the standards of academic integrity.

<http://catalog.gcsu.edu/grad/student-academic-dishonesty.htm>

Also see the student Honor Code at the website below:

<http://www.gcsu.edu/studentlife/handbook/code.htm>

➤ **Fire Drills**

Fire drills will be conducted annually. In the event of a fire alarm, students will exit the building quickly in a quick and orderly manner through the nearest hallway exit. Learn the floor plan and exits of the building. Do not use elevators. If you encounter heavy smoke, crawl on the floor so as to gain fresh air. Assist disabled persons and others if possible without endangering your own life. Assemble for a head count on the front lawn of main campus or other designated assembly area. For more information on other emergencies, please visit: <http://www.gcsu.edu/emergency/actionplanmain.htm>