

**Centre for West Asian Studies**  
**School of International Studies**  
**M.A. International Relations-West Asian Studies**

Course No.	:	WA406
Course Title	:	Society and Culture in West Asia and North Africa
Course Teacher	:	Md. Muddassir Quamar
Credits	:	4
Instruction Method	:	Lectures, Seminars and Tutorials
Evaluation Method	:	Class Participation, Assignment and End-Semester Examination
Course Duration	:	One Semester
Contact Hours	:	04 per week

**Objective:** The WANA region has a rich and complex history with diversity of societies and cultures existing simultaneously. Although the region is predominantly Arab and Islamic, it is not a homogenous entity when so far as socio-cultural practices and processes are concerned. The course intends to underline the diversity and heterogeneity of the societies and cultures in the region with a comprehensive understanding of the important sociological issues in contemporary WANA.

**Learning Outcome:** The course seeks to develop an understanding and a keen interest in the students to the diversity and richness of the societies and cultures in WANA.

**Course Outline**

**Unit I. Social Structure:** Demography; Tribes and tribalism; 'Aşabiyya; migration; citizenship.

**Unit II. Family, Marriage and Kinship:** norms; values; practices; gender; patriarchy.

**Unit III. Religion, Customs and Traditions:** Faith; monotheism; divisions and tensions; theology; ulema.

**Unit IV. Modernisation and Development:** Education; Urbanisation; Stratification; Social mobility; Social reforms; Globalisation.

**Readings**

**Unit I:**

Abu-Lughod, Lila, "Zones of Theory in the Anthropology of the Arab World," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 1989, vol. 18, pp. 267-306.

Allman, James, "The Demographic Transition in the Middle East and North Africa," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 1980, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 277-301.

Al-Naqeeb, Khaldoun Hasan, *Society and State in the Gulf and Arab Peninsula: A Different Perspective*, London: Routledge, 1990.

Billingsley, Anthony, *Political Succession in the Arab World: Constitutions, Family Loyalties and Islam*, London: Routledge, 2010.

Cole, David P. "Where have the Bedouins Gone?" *Anthropological Quarterly*, 2003, vol. 76, no. 2, pp. 235-267.

Foroutan, Yaghoob, "Social Change and Demographic Change in Iran (1956-2006)," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2014, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 151-161.

Ibn Khaldun, Abd al-Rahman bin Muhammad, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, translated by Franz Rosenthal, edited by N. J. Dawood, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.

Khoury, Philip and Kostiner, Joseph (Eds.), *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

Lutfiyya, Abdullah M. and Churchill, Charles W. (Eds.), *Readings in Arab Middle Eastern Societies and Cultures*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1970.

Ze'evi, Dror and Toledano, Ehud R. (Eds.), *Society, Law, and Culture in the Middle East: "Modernities" in the Making*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.

## **Unit II:**

Abu-Lughod, Lila, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others," *American Anthropologist*, 2002, vol. 104, no. 3, pp. 783-790.

Ahmed, Qanta A., *In the Land of Invisible Women: A Female Doctor's Journey in the Saudi Kingdom*, Naperville: Sourcebooks, 2008.

AlSharekh, Alanoud (Ed.), *The Gulf Family: Kinship Policies and Modernity*, London: Saqi, 2007.

Badran, Margot, *Feminism in Islam: Secular and Religious Convergences*, Oxford: Oneworld, 2009.

El Fadl, Khaled Abou, *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women*, Oxford: One World Publications, 2001.

Engineer, Asghar Ali, *The Qur'an, Women and Modern Society*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2005.

Herb, Michael, *All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution, and Democracy in the Middle Eastern Monarchies*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1999.

Hoodfar, Homa, *Between Marriage and the Market: Intimate Politics and Survival in Cairo*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

Joseph, Suad, "Brother/Sister Relationships: Connectivity, Love, and Power in the Reproduction of Patriarchy in Lebanon," *American Ethnologist*, 1994, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 50-73.

Mernissi, Fatima, *Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Muslim Society*, London: Saqi Books, 2011.

## **Unit III:**

Algar, Hamid, *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay*, New York: Islamic Publication International, 2002.

Al-Jabiri, Muhammad Abid, *Arab-Islamic Philosophy: A Contemporary Critique*, Austin: University of Texas Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, 1999.

Arkoun, Mohammed, *Islam: To Reform or to Subvert?* London: Saqi Books, 2006.

Boullata, Issa J., *Trends and Issues in Contemporary Arab Thought*, Albany: New York University Press, 1990.

Dekmejian, Richard H., *Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World*, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1985.

Delong-Bas, Natana J., *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Demant, Peter R., *Islam vs. Islamism: The Dilemma of the Muslim World*, Westport: Praeger, 2006.

Haj, Samira, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.

Lewis, Bernard, "Freedom and Justice in Islam," *Culture and Society*, 2007, vol. 44, no. 2, pp. 66-70.

Mernissi, Fatima, *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*, Translated by Mary Jo Lakeland, New York: Basic Books, 1991.

#### **Unit IV:**

Abir, Mordechai, *Oil, Power and Politics: Conflicts in Arabia, the Red Sea and the Gulf*, London: Frank Cass, 1974.

Algosaiibi, Ghazi A., *The Dilemma of Development*, translated from Arabic by Leslie McLoughlin, Reading: Ithaca Press, 1995.

Bahgat, Gawdat, "Education in Gulf Monarchies: Retrospect and Prospect," *International Review of Education*, 1999, vol. 45, no. 2, pp. 127-136.

Chaudhry, Kiren Aziz, *The Price of Wealth: Economies and Institutions in the Middle East*, London: Cornell University Press, 1997.

Crane, Keith, Simon, Steven and Martini, Jeffrey, *Future Challenges for the Arab World: The Implications of Demographic and Economic Trends*, Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2011.

Crystal, Jill, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Ehteshami, Anoushiravan, "Reform from Above: the Politics of Participation in the Oil Monarchies," *International Affairs*, 2003, vol. 79, no. 1, pp. 53-75.

El Azhary, M. S., *The Impact of Oil Revenues on Arab Gulf Development*, London: Croom Helm, 1984.

Elsheshtawy, Yasser (Ed.), *The Evolving Arab City: Tradition, Modernity and Urban Development*, London: Routledge, 2008.

Foley, Sean, *The Gulf Arab States: Beyond Oil and Islam*, New Delhi: Viva Books, 2011.

Ibrahim, Saad Eddin, *The New Arab Social Order: A Study of the Social Impact of Oil Wealth*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1982.

Mamdani, Mahmood, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Marzui, Ali A., "Globalization and Cross-Cultural Values: The Politics of Identity and Judgement," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 1999, vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 97-109.