

**COURSE SYLLABUS: EPHD/SOAN
SEMINAR ON ECOLOGIES OF WAR AND SURVIVAL IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

*Meeting Schedule: Monday, 5:30-8:00PM,
ROOM: VANDYCK 103*

Instructor: Omar Dewachi, MBChB, PhD

Office: Vandyck, 220, Office hours: Tuesday 4:00-5:30PM or by appointment

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AUB extension: 4677

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The depictions of war and conflicts in the Middle East have fallen into simplistic characterizations of violence as defined by religious, ethnic and civilizational identities. Alternatively, the increased militarization, destruction and dismantling of state institutions, the massive population mobility, displacement, the rise of humanitarian regimes have all led to a renegotiation of borders and boundaries of new/old forms of sociality and organization.

In this seminar, we problematize common understandings of conflicts in the Middle East region. Building on anthropological and sociological frameworks, we interrogate forms and processes of war as embedded in the historical and material conditions and infrastructures of everyday life of people and communities. We explore the shifting social, political, and historical movements of the recent decades and how social relations of communities, as well as the material life-worlds they inhabit transform under conditions of war. We ask: what does a social analysis of war look like? What kinds of everyday resources become available and/or become mobilized under conditions and processes of chronic war and conflict? How do such resources metabolize back into the everyday? Thinking with, and through war, the course attempts to explore what an “ecologies of war” would look like.

The course builds on research-based and problem-based models of learning. Throughout the seminar, students are encouraged to develop their own interdisciplinary questions, and attempt to answer them through their class assignments, discussion of reading material, and final projects. This requires an engagement with a broad set of literature to build up locally relevant theoretical and empirical knowledge and accounts. We will draw from a wide-range of theoretical and empirical work, journalistic reports, fiction and non-fiction accounts of war to explore the different perspectives and avenues of the ongoing conflicts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Engage with theoretical and empirical work in the social sciences on war and society
2. Contextualize a range of current affairs of war and violence in the broader academic debates on the Middle East.
3. Develop methodological frameworks to examine the broader meanings and processes of war and their impact on social organization and everyday life in the Middle East.
4. Explore the interrelated political, social, spatial, environmental, technological and medical dimensions of violence and conflict.

More general learning objectives of the course:

5. Think in abstract and empirical ways about a wide range of social issues.
6. Interpret academic arguments that are new/or unfamiliar
7. Formulate positions based on critical social analysis.
8. Communicate such opinions verbally to peers.
9. Defend these opinions verbally through discussion in seminar
10. Apply sociological analysis to a range of contexts within your subject discipline.
11. Present your conclusions formally to an audience and field subsequent questions
12. Write a convincing academic argument engaging theoretical and empirical material.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT EVALUATIONS

1. Attendance and participation (10%)

Class will meet once a week on Tuesday from 5:30-8PM. Students are required to attend classes, and are expected to come prepared- having read the assigned readings and ready to participate in the class discussion. Students who miss more than one-fifth of the classes during the first ten weeks of the semester will be dropped from the course.

2- In-class presentation (20%)

Each student is responsible for presenting at least one reading and lead the discussion in class. The presentation should be no more than ten minutes that briefly summarizes the reading, engage critically with the author, and suggest one to two questions for discussion.

3- Book review/essay (30%)

Each students is required to write a 1000 words book review of Evans Pritchard's *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*. The essay is due in November. More details about the assignment will be supplied in due time.

4-Final paper (40%)

Each student will choose a relevant topic that relates to the course themes and will write a 2500-3000 word analytical paper. The final paper will be evaluated on the ability of the student to address the topic using terms, concepts, and principles covered throughout the semester. Thinking about the topic should start much earlier and with discussion with Midway through the semester, students will be required to submit a synopsis of the topic they want to elaborate on for their final essay. Each student will present a two-page abstract and a bibliography of references intended to be used. Students' abstracts, including the questions they want to address in their final papers, will be discussed in class amongst peers. [More details will be supplied in due time]

Academic Integrity

"The American University of Beirut has a strict anti-cheating and anti-plagiarism policy. Penalties include failing marks on the assignment in question, suspension or expulsion from the university, and a permanent mention of the disciplinary action in the student's records. Education is demanding and time management is essential. Do not hesitate to use the resources around you, but do not cut corners. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Please review the Student Code of Conduct in your handbook and familiarize yourself with definitions and penalties. If you are in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, ask your instructor because it is your responsibility to know." The AUB student code of conduct is also available on the following web page: <http://pnp.aub.edu.lb/general/conductcode/index.html>

AUB Statement on Learning needs of students with Disability

"AUB strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please inform me immediately so that we can privately discuss options. In order to help establish reasonable accommodations and facilitate a smooth accommodations process, you are encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Office: accessibility@aub.edu.lb; +961-1-350000, x3246; West Hall, 314."

READINGS AND SCHEDULE

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| Week 1 September 5 | INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW No readings required |
| Week 2 September 12 | WHY WAR? RETHINKING PARADIGMS Informal Assignment Bring to class two pieces of writing (academic, journalistic, fiction, non-fiction...etc.) that portrays a social aspect of a past or ongoing conflict in the Middle East: one of what you think is a “good” account of that conflict, and the second is of “bad” one. Write a short paragraph explaining your choices and be prepared to discuss them in class. Readings Freud, Sigmund. "Why War?" In <i>Aggression, Hostility and Violence: Nature or Nurture?</i> Edited by Terry Maple and Douglas Matheson. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1973, pp. 16-27. Hedges, Chris. "Introduction." In <i>War is a Force That Gives us Meaning</i> . New York, NY: Public Affairs Book, 2002, pp. 1-17. |
| Week 3 September 19 | FRAMEWORKS OF WAR IN ANTHROPOLOGY: STRUCTURE, EVENT, PROCESS Readings Lubkemann, Stephen C. 2008. "Introduction" in <i>Culture in Chaos: An Anthropology of the Social Condition in War</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Begin reading: Sanusi of Cyrenaica "Chapter I" |

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| <p>Week 4 September 26</p> | <p>CULTURAL LOGICS OF WAR</p> <p>Readings Akbar. 2013. "INTRODUCTION" in <i>The Thistle and the Drone: How America's War on Terror Became a Global War on Tribal Islam</i>. Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press.</p> <p>Rosaldo, R. (2004) Grief and the Headhunter's Rage. In <i>Violence in War and Peace</i>. (chapter 17)</p> <p>Sanusi of Cyrenaica "Chapter II: The Bedouin of Cyrenaica"</p> <p>Watch: JEREMY SCAHILL DIRTY WARS</p> |
| <p>Week 5 October 3</p> | <p>ZONES OF THEORY IN THE ARAB WORLD</p> <p>Readings Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1989. "Zones of Theory in the Anthropology of the Arab World." <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i> 18 (January): 267-306.</p> <p>The Sanusi of Cyrenaica "Chapter III: The Sanusiya and the Tribes"</p> |
| <p>Week 6 October 10</p> | <p>BLOOD FUEDS</p> <p>Readings Michael Gilsonon, <i>Domination as Social Practice: 'Patrimonialism in North Lebanon: Arbitrary Power, Desecration, and the Aesthetics of Violence'</i></p> <p>Sanusi of Cyrenaica "Chapter IV: The Turkish Administration"</p> <p>FILM: Omar Amir Elay: <i>Fiyadhan fi Zaman al-Ba'ath</i>.</p> |
| <p>Week 7 October 17</p> | <p>WAR AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>Readings: Joy Gordon, "Introduction" in <i>Invisible War: The United States and the Iraqi Sanctions</i></p> <p>Al-Mohammad, Hayder. 2007. "Ordure and Disorder: The Case of Basra and the Anthropology of Excrement." <i>Anthropology of the Middle East</i> 2 (2): 1-23.</p> <p>Sanusi of Cyrenaica "Chapter V: The Italio-Sanusi War (1911-17)"</p> |

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| Week 8 October 24 | WAR AND ITS FALLOUTS Readings: Dewachi, Omar, <i>Ungovernable Life: War and Mandatory Medicine in Iraq</i> Stanford University Press (2017) [Excerpts] Watch: SARI'S MOTHER Sanusi of Cyrenaica "Chapter VI: The period of the Accords (1917-23)" |
| Week 9 October 31 | COLONIAL PATHOLOGIES/UNGOVERNABLE BODIES Readings: Fanon, Frantz, <i>Medicine and Colonialism</i> in "A Dying Colonialism" Linda Nash, 2006, "Body and Environment in an era of Colonization" in L. Nash <i>Inescapable Ecologies</i> California Press. Sanusi of Cyrenaica "Chapter VII: The Second Italo-Sanusi War (1923-32)" In class-viewing :Jean Rouch <i>Les Maitres Fous</i> |
| Week 10 November 7 | TOXIC WARS AND MUTANT ECOLOGIES Readings: Masco, Joseph. 2013 "Mutant Ecologies: Radioactive Life in Post-Cold War New Mexico." <i>Cultural Anthropology</i> 19 (4): 517-50. Omar Dewachi, 2013 <u>The Toxicity of Everyday Survival in Iraq</u> . Jadaliyya. Sanusi of Cyrenaica "Chapter VIII: Italian Rule and Colonization (1932-42)" |
| Week 11 November 14 | THE WAR MACHINE AND GLOBAL HEALTH TBA |

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| Week 12 November 21 | TBA |
| Week 13 November 28 | TBA |
| Week 14 December 5 | TBA |
| Week 15 December 12 | Submit Final Essay |