

REL/SAS/WGSP 465 Islam and Gender
Gendered Identities in the Lives of Women and Men in Muslim Communities
COURSEWORK IS DONE THROUGH BLACKBOARD (see blackboard.syr.edu)

Dr. Svetlana Peshkova
Department of Religion
Syracuse University
E-mail: speshkov@syr.edu

Too often the term gender is used as a way of understanding the lives of women in Muslim communities. Studies of masculinity in Muslim communities are still rare. This seminar attempts to render both Muslim women and men visible as gendered subjects, who actively participate in the lives of their communities both reflecting and informing larger global power dynamics. While looking at some examples of everyday lives of Muslims, this course introduces students to several theological and practical aspects of gender politics in different Muslim communities, critically questioning and challenging established binaries and definitions (e.g. Muslim, Muslim community or Muslim wo/man). As all human communities, Muslim communities have different ideas and practices that mark biological differences between men and women in a hierarchical fashion. These ideas and practices both inform and are informed by intellectual discourses, strategic activism, embodied practices, holistic spirituality, and by politics on individual, societal, and global levels. The course's thematic units are: a very short introduction to Islam and gender studies; representations of gender roles in Muslim communities; histories of gender ideology; various contextual gendered practices and discourses; gender and sexuality; third or middle gender; gender and violence; and issues of gendered agency in Muslim communities. The course material will be modified for the graduate students interested in taking the course. Students are expected to engage critically with the course material and pay close attention to the intersection of gender, contextual religious beliefs and practices, history, and politics. I take Islam to be a map of discourses about how to feel and act as Muslim. So we start with human beings and move into their rationalizations of their feelings and actions, rather than some assumed objectified monolithic entity of Islam. The class readings include ethnographic, historical, visual and audio materials as well as work of several famous theorists writing about gender.

Course objectives:

I hope this course helps students to become **critical** and **reflexive** readers and writers. As we will meet both in cyberspace and in person, the students, hopefully, will continue developing their critical voice through writing and in-class and on-line dialogues.

- By **critical** I mean that students will not take for granted the opinions of the authors, speakers, journalists, friends, and the instructor. They will be willing and able to evaluate those opinions and truth claims these various actors make in light of their own knowledge and experiences.
- By **reflexive** I mean that students will be able to understand the role that their socio-cultural context and experiences play in the formulation of their opinions about the world in general and Muslim communities (gender, religion, and politics) in particular. Finally, I hope that students will be able to get several perspectives on the issues of gender in Muslim communities and thus challenge their opinions and expand their knowledge about Muslim and other faith-based communities.

The final goal of the course is to help students **to develop their voice**, a well informed one, about the intersection among gender, politics, history, religion, and human agency, and to hold their voice flexible enough to be able to critically incorporate new knowledge acquired about gender and other issues in their further studies.

Course Evaluation:

I will evaluate the students' progress in the course based on the following criteria (the details provided below the list):

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| • In-class and on-line active participation (Each missed class without a reasonable excuse will result in 2% decrease of the semester grade) | 15% |
| • Weekly (300 words) reflection papers posted on Blackboard by Friday @ midnight (10 papers), each 4% of the semester grade | 40% |
| • Final project question (agreed upon with the instructor) | 5% |
| • Midterm annotated bibliography for your final project | 15% |
| • Final Project as your paper | 25% |
| TOTAL _____ | 100% |

IMPORTANT DETAILS:

Active participation: You are to actively engage in the discussion taking place both on-line and in the classroom: in the classroom in the form of dialogue with your colleagues and the instructor, and online in the form of responses to your colleagues' weekly papers.

Weekly reflection papers: For these papers the students are expected to reflect on and engage with the reading material covered that week. By engaging I mean critically assessing the arguments and information put forth by the writers. The papers should be no less than 300 words and no more than 2 pages in length. The material from the readings should be cited in appropriate format, e.g. Author, year: page (Peshkova 2003:5). Every student should have 10 papers posted on the web, i.e. almost every week (see the schedule). The papers should be submitted by Friday midnight on the dates indicated in the schedule. Each paper is worth 4% of your grade. Papers' grades are as follows 4=A, 3=B, 2=C, 1=D, 0 = fail. Please use the questions that I put forward as guiding questions, i.e. you are not required to answer them. You may write on a topic of your choice that has crystallized while you were doing your readings. These papers should have the format appropriate for academic papers. You will be provided guidelines on how to write response papers. Please follow those. Please submit your papers electronically under the appropriate forums on the discussion board.

Grading your response papers:

You will be graded based on these criteria:

1. **Clarity.** No additional and unnecessary words, please: substance and not quantity matters. Please ensure that your points are well argued. Top sentences of each paragraph should establish the issue and argument contained within the paragraph. Give me the gist of your argument in the first paragraph, so that I want to continue to read and learn more

- this is what one of my teachers insisted I do. (40%)

2. Engagement with the material. I do not need reviews of the articles or books for your weekly papers. Rather it should be a critical analysis of the readings. Look for the key issues, arguments, and respond to those critically (40%)

3. Creativity. Your work is already creative as it is YOUR work. You should try to create some meaningful relationships to the subjects you are talking about. These are your interpretations, your positions--own them but be reflexive (see the definition of reflexivity in the beginning of your syllabus). (20%)

Total 100%

Your research question/topic for your final project: You should start thinking about your final project early on. It is a process that includes several steps. The beginning of this process is to come up with a question, which you will submit on the day indicated in the course scheduling in the form of two/three paragraphs addressing three points: 1. what you would like to do for your final project; 2. why your project is important; and 3. how is it connected to the course. I will respond to you and discuss your project's feasibility. I, if needed, will help you to find sources for your projects. You are encouraged to talk to me before you submit your question (run it by me either in person or via e-mail). Your midterm and final will all be created around this question. This research question is worth 5% of your grade. It is to be submitted electronically under the forum "research question/topic for the final project".

Your midterm: Your midterm will take the form of an annotated bibliography. You will be provided with guidelines on how to write it. Your annotated bibliography should include three sources from outside the class readings (they do not have to be all books; there can be one visual source, one chapter from the book and one article, or other combinations) that deal with your research question (or help you to address it). You can also consult the forum titled "the midterm" for more details on how to write an annotated bibliography. Your midterm will be submitted electronically under the forum "the midterm" on the date specified in the syllabus. Your midterm is 10% of your grade. It will be graded as follows: 9-10=A, 8-9 = B, 7-8 = C, 6-7 = D, less than 6 = fail.

Final Project: Your final project will be developed in several stages. As I have stated previously we (you, me and feel free to solicit help from the class) will start with identifying your **interest** in a particular theme within the field of gender studies in Muslim communities (both historical and contemporary). You will work on formulating a **research question**, which you will submit by on the date specified in the scheduling. You will create a **list of sources**, which you will discuss via annotated bibliography and submit on the date specified in the scheduling as your midterm. Your **final paper** will be an in-depth discussion of/engagement with/findings pertaining to your particular question. (See the final pages of this syllabus for the books/articles/films/websites as possible resources for your papers.) Your final paper should be 10-12 pages long (although what matters is the substance not the length). It must have a title, your name, course number, the date, a thesis, include three additional sources (that you have used in your midterm or others, outside of the class readings), which help you to develop your thesis (you can use as many works that we have read in the class as you consider necessary in order to have a substantiated, well argued paper), be double-spaced, 12-point font, have appropriate citations (no wikipedia-like sources), when quoting include appropriate information (the name of the author, the year: the page), and have a bibliography as your final page. I prefer APA format but you can use MLA as well. You will present **your research to the class** (the logistics of your presentations will come at a later date). Your presentation is worth 10% of your grade. Your **final papers are due on the date specified in the scheduling. It is 20% of your grade.** Good luck!

GRADING SCALE

| | |
|----|----------|
| A | 93- 100 |
| A- | 90 – 92 |
| B+ | 87 – 89 |
| B | 83 – 86 |
| B- | 80 – 82 |
| C+ | 77 – 79 |
| C | 73 – 76 |
| C- | 70 – 72 |
| D+ | 67 – 69 |
| D | 63 – 66 |
| D- | 60 – 62 |
| F | Below 60 |

PLEASE CONSULT THE COURSE SCHEDULE FOR EXACT DATES AND TIMES OF YOUR PAPERS AND YOUR READING ASSIGNMENTS.

A note on the Qur'an:

As the sacred scripture, the literal word of God, the Qur'an has primary authority in the way many Muslims understand their faith. The students are encouraged to get their own copies of the Qur'an, particularly if they plan to continue to learn about Islam. One possible version of the text is *The Meaning of the Holy Quran*. Translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Maryland: Amana Publications. One important effort at creating gender inclusive reading of the Qur'an is *The Sublime Quran* by Dr. Laleh Bakhtiar, see <http://www.sublimequran.org/>

A note on the readings:

Please be aware of some unhelpful markings in the articles and the texts (some people feel necessary to make their opinions visible to others in the library books). Do not accept them without questioning.

A note on US:

We are a community. As a community we will have our differences. As a community we ought to learn how to live/work together. Hence, we should feel comfortable and compelled to learn from each other and to challenge each other's views and opinions. We are to develop our own voices and make them heard by others. Let me know if you think that your voice has been absent or not heard by others. In our community we will learn how not only to assert our voices but more importantly be able to make academic arguments substantiated by evidences. We hope to learn how to convince each other and to persuade each other and not to talk over each other.

Syllabus Statement for Turnitin

This class will be using Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention system. The ease of using the Internet has made it very easy for students to "cut and paste" material into papers that they are writing without proper citation. I will submit all/some/ papers that you write in this class to Turnitin, a service that identifies "matched text." I will then interpret the originality report, based on your writing capability and writing style. In this class, you will also be given the opportunity to submit your own papers to Turnitin to check that all sources you have used are properly acknowledged and cited. Note that all submitted

papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers.

A note on the syllabus: This syllabus is tentative. I reserve a right to adjust it if there is a need to incorporate new readings, presentations, guest speakers, scheduled talks in the departments of Religion, MES program, Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology, and Women's and Gender Studies Department. Check the updated versions of the syllabus on the blackboard when notified.

Academic Integrity Statement: The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort. For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>

If you violate integrity code you will be reported to the appropriate office, will receive will receive an F for that assignment, and may receive F in the course (depending on the offence). The students have a right to appeal.

Disability Statement: Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 304 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary. For further information, see the ODS website, [Office of Disability Services](http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/) <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/>

Your work:

Works in all media produced by students as part of their course participation at SU maybe used by the University for educational purposes. All personal references will be erased. A written permission from the author will be secured.

Required Readings: These texts can be purchased by the students. These are available at both SU bookstores and on-line.

Ahmed, Leila

1992. *Women and Gender in Islam*. New Haven: Yale University Press

Burkhalter-Fluenckiger, Joyce

2006. *In Amma's Healing Room: Gender and Vernacular Islam in South India*. Indiana University Press.

Ouzgane, Lanoucine (ed.)

2006. *Islamic Masculinities*. London and New York: Zed Books

Ruthven, Malise

1997. *Islam: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.

Wadud-Muhsin, Amina

2006. *Inside the Gender Jihad: Women's Reform in Islam*. Oneworld Publications

Readings on the blackboard: These academic articles, book selections, and personal stories will be posted by the instructor on the Blackboard. Also please take notes when you read these selections. These notes will help you to write your papers.

Films (some or all)

Moolaade by Fatoumata Coulibaly.

A Jihad for Love, directed by Parvez Sharma, produced by Sandi DuBowski. I hope the library will have a copy in time for the class.

I exist: voices from the Middle Eastern lesbian & gay community by EyeBite Productions ; produced by Peter Barbosa ; directed by Peter Barbosa & Garrett Lenoir.

Osama. Metro Goldwyn Mayer Home Entertainment, 2004.



Weekly Schedule (may be adjusted as based on the needs and interests of the instructor and the students):

***Week 1: A very short introduction to Islam**

During this first week we hope to get to know each other. You are expected to read M. Ruthven's book (at least 80 pages of it) in order for all of us to be on "the same page" in the class. You are welcome to read a substitute for this book. A couple of other options that come to mind are John Esposito's (2005) "Islam - the Straight Path" by Oxford University Press; T. Sonn (2004) "A Brief History of Islam" by Blackwell Publishers; Abdullah Saeed (2006) "Islamic Thought: An Introduction" by New York: Routledge. If you have some other books in mind please run it by me. But do read those, at least the first 80 pages during this first week. If you do not finish the reading, continue in your free time (some of these books are larger than others, Ruthven's is about 120 pages). It is important for you to gain some background in Islam through reading these texts, however problematic these texts are, as they do not reflect the complexity of everyday lives of Muslims. I recommend you look through <http://www.uga.edu/islam/primsourcisl.html> (accessed 8/13/08). For those interested in what Muslims think about political/social/economic realms of their existence and their dreams and plans for the future, I recommend J. Esposito and D. Mogahed's last book **Who Speaks For Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think**. You can find it on Amazon.com. I also encourage keeping an intro book handy, in case you need a reference while doing your weekly readings.

The first meeting (W) we will talk about the syllabus.

The second one (F) I will give a brief lecture about Islam.

This week I would like you to reflect upon your existing knowledge about Islam, and gender. Why are you taking this class? What are your expectations/goals in this class? How do you define gender? What do you know about Islam?

*** Week 2: A very short introduction to Islam and to the concept of gender**

This week you should finish reading Ruthven's book (or its substitute), including the appendix. Please read Johnson's and Mernissi's articles in the Weekly Readings/Week 2 (every other week contains information about the readings and the articles/external links

that you need to read for the week in addition to your texts). On W we will continue talking about Islam, on F about gender (approaches to studying gender such as textual (theological), and historical, anthropological and theories about gender: evolutionism, psychological, materialistic, structuralism, discourse analysis/sociolinguistics, reflexivity.)

Questions to consider for an in-class discussion and your response paper 1 (due the 5th midnight): Please, tell us what did you learn about Islam and gender from this week's readings (although Johnson's reading is not about Muslim communities it should provide you with some food for thought). What do you think about the material and arguments put forth by the writers? Substantiate your opinions.

***Week 3: A very short introduction to issues of representation and issues of gender in Muslim communities**

Representations, interpretations and issues: This week has several interesting readings. Let me know if they feel too overwhelming. One scholar talks about issues of gender in Muslim communities in Iran and larger context, while another is critical of multiple strategic inaccurate and ultimately political (mis)representations of Islam and Muslim communities (as the Other) in the mass media and academia. Yet another scholar is questioning our need (the need of "the West") to save Muslim women in "the East" (or the Orient as E. Said argues). Please read a brief intro to Ouzgane's edited book, which brings to light the "disappearance of men" in the studies of gender in Muslim communities.

On W we will talk about Western representation of gender roles in Muslim communities. On F we will talk about the assumptions that guide some of the research on gender, particularly the research about Muslim men and women. The readings include:

Said <http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/Orientalism.html>;

<http://www.thenation.com/doc/19960812/said>;

<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20011022/said>;

Mir-Hosseini, pp. 3-7, Ouzgane, pp. 1-7, Abu-Lughod;

Kolhatkar <http://www.zmag.org/content/Gender/kolhatkarwomen.cfm>; and Ouzgane Intro.

Please submit your project's question on W (9/10).

Questions to consider for an in-class discussion and your response paper 2 (due 12th midnight): What are some of the uncomfortable/discomforting/disturbing aspects of representations of gender relations in Muslim communities from your standpoint? Are these representations innocent/ignorant or are they strategic (as means used to achieve certain ends)? Feel free to bring the examples from current news coverage/cinema/art.

***Week 4: Some history of gender ideology in (and from within) Muslim communities**

Please begin reading L. Ahmed's book (has to be purchased by you at the Follett's bookstore or any other online or actual store). It is truly a ground breaking work. Not everyone agrees with Ahmed's argument and some find her treatment of history of Muslim communities (prior to the event of Islam and after) to be problematic but she is one of the first feminist and Muslim and not Muslim scholars who are able to critically

assess history, politics and ideology that both inform and are informed by the gendered lives of Muslim men and women. I expect you to cover about 80 – 100 pages this week.

W and F meetings we will discuss Ahmed's book and see a short interview with the scholar.

Questions to consider for an in-class discussion and your response paper 3: What have you learned about a history of patriarchy in Muslim communities and compare it to the history of patriarchy in your/our own communities (you can think historically [the US or Europe] as well as situationally [your personal life])? How would you define patriarchy? Does it affect women only?

***Week 5: History of gender continued: Gender and Power**

Please continue reading Ahmed's book. You should be able to cover chapters 7,8,9. Mernissi's article talks about the context of interpretation of other authoritative sources in Islam – the Hadith. W – we will continue discussing Ahmed's book and I will give a short lecture on Islamic Feminism. On F we will talk more in detail about historical interpretations of authoritative texts in Muslim communities.

Questions to consider for an in-class discussion and your response paper 4: Who is power? Who has it and who does not? Does it “change hands” and under what conditions? What is Islamic feminism? What do you think about the veil (such a tired subject in my opinion, but...): what does it have to do with politics and power in Muslim communities? How is power distributed in a Muslim community along gender lines (does the power distribution have one absolute model/pattern for everyone)? What does your author think? What do you think? What is the role of the larger political and historic context in defining gender roles in a Muslim community (e.g. Egypt or Turkey)?

***Week 6: Can men understand women and their experiences and vice versa?**

Please read a very famous French philosopher L. Irigaray and the application of her work by Abdal Hakim Murad to a discussion of gender roles in Muslim communities. Should women be/lead/achieve separate consciousness from men? Are we (men and women) different and to what extent (remember we are yet to question what constitutes “male” or “female”)? Does Murad succeed in his argument on both levels – to be able to talk about and for women, and to advocate for “equal but separate” lives? Also read Chapter 4 from Ouzgane's book (*Islamic Masculinities*). This chapter is written by Najat Rahman and provides in insight into symbolic and mythological heritage of masculinity in some Muslim communities.

Questions to consider for an in-class discussion and your response: Do you find Murad's argument pervasive? Why or why not? Do you think men can understand and speak about women's experiences? Are we that different? Do we need to dwell on this difference? Should we prefer homo-sociality (men among men, women among women) to hetero-sociality (men with women)?

***Week 7: Gender and politics. Politics of sexuality or sexuality as politics**

Gender is political in the sense that all human societies are ordered according to certain patterns of appropriate gendered behavior and gendered power relations. Gender politics comprises the ongoing construction of the social gender relations within which individuals and groups act (or encouraged to act) in all spheres of social life in all human

communities. Many actors are engaged in gender politics. Among these are individuals, the state, various international actors, and social movements. Please read from Ouzgane's book chapter 3 (pp. 57-68), chapter 6 (pp. 105-120), chapter 7 (pp. 123-138), and Northrop (also read Sahadeo/Zanca which will provide you with the context of Northrop's piece) on the blackboard this week.

Questions to consider for an in-class discussion and your response paper 6: Why such diverse representations of the Prophet's sexuality? Why was/is it important to talk about the Prophet's virility in these various ways? What is political about sexuality and the way it is talked about within and represented outside of Muslim communities? How and in what sense gender is political (what was its utility in the Soviet restructuring of Central Asia)?

***Week 8: Gender and Politics (cont.): "Politics as usual" and "politics in unusual places"**

This week's readings continue tracing the relationships between gender and politics in Muslim communities and on a global level. They look at the intersection of the State's politics, international politics, and interpersonal politics – how one expresses oneself in relation to the others, how one understands one's place in a community/society, how one negotiates social expectations and personal aspirations. Additionally, intensification in migration brought about contemporary stage of globalization also creates opportunities for re-envisioning of gender relations (in both conservative and non-conservative terms). Please read Uehling piece on Tajikistan: chapter 8 (pp. 145-148) from Ouzgane's book, and Charsley's article about unhappy husbands.

W movie *Moolaade*

F – in-class discussion: What does gender work have to do with politics?

Your midterm annotated bibliography is due October 15th.

***Week 9: Gender and Violence**

This week I urge you to think about contemporary events around the world. I urge you to think "in-depth" about some of the factors that generate gendered violence and motivate its actors. Please read Ouzgane's book chapter 9 (pp. 161-181), chapter 10 (pp. 184 - 199), Bosse's article ("Crossing the river Drina"), Enloe's article and Peteet's article. This week you have plenty of reading. It is very dense. Take your time and if you have questions please ask me. This week we will have a lecture by the instructor on **W** and a movie (*Osama*) on **F**. We hope to have a discussion both on **W** and during the next week's meetings.

***Week 10: Sexuality and desire**

Sexuality has an ambivalent position in the writings about Muslim communities. It is praised in the context of heterosexual marriage (whether monogamous or polygynous [multiple wives]), but it (sexuality) has to be controlled and restricted outside of this social institution (marriage). Homoerotic love, however, is a part and parcel of both production of discourse (how sexuality is talked about) and practice (enacted, inhabited) in Muslim communities. A couple of examples from your readings are (1) plentiful Sufi writings about various forms of love and (2) an unspoken love (both physical and spiritual) within homo-social gatherings in Iran (Qajar period). In this section we will push the topic even further by considering not only empirical examples and also theoretical approaches to gender, sex, and sexuality. One example of this week's readings

-- Butler's (a very famous social theorist) treatment of gender as socially constructed and not anchored by sex – encourages us to further consider gender as an apparatus of production of sex (see Wood's piece, p. 20). Hence, there can be not only male women and female men but also any number of genders, i.e. "if gender is a socio-cultural construction then biology does not dictate the number or nature of genders" (Wood, 20). What are the implications of such theories in the studies and understandings of sexuality and genders (multiple) in the contexts of Muslims' everyday lives? What do politics on the state and international levels have to do with one's sexuality? How do historical transformations affect moral assessment of one's sexuality? How are the notions of what is permitted/prohibited – regimes of moral truth - influenced by politics on local and international levels? What is the role of the State in one's bed and in defining one's desires? And finally, what are the active actors in writing the history of sexuality within particular Muslim communities?

Readings: Najmabadi, Wood, Al-Nafzawi

W - discussion about gender and violence.

F – discussion about sexuality and desire. **Questions to consider: What are other important issues that are rarely get attention when we focus on the veil in regard to Muslim communities? What is "sex trouble"?**

Questions to consider for an in-class discussion and your response paper 7: Please, think about everyday lives and experiences of individuals in Muslim communities (and others) of imperial militarism perpetuated by certain States (their own or external)? What are some of the unexpected intersections of religion, violence, and gender?

***Week 11: Third gender/middle gender**

It is said that the Qur'an generally disdains homosexual relationships (e.g. speaking about males in particular in the verses about the people of Lot, see Q 7:81, 26:165-166, 27:55, 29:28-29). But the Qur'an does not prohibit using passive sex partners (the men who have a lack of arousal towards women has considered to be "natural eunuchs" see Q 24:31). Hadith (traditions [sayings, practices] of the Prophet and his close companions) also talk about "effeminate" men. The Qur'an mentions only the unjust homosexual rape perpetrated by straight men against other straight men (Q 12:20). There are also numerous references to the *ghilmaan* (some translate this word as "youth" or "boys") in paradise. There is, in general, no reference to sexual relations among women in the Qur'an. Indeed, there is a lack of discussion about the discourse and practices of female-female love in the context of both historical and geographical Muslim communities. Whether it is considered a sensitive subject, or it is the dominance of "his-story" (focus on the male subject) in the research on gender, sex and sexuality – we cannot say for sure. It is probably a combination of both. This week's readings attempt to raise these and other questions and provide some answers. Yet, I want you to remember, it is but a glimpse in the complex subject of sexuality, sex, and regimes of gender relationships as inhabited by Muslims (both historically and contemporary). **While doing this week's readings please continue to think about how larger politics inform/influence/transform politics of sexuality? Do we have a universal language to talk about one's desires and sexual practices? What does God have to do with one's desires, sexual preferences, and communal life?**

Wikan (pp. 168-189); Murray and Roscoe selections from "Islamic homosexualities," Ouzgane (pp. 202-214); Boellstroff, Massad, Malik, and Safra Project <http://www.safraproject.org/about.htm>

One of the meetings a film: *A Jihad for Love* or *I Exist*

Questions to consider for an in-class discussion and your response paper 8: While reflecting on the readings, share with us what you think about the concept of “third/middle gender”? What are personal experiences with sexual difference? What are the relations between doctrinal dogmas and actual practices? What are some of the problems with the concept of gender? Is it capable of accommodating individual differences? What are the relations between religion, sexuality, and gender roles? What are your thoughts and experiences in regard to these issues?

***Week 12:** Case study. This and next week we will be reading an ethnography that will exemplify some of the topics discussed in the class and a general complexity of gender work in Muslim communities. Please read *In Amma’s room* pp. xi – 63, 107-167

Discussion on W.

Pr. Sue Wadley’s presentation on multiculturalism in India on F (the 14th).

***Week 13:** *In Amma’s room* pp. 168-249 (ch.5,6, conclusions and the epilogue)

Islam, globalization, and gender work written onto and by the lives of individual actors. There will be a brief lecture on W with a follow-up discussion of F.

Questions to consider for an in-class discussion and your response paper 9: While using this ethnography as a case study, consider the following questions: How does a larger field of the state and global politics affect politics in unusual places such as interrelations between men and women in South Asia? While reflecting on the readings, think about what role does the context (socio-cultural, political, economic) play in re-definition/transformation of gender relations (larger politics’ influence on gender politicking)? Are gender roles static or dynamic? Do they change? What are some of the factors that affect change? Is there a gender dynamic between Amma and Abba?

***Week 14:** Thanksgiving

*** Week 15: W meeting only: Responses to Patriarchy and Militarism: Muslim women and men struggling for agency and equality/equity**

Please, while reading, think about the role of an individual in the transformation of discourse about gender (both religious and secular). Muslim men and women produce various responses to patriarchy and militarism so blatantly promoted on everyday basis by their local and our global elites. Please read some of the examples. You can use these in your final paper. Muslim men and women as much as non-Muslim men and women are not passive observers or victims in the contemporary global and local political environments. They are very active agents in the process of identifying problems and defining their everyday lives on their own terms. The readings for this week include:

Esack’s chapter (an example of struggling for agency in the field of gender politics by a Muslim man); M. Badran’s article <http://www.countercurrents.org/gen-badran100206.htm> (builds on her previous article in *Al-Ahram*); M. Badran’s article on Islamic feminism in *Al-Ahram* weekly; and Amina Wadud’s chapter (one example of doing Islamic Feminism).

Discussion

Final Response paper 10 – what have we learned?

Your final paper is due 12/9 from 2:45 to 4:45 in room 501 Hall of Languages (be sure someone signs on it). Please post it in the final paper forum under the discussion board, under the “final paper” forum.