RUTGERS UNIVERSITY NEWARK DEPARTMENT OF AFRICANA STUDIES

Comparative Slavery in the Middle East and Africa

Spring 2024
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Office Hours: MW 2:00 pm-3:00 pm
Comparative Slavery is an upper-level discussion-oriented course that challenges the singular narrative that has posed slavery as a “peculiar institution” exclusively derived from the Trans-Atlantic experience. Focusing mostly on the Middle East, Africa and the Indian Ocean, the course examines the history of slavery with its particularities pertaining to different regions and social contexts and in conversation with the Transatlantic model. Topics of discussion include forms of male and female slavery, slave trade in Africans and Circassians in the Ottoman empire; the manumission practices and ex-slaves’ lives afterwards; also, the complex relation between gender, race and religion. It will combine the methodologies of political, social, and cultural histories of Middle East and Africa together. Along with works from historians of both regions, close reading on primary sources will also accompany each week’s theme.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION is mandatory and only 3 excused (documented) absences are allowed before grade is affected. Your success in this class will depend on your preparation and participation in class discussion. Class work cannot be made up – it depends on being in class. Recognized grounds for absence are illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions. Following Rutgers policy, any student who misses eight or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

➔Use of electronic devices during lecture and class discussion is prohibited.

➔No student may record the class in any fashion unless they have written permission from the teacher and the recording device is visible to everyone in the classroom.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Response papers for 5 weeks:** Students will choose 5 weeks out of 15 and write a 1-1,5 double space reflection paper in which they critically examine the themes, concepts and
author’s approach to the topic in the readings and raise a question (or more) to be discussed in the class.

2. **Midterm examination**: In person written exam

3. **Final Paper/Project Presentation**: In a 15 minute- presentation, each student will present the theme of their projects as well as the methodology and sources that they will use for them.

4. **Final paper/ Project**: will be done in stages. You will have an option to do a written paper or a Multimedia project (could be digital humanities project, as well) on a topic that was covered in the class relating to slavery, legacy of slavery, emancipation in the Middle East, North African and East Africa with professor’s approval. Up Until the Spring Break, you should select a topic for your project. Each student will have a meeting with the professor about the topic, thesis and bibliography that the student decides and will use in the paper/project between March 25 and April 3. The week of April 29 will be reserved for presenting your project and discussing it with class. You will incorporate these final comments and submit the final paper/project through Blackboard due on May 14.

Written assignments will be graded based on content and accuracy, evidence used to support the analysis and interpretation, grammar, spelling, punctuation, clarity of thinking and writing, organization, and presentation. Paper grading rubric is available on Blackboard.

You are strongly encouraged to make an appointment at the Writing Center:

https://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter, and receive help with completing your writing assignments.

**GRADING**

Attendance & Participation: %15

Response papers for 4 weeks: %20

Book Review: %25

Final Paper/project presentation: %10

Final paper and/or project: %30
90-100 % A (outstanding)
80-89 % B (above average)
70-79 % C (comprehension at an appropriate university level)
60-69 % D (unsatisfactory, barely passing)
Below 60% F (failure)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Principles of academic integrity require that Rutgers University students:
• properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others
• properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work
• make sure that all work submitted as his or her own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of unsanctioned materials or unsanctioned collaboration
• obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions
• treat all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress
• uphold the canons of the ethical or professional code of the profession for which he or she is preparing.

Read entire policy: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/

Please note in this matter, ignorance is never an acceptable excuse.
DISABILITY SERVICES

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentationguidelines.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form. For more information please contact the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219, by phone at 973-353-5375 or by email at odsnewark@newark.rutgers.edu.

SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Rutgers faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. Rutgers has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The University strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the University. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to Policy 10.3.12) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the University’s Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak with a staff member who is confidential and does not have this reporting responsibility, you may contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at (973)-353-1918, or at run.vpva@rutgers.edu. Learn more about the office here: http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/vpva
All other readings are available on Blackboard and marked with asterisk.*

Syllabus is subject to change. The most updated version is on Blackboard.

Required texts

**THE SLAVE YARDS: A NOVEL**
by Najwa Bin Shatwan, Nancy Roberts (Translator)

*Black Morocco: a history of slavery, race, and Islam.* Chouki El-Hamel. New York :
Cambridge University Press, 2013

*Slaves of one master: Globalization and Slavery in Arabia in the Age of Empire,* Matthew Hopper

**WEEKLY CLASS PLAN**

Week 1: January 17---

Introduction to the course

Syllabus

Study of Slavery

Week 2: January 22---- *Introduction: Study of Slavery (Theoretical questions)*

Patterson, Orlando, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study.* Cambridge, Mass.:

(additional excerpts in class)


January 24

Gomez, Michael Angelo, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African*
**Week 3: Study of Slavery II (Methodologies for the history of slavery in Non-Western World)**

**January 29**


**January 31**

Ehud R. Toledano, ‘Ottoman and Islamic Societies. Were They “Slave Societies”?’, in Noel Lenski and Catherine M. Cameron (eds), *What is a Slave Society? The Practice of Slavery in Global Perspective* (Cambridge, 2018), 360-82.

Ceyda Karamursel, “Ottoman slavery as a tool for historical analysis: A review of recent literature” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 193-203

**Additional:**

Alison Frank, *The Children of the Desert and the Laws of the Sea: Austria, Great Britain, the Ottoman Empire, and the Mediterranean Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century*  

Ehud Toledano, *As if silent and absent: bonds of enslavement in the Islamic Middle East*  

**Islamic Law and Slavery**

**Week 4: February 5**

February 7


Enslavement practices in question

Week 5: Military administrative- Elite slavery

February 12


February 14


Week 6: Feminizing Slavery: The imperial harem

February 19*


**February 21**

Seteney Shami. “Prehistories of Globalization: Circassian Identity in Motion” *Public Culture*, Volume 12, Number 1, Winter 2000, pp. 177-204


**Week 7: Feminizing Slavery II**

**February 26**


**February 28**


**Week 8: Imperial Enslavement: Eunuchs**

**March 4**


**March 6**


Jateen Lad, Black Eunuchs as Guardians of The Topkapi Harem, pp: 136-177

*Spring break*

**Week 10: Slavery on the Nile**

**March 18**


Ahmad, Sikainga, “Slavery and Social Life in nineteenth Century Turco-Egyptian Khartoum,” in *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*, Ch. 6, pp. 147-168

**March 20**

Kim Searcy, “The Sudanese Mahdi’s Attitudes on Slavery and Emancipation”

Eve Troutt Powell, “The Tools of the Master: Slavery, Family, and the Unity of the Nile Valley, (pp. 135-167)

*Book review due*

**Week 11: Abolition**

**March 25**

Suzanne Miers (1997) Britain and the suppression of slavery in Ethiopia, Slavery and Abolition, 18:3, 257-288


- **Guest Lecturer: Lacy Feigh, Princeton University**
March 27

Ismael Musah Montana, The Abolition of Slavery in Ottoman Tunisia (Gainesville, 2013).
[Chapters will be divided among students.]

Week 12: The Indian Ocean world

April 1


April 3

Matthew Hopper, Slaves of one master: Globalization and Slavery in Arabia in the Age of Empire Ch.1&2& 4

Week 13: Life after Enslavement

April 8


Behar, Cem, “End of Empire” Portrait of a Neighborhood Community in the Late Nineteenth Century, pp:131-171

April 1


Nazan Maksudyan, “Foster-Daughter or Servant, Charity or Abuse: Beslemes in the Late Ottoman Empire,” Journal of Historical Sociology Vol. 21 No. 4 December 2008

Week 14: Memory- Narrating Enslavement

April 15
Eve Troutt Powell, *Tell this in my Memory*, Ch. 4


April 17

Ana lucia arajuo, “Slavery and Memory,” in *Slavery in the Age of Memory*, pp 1-13


*In Class: Documentary Baa Baa Black Girl (Arap Kızı Camdan Bıyııyor) directed by* Gül Büyükbeşe Muyan, 2006


Week 15: Legacy

April 22


April 24

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"From Religious Eulogy to War Anthem: Kurdizadeh's "Layla Bigufta" and Blackness in Late Twentieth-Century Iran." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 41, no. 3 (2021): 441-454

**Week 16: Final paper and project presentations**

April 29