Ben-Gurion University of the Negev  
The Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel & Zionism

*The Poetics and Politics of History and Anthropology in Middle Eastern Societies*

016-2-2001

2012-2013

Tuesday, 14:30 pm – 18:00 pm
Sde Boker Campus, The Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel & Zionism

Dr. Kobi Peled
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Office hours and location:
1. Beer Sheva, Main Campus, Building: 72, Room: 601 – Monday 12:00-13:00
2. Sde Boker Campus, Building: Moran, Room: 33 – Tuesday 13:30-14:30

Course Description:
In the first part of this course we will read anthropological studies that are considered to be classics and are highly relevant to understanding Middle Eastern societies. In the second part, we will read historical masterpieces and examine their contribution to our understanding of the Middle East. We will discuss together the methods, theories and problems of both disciplines, and examine their borderlines and points of intersection.

Course Objectives:
The main aim of the course is to provide the necessary theoretical foundations in both disciplines – History and Anthropology – for interpreting Middle Eastern cultures and societies. Another principal objective of this course is to gain experience in critically reading canonical texts – revealing their premises, studying their weak spots, and examining their contribution to our understanding of the cultures of our region.

Course Structure:
The course is divided into two parts (part one – Anthropology, part two – History). In each course meeting there will be a discussion of one major study (+ further reading), based on individual reading.

Total # of Credits:
4

Teaching Method:
The course will be based on individual reading at home and group discussion in class. The students should prepare their weekly assigned readings and come to class with significant questions that stem from the readings.

Course Requirements:
Compulsory attendance – Yes
Pre-requisites – None
**Structure of Final Grade:**
Course grade will be based on class attendance, knowledge of readings and active participation (25%), and on a final paper, or a seminar paper, which will review a major historical or anthropological work that is relevant to the understanding of the modern Middle East.

**Course Schedule Layout:**

**Part 1 – Anthropology**

**Week 1:**
Weekly subject title: Introduction

1. General Introduction

2. Introduction to the History of Anthropology

**Week 2:**
Weekly subject title: Sociological Foundations


**Further reading:**


**Further reading:**

**Week 3:**
Weekly subject title: Urban Sociology


**Further reading:**

**Further reading:**
**Further reading:**  

**Week 4:**  
Weekly subject title: **Functionalism**

**Further reading:**  

**Further Reading:**  

**Week 5:**  
Weekly subject title: **Structuralism**

**Further reading:**  

**Further reading:**  

**Week 6:**  
Weekly subject title: **Cultural Anthropology**

**Further reading:**  

Further reading:

**Week 7:**
Weekly subject title: Critical Anthropology


Further reading:

14. Discussion

Part 2 – History

**Week 8:**
Weekly subject title: Historical Facts


Further reading:


Further reading:

**Week 9:**
Weekly subject title: Metahistories


Further reading:

**Week 10:**
Weekly subject title: Petit-Grand Histories


**Further reading:**


**Further reading:**

**Week 11:**
Weekly subject title: Historical Demystifications


**Further reading:**
Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 47-140.


**Further reading:**

**Week 12:**
Weekly subject title: Telling Fact from Fiction


**Further reading:**


**Further reading:**
Week 13:
Weekly subject title: Deconstructing History

Further reading:

Further reading: