

HIST/ANTH 160

## Arab Cultures and Societies

Fall 2006 Class MWF 11-11:50 Main 302

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Office Hours: TTH 3-5 and by appointment

I. Course Description: This introductory course explores how we learn about another culture and its history by using the example of a cluster of societies and nations that comprise the Arab world. Themes include an introduction to the region, the coming of the Muslim faith, the period of the Crusades, the colonial period and Arab nationalism, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Lebanese civil war and the Iraqi dictatorship. Students will become familiar with the political, economic and social history of some of the major regions of the Arab world. Several films will be shown.

II. Course Goals: While familiarity with the construction of Arab cultural identity is the obvious goal of this course, a more profound goal is to give students confidence that they can begin to get to know any part of the world by interacting with some books, audiovisual materials and reference resources. You will learn that identity is constructed on many planes and often as much by what you are not as by what you are. The course fulfills the non-western gen ed requirement and the History elective of the Humanities Knowledge category.

### III. Method of Evaluation:

Student performance in this course will be based on the average grade of two tests (20% & 10% ) one oral report (10%) and two book projects with essays (20% each). Attendance will also count 20%. Points may be deducted for the late submission of assignments. A missed test may be made up only before the graded tests are returned to the class. The test will be based on class viewed films, lectures, books and assigned maps.

### IV. University Policies:

a. weather policy: In case of bad weather call the UWS weather hot line for information about class cancellations . It is (715) 394-8400.

b. accommodation of religious belief: Please notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester if there are special dates that need accommodation due to your sincerely held religious beliefs.

c. disabilities and special challenges accommodation: materials, readings, testing and evaluations may be modified for students who inform the instructor about their disabilities requirements at the beginning of the semester and register with the office of student services Main 134

### V. Course Policies:

a. attendance: Good attendance is the easiest way to insure that you achieve high marks in any college course. It is very hard, often impossible, to do well with a poor attendance habit. Therefore, attendance will be taken in each class and 10% of your grade will be based on attendance. Students who don't like to attend classes regularly should find a different class. At the same time the instructor recognizes that there are cases of personal illness, bad weather, illness of a family member or other civic or religious responsibilities that can prevent any serious student from attending one class now and then. For this reason a limited number of excused absences are awarded to each student. You do not need to ask for them or excuse an absence or two. You do need to notify the instructor if you would be missing such a significant number of classes as to prevent you from completing the course as scheduled.

The attendance grade will be as follows:

classes attended	grade	classes attended	grade
41	100%	38	92
40	98	37	88
39	95	36	85 etc.

b. plagiarism. Put simply, plagiarism is turning in work that is not your own. It may have been borrowed from the Internet, a book or another student's work. Students may use materials from the Net or books by citing their sources with correct documentation. All undocumented borrowing of others sources will result in an F on the assignment and may result in an F on the course. Use of another student's work, whether from your own or previous classes will usually result in an F on the course . DO NOT PLAGIARIZE.

VI. Text Books: There are five books for this course. They are all written by Arab authors. They are available at the UWS bookshop or could be ordered from the net or through any local bookstore. While you may share the purchase of some of the texts with a classmate, remember that you are responsible for reading all five books at the time they are assigned. If you anticipate needing to purchase the books later in the semester, have the bookshop manager reserve them for you or be prepared to order the book through a commercial bookseller. All of these books are in print and easily available. These books, in the order in which we will read them are:

1. 1998. Chraibi, Driss. *Muhammad: A Novel*. Boulder; Lynne Reinner Publishers. 0-89410-858-1

How does an author of novels from the Muslim world portray the life of the Prophet Muhammad? What aspects of the life of the prophet will be emphasized?

2. 1999. Ali, Tariq. *The Book of Saladin*. Verso. London 1-85984-231-3

An Arab author writes a fictionalized account of the Arab victory over Jerusalem and the resulting 3<sup>rd</sup> Crusade of Richard I and Philip king of France.

3.1997. Idilbi, Ulfat. *Sabriya: Damascus Bitter Sweet*, NY: Interlink Books.1-56656-254-6

A Syrian girl is deeply committed to the nationalist movement in her country. Her boy friend and brother actually fight against the French. Living in these tumultuous times might have new opportunities for women, but old attitudes die hard too. How will the life of Sabriya fare?

4. 1. 1982. Adnan. Etel. *Sitt Marie Rose*. Sausalito: The Post-Apollo Press. 0 942996-13-5

The Lebanese Civil War tore apart a small Arab country that had been called the idyllic Switzerland of the Middle East. Why did this happen and why were western observers caught off guard when it did?

5. 2003. al-Ramli, Muhsin. *Scattered Crumbs*. Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press. 1-55728-750-3

How did Iraqi artists and authors treat the rule of Saddam Hussein? How were non-conformists treated during the war with Iran? A slice of life of modern Iraqi history.

6. ADD: 1998. Said, Edward. *After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives*. NY: Columbia University press 0231114494

#### VII. Weekly Schedule of Reading and Assignments:

Readings should be done according to this schedule or earlier to obtain maximum benefit from the classes:

##### Week of September 6th

Topic: Definitions: Arab, Muslim, Muslim World, Persian, Turk , Arab world, Middle East etc.

purchase books. Class introductions

film: *the Arab World*: Part I Regions and Environment Part II Islam

##### Week of September 11th

Topic: The Religion of Islam and its history

form in class study groups  
begin to read *Muhammad, A Novel* 13-41  
watch *the Message*

Week of September 18th

The life of the Prophet  
Read *Muhammad, A Novel* p. 43-90  
film: *the Message*

Week of September 25th

Read *The Book of Saladin* from p.xiii. to p. 159  
Oral reports on study guide Watch *Saladin*

Week of October 2nd

Read *The Book of Saladin* p. 163-235  
oral reports on the study guide continue to watch *Saladin*

Week of October 9th

finish the novel Read *The Book of Saladin* p. 239-367  
oral reports on the study guide finish the film *Saladin*  
test on definitions, the religion of Islam, the life of the Prophet, and the Crusades  
Friday October 13th

Week of October 16th

read on colonialism *Sabriya* –p.74  
film: *A Voice Like Egypt's*

Week of October 23

read *Sabriya* 75-110  
Film: *Palestine 1890's-1990's*

Week of October 30th

finish *Sabriya* 110-186  
Paper #1 on colonialism, nationalism and pan-Arabism: due in class November 3rd  
Write 3-4 pages on this question:

**Using the novel *Sabriya* and the films: *A Voice like Egypt*, and *Palestine 1890's-1990's* what have you learned about colonialism, nationalism, and pan-Arabism in the Arab world?** Refer to specific incidents in the films or page numbers in the book to prove your points. Be sure to write an introduction to the question and a conclusion to it that summarizes your major points. Attach the study guides to the films and the novel to the paper and hand them all in together.

watch film: *Lebanon* in preparation for next week's work:

Week of November 6th

read *Sitt Marie Rose* p.1- 40

and handouts on Etel Adnan and Hala Salaam Maksoud

Week of November 13th

Finish reading *Sitt Marie Rose* p.43-76

handout of Elizabeth and Robert Fernea

watch film: *Children of Shatila*

Week of November 20<sup>th</sup>

finish reading *Sitt Marie Rose* 79-105

Week of November 27th

Hand in paper # 2 on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November on the question:

Write 3-4 pages on: **How does your study of *Sitt Marie Rose* challenge your assumptions of “Arab” identity- in the life of its author, the characters and events of the story and the history of the country in which it is set?** Refer to ideas or citations from the handouts and novel by page numbers (ie. SMR p.45, HM p.2, EA p. 3). [hints: How is your idea of Arab identity now more refined, more nuanced. If the Lebanese are all Arabs, how did a civil war take place? How were Palestinians involved? ]. Be sure to write an introduction to the question and a summary conclusion . Attach the study guides to the novel, the films and the handouts and hand in the paper by Nov. 29th

also

read *Scattered Crumbs* p.3-43

Week of December 4<sup>th</sup>

*Scattered Crumbs* p.43-79

Week of December 11<sup>th</sup>

finish *Scattered Crumbs* p.79-126

test on Iraq and *Scattered Crumbs* December 15<sup>th</sup> in class

do the course evaluation

get the test back in the examination period for the course:

December 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:30-11:30 from Sundquist 221

Author please?

I Am the Israeli

I am the focus of Palestinian fury  
I caused the Palestinian Diaspora and the exile  
I refuse to provide Palestinian travel documents  
And I deny the owners of the land I stole,  
Rightful possession of an ID card.

I imprison Palestinians without trial  
I beat and torture them  
I fear their anger, but envy their freedom  
For I am a slave of my passions.  
Though I am their jailer

They enjoy more liberty than me,  
For their minds are free  
From the oppression I inflict on their bodies.

I am the one who detains Palestinians  
Without their consent, in the absence  
Of a trial by law.

I am the Israeli soldier  
Shooting live bullets  
Into the hearts of my enemies.

Though I kill their children  
Demolish their houses,  
And deport them,  
I envy their valiance, their spirit,  
Their resilience against my brutality.

I perpetrated the massacres=20  
at=20  
Deir Yassin,  
Sabra and Shatella,  
Tel el-Za'ter  
Al-Aqsa and El-Haram El-Ibrahimi,  
Yet, they rise out of their own ashes  
Like the Phoenix bird and carry forward  
Their banners of courage Through their blood-stained streets.

I am the Zionist officer  
Slapping young Palestinian men across their faces  
I humiliate them at every crossroad,  
Every bypass, and every checkpoint  
But no matter how hard I try,  
I cannot take their identity away from them,  
Yet my own identity  
Slowly slips away into oblivion.

The incessant memory returning,  
The Palestinian of 48  
The Palestinian of 67  
The Palestinian of 98  
And the latest model of 2001,  
Haunt me.

I am the Occupier  
And the haunting insomnia is mine alone.

I am the reason for the Intifada.

My armor bears the brunt of five hundred thousand  
Rocks hurled at me  
I quickly retaliate by shooting to kill  
The Gentile children,  
The infant Palestinian Davids.

I hear the Palestinian Dabkeh  
The wedding bells of newlyweds  
And I envy my enemies their  
Moments of silent dignified joy.

I am the cause of the endless funeral processions  
Of the Lion's sons, Palestinian Shibels.  
I am Pontius Pilate and Herod in one,  
Palestinian blood drips from my hands  
Its indelible red remains stamped  
Upon my memory forever.

I am Judas and every day is The Last Supper  
For those I lead to the slaughter.  
I am the Israeli fearing God's wrath  
And the reincarnation of Sodom and Gomorrah.

I am the new Hitler  
Out to slay the innocent  
All the while, losing my own humanity.  
I dwell in a state of perpetual denial of my own hideous Crimes  
And refuse to recognize my savagery, my own brutality.

I am the Israeli settler dancing around  
The dying young Palestinian I dragged  
Through the streets,  
I passed out candy  
And mutilated his body  
Even before his heart stopped beating,  
But I sold my soul to the devil in the process.

I am the cause of the Palestinian Holocaust.  
I have rewritten history so many times, I no longer know the truth,  
And I have hung so many heroes that I have lost count.  
And though I feign superiority  
Over all non-Jews,  
I am not proud of what I am  
Or what I've done.  
I am the Israeli

It is easier for the world to accept a simple lie than a complex =  
truth----Alexis de Tocqueville=20

WITH OCCUPATION THERE CAN NEVER BE PEACE...EVER