

**Department of Anthropology**

**ANTH 2219F-001**

**Cultures of the Middle East**

**Course Outline**

**Fall 2016**

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**Class time:** Thursdays 2:30 pm - 5:30 pm

**Room location:** UCC 58

**Instructor:** Dr. Randa Farah

**Office:** SSC 3423

**Email:** rfarah2@uwo.ca

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 1:00pm – 3:00pm

**TA:** Abdulla Majeed

**Office:** SSC 3417

**Email:** amajeed4@uwo.ca

**Office hours:** Thursdays 12:30pm– 2:30pm

**Credit Value: 0.5**

**Prerequisite(s):** Any Arts and Humanities or Social Science 0.5 or 1.0 essay course.

*Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.*

The "Middle East", also known as the "cradle of civilization", is a vast and heterogeneous region with rich and complex histories, and changing political, social and cultural formations. Sumerian, Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian, Phoenician, Persian, Greek, Roman/Byzantine are but a few of the civilizations that rose and fell in the region. Moving forward to later centuries and beginning in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, a large Arab-Islamic Empire arose and made significant contributions and advancements in various fields of knowledge; it lasted several centuries and when it collapsed, most of the region was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century European powers colonized the region. Although anti-colonial Arab liberation struggles succeeded in gaining formal independence, imperial domination continued, mainly by Britain and France and after WWII by the US, which led to political tutelage and socioeconomic deterioration. Undoubtedly, powerful states continue to vie for the control of the region due to its geo-strategic location at the intersection of three continents, and its rich resources especially oil and gas. Palestine is a special case, as the process of colonization of the land and the displacement of the indigenous people continue unabated. This is the general context within which societies and cultural formations have emerged and changed, and continue to do so. Yet, in western societies, stereotypical images based on an Orientalist tradition persist, that is, explanations and analyses assume there are inherent and unchanging cultural features in Arab societies. These societies are in fact quite diverse in their cultural, religious, political, economic, etc. configurations and backgrounds. The course aims to challenge these assumptions and to situate Arab and Muslim societies within the global and historical changes. The topics we examine include: a) a historical overview which covers a quick review of societies in the MENA region before the 7th century, the rise of Islam, the Andalusian period, and the colonial era and its legacies with a focus on Palestine, Algeria, Iraq and Western Sahara as case studies. b) Orientalism as the paradigm through which much of the knowledge in the 'West' about the 'East' has been produced. c) Gender issues including the western obsession with Arab and Muslim women's bodies and veiling. d) Popular culture and the media, looking at contemporary art and music as expressions of everyday life, as well as of resistance and political and social transformations. Through lectures, readings, films, group presentations and discussions, the course will help students engage critically in academic and current public debates.

## Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Examine, situate and connect social and cultural phenomena pertaining to Arab and Islamic societies within larger historical and political contexts.
- List a number of contributions and discoveries in science, philosophy, medicine, mathematics and other kinds of knowledge made by Arabs and Muslims to European civilization.
- Distinguish between popular clichés, propaganda and stereotypes on the one hand, and scholarly knowledge and analytical approaches on the other.
- Define 'Orientalism' and how knowledge production about the 'East' is intricately linked to power: to imperial and colonial projects of domination.
- Apply scholarly approaches to analyze contemporary and publicly debated issues, such as the question of women's veiling, and the current instability in the region.
- Identify some of the contemporary popular cultural trends.

*All students are responsible for attending class for information in case of minor modifications to the outline, which are mostly related to dates of films or presentations. Such modifications, however, will not include any changes to the nature of assignments, or the weight of each. Please regularly check course website for updates, notices and relevant materials.*

## PART I- HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

**Week 1 Sept 8** Introduction to the course. Mapping the Region: Pre-Islamic Arabia

**Week 2 Sept 15** The Rise and Fall of the Arab-Islamic Empire

### Readings

Hourani, Albert. 1991. *History of the Arab Peoples*. Faber and Faber: London. Chapter 1: A New Power in an Old World. pp. 7-22.

Gelvin, James L. 2005. *The Modern Middle East: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 1: From Late Antiquity to the Dawn of a New Age, pp. 13-24, and Chapter 2: Gunpowder Empires: pp. 25-32.

Hitti, Philip. 1961. *History of the Arabs*. Macmillan & Co: New York. Chapter L: Arab Lands as Turkish/Ottoman Provinces. pp. 709-719.

**Week 3 Sept 22** The Andalusian Period in the Iberian Peninsula.

**Documentary:** *When the Moors Ruled Europe* (1 hour 40 min)

### Readings

Hourani, Albert. 1991 *History of the Arab Peoples*. Faber and Faber: London Chapter 12: The Culture of Courts and People, pp.189-205

Lockman, Zachary. 2010. *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1: In the Beginning (pp. 31-37).

Al-Hassani, Salim T.S. (Chief Editor), 2006. 1001 Inventions: Muslim Heritage in Our World. Manchester, UK. Vision and Cameras: 26-29; Sound System: 34- 37; House of Wisdom: 46-48; Universities: pages 54 – 59; Mathematics 64-67; Chemistry: 72-75; Surgery 164-168; Astronomy 282-285.

## **PART II COLONIAL LEGACIES**

### **Week 4 Sept 29** The Colonial Period - Palestine

#### **Readings**

Abu Lughod, Lila and Ahmad Sa'di, eds. 2007. *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory*. New York: Columbia University. Introduction: The Claims of Memory. pp. 1-23

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 2007. "Return to Half Ruins: Memory, Postmemory, and Living in Ahmad H. Sa'di and Lila Abu Lughod, eds. *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory*. New York: Columbia University, pp. 77-104.

### **Week 5 Oct 6** The Colonial Period - Palestine (**Presentation 1**)

**Documentary:** *Occupation 101* (1 hour 30 min).

#### **Readings**

Collins, John. 2010. Between Acceleration and Occupation: Palestine and the Struggle for Global Justice *Studies in Social Justice*. 4 (2): 199-215.

### **Week 6 Oct 13** The Colonial Period -1) Algeria 2) Western Sahara (includes instructor's fieldwork material and photos). **MIDTERM EXAM 90 minutes**

#### **Readings**

Bennoune, M. 1988. *The Making of Contemporary Algeria, 1830-1987*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 35-51

Lippert, Anne. 1987. "The Sahrawi Refugees: Origins and Organization, 1975-85," in *War and Refugees: The Western Sahara Conflict*, Richard Lawless and Laila Monahan (eds.), London and New York: Pinter Publishers. pp. 150-166.

### **Week 7 Oct 20** The Colonial Period - Iraq. **Presentation 2**

**Documentary:** *The Unreturned* (50 min) and excerpts from *About Baghdad* (15 min)

#### **Readings**

James, Gelvin. *The Modern Middle East: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 17: The United States and the Middle East, pp. 226-282.

Shohat, Ella. 2014. Remembering A Baghdad Elsewhere: An Emotional Cartography. *Biography* 37.3 (Summer 2014): 784-790.

Ismael, Jacqueline S. and Shereen T. Ismael. 2007. "Iraqi Women Under Occupation: From Tribalism to Neo-Feudalism", *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies*, 1 (2): 247-267.

**Optional Reading:** Attiyah, Ghassan. 1973. Iraq 1908 - 1921 a Socio-Political Study. Beirut: The Arab Institute for Research and Publishing. Chapter 3: British Policy in Iraq Before 1914 (pp. 71-79) and Chapter 5: British Plans for the Future of Iraq (pp. 151-168).

**Week 8 Oct 27 FALL STUDY BREAK - NO CLASS**

### **PART III ORIENTALISM**

**Week 9 Nov 3 Orientalism. Presentation 3, Presentation 4**

**Guest Presentation:** Kristin Hoffmann (Western Libraries)

**Documentary:** *Orientalism* (40 min)

#### **Readings**

Said, Edward. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books. Read pp. 1-31.

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 2002. "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others," *American Anthropologist* 104: 3, pp. 783-790.

Zine, Jasmin. 2006. Unveiled Sentiments: Gendered Islamophobia and Experiences of Veiling among Muslim Girls in a Canadian Islamic School. *Equity & Excellence in Education* 39(3) (pp. 239-252).

**Week 10 Nov 10 EXAM 2 (2 hours)**

### **PART IV Popular Culture: Rai, Rap, Art and Graffiti**

**Week 11 Nov 17 (NO CLASS)** Popular Culture, Poetry and Music: **Out of Class Assignment**

**Documentary:** Reel Bad Arabs (50 min): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKD3CnPJNOE>

**Readings: Students enter commentary on the two readings and documentary for this week on the Forum (OWL).**

Gross, John; David McMurray and Ted Swedenburg. 1992. "Rai, Rap, and Ramadan Nights: Franco-Maghribi Cultural Identities," *Middle East Report*. No.178, (Sept. – Oct. 1992).

Maira, Sunaina and Magid Shihade. 2012. Hip Hop from '48 Palestine: Youth, Music, and the Present/Absent. *Social Text* . 30 (3) 112: 1-26.

**Week 12 Nov 24** Popular Culture: Art and Music expressions of resistance and experiences of war and displacement: **Presentation 5, Presentation 6**

Swedenburg, Ted. 2004. "The "Arab Wave" in World Music after 9/11". *Anthropologica*, 46 (2):177-188.

de Ruiter, Adrienne. 2015. Imaging Egypt's political transition in (post-)revolutionary street art: on the interrelations between social media and graffiti as media of communication. *Media, Culture & Society*, 37 (4): 581-601.

**Week 13 Dec 1** A short in-class written commentary on readings from week 11 - 13.

**Essay Submission**

<b>EVALUATION</b>		<b>DATE</b>
Midterm Exam	20%	Oct 13
Exam #2	30%	Nov 10
Out-of-class Assignment	5%	Nov 17
Group Presentations	10%	TBA
Term Paper Submission	30%	Dec 1
<u>In-class paper</u>	5%	<u>Dec 1</u>
Total		

**Note: Regularly Check Class Website for Updates and Information.**

### **Electronic Devices**

Only laptops to take notes are allowed. Please make sure all phones and other devices are turned off.

## **ASSIGNMENTS IN DETAIL**

**No electronic devices** will be allowed in the classroom during tests and examinations.

### **Attendance!!**

An attendance sheet will be circulated every week. Only brief lecture outlines will be posted on the website, thus attendance is critical. It is important that you attend every class, **especially the last three weeks of the term**. You are expected to read the assigned material and engage in class discussions. **If you miss more than 4 classes without a note from Academic Counseling justifying your absence 2% of your final course grade will be deducted, if you miss 6 or more classes without the required note from the Academic Counseling Office, 6% of your final grade will be deducted.** The instructor will reserve the right to give a bonus point (1% added to final course grade) for students who never miss class and regularly participate in discussions.

### **Out-of-Class Assignment**

November 17 the Instructor and TA will be away at a conference. But that only means you have some work to do at home: read the articles and watch the documentary assigned for that week and submit a critical commentary of 200-250 words on the **readings** and on the **documentary**. The readings are 1) Gross, John; David McMurray and Ted Swedenburg. 1992. "Rai, Rap, and Ramadan Nights: Franco-Maghribi Cultural Identities," **AND** 2) Maira, Sunaina and Magid Shihade. 2012. Hip Hop from '48 Palestine: Youth, Music, and the Present/Absent.

### **Midterm**

The midterm covers lectures, readings and documentaries from weeks 1-5 (week 5 readings, lectures or documentary are included on the midterm).

### **Exam 2**

The exam covers lectures, readings and documentaries from weeks 6 – 9, and will draw from general knowledge acquired throughout the course.

### **Format**

Includes some or all of the following: multiple choice, true and false, definitions, fill-in-the-blanks, short and long answers.

## Group Presentations

Presentation Topics, Dates and Names: These will be assigned at the beginning of the term, check class website for updates.

Duration: The presentations should be *no more than* 30 minutes: **20 minutes for the presentation and 10 minutes for discussion**. Prepare two questions to generate discussion after the presentation. Practice the presentation as a group to make sure it is within the time allocated. Please ensure fair distribution of tasks. Think creatively and begin preparing early!

The objectives of group presentations are: to broaden your knowledge on the Middle East; to enhance your research, analytical and oral skills; to acquire experience in collective projects.

The criteria used to evaluate presentations are as follows:

- *Content* (40%): The group is expected to cover the major themes pertaining to the topic and is able to answer questions from the class.
- *Background* (10%): The group situates the topic within its historical, social and/or political contexts, a particular place, within the literature and larger debates.
- *Organization* (10%): The presentation has an introduction, a body that includes the major arguments and themes, and a conclusion.
- *Clarity* (10%): The group makes a clear presentation, defines and explains concepts.
- *Cooperation* (10%): Even and fair distribution of work among members. *Audio-visual aid* (10%): Clear and used to enhance the presentation.
- *Delivery* (10%): Presenters speak clearly and capture the interest of the class.

Each group is expected to submit a hard copy of the power point; include the scholarly sources used. You are not allowed to use or cite Wikipedia as a reference.

In addition, each student is required to submit a hard copy of her or his presentation (should not be more than one page double spaced). All members of the group will receive the same grade, except when there is an obvious inconsistency, for example, if there is a problem where one member does not attend any group meetings, does not participate or contribute, the instructor and the TA will grade that particular student differently.

## Essay

### *Helpful links*

For citation and information on style guides, plagiarism and other, consult:

<http://www.lib.uwo.ca/essayhelp/>

The Western Writing Support Centre offers free one-on-one counselling sessions, online writing help, and workshops. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/>

The teaching team will provide examples **on citation** and how to **find sources** at the beginning of the term.

### *General information about your essay*

Number of words 2500 – 3000 (marks will be deducted if maximum number of words significantly exceed or fall short of the minimum).

Number pages, double space, font 12 Times New Roman, no space between paragraphs!

Students must use a minimum of **6 sources**, with **no less than 4** from anthropological sources.

An essay is not a summary of readings, but an in-depth argument about a question or topic that you support drawing on scholarly sources.

Make sure the essay question is not too general and its scope not too wide to cover in the limited pages you are allowed for the essay.

Make sure the essay is coherent and arguments are clear. Do not ramble or repeat the same idea to fill space.

*How should my papers be organized?*

An essay should include an introduction, body, conclusion, and references.

A cover page with the title of the essay, course number, instructor's name, student's name and number.

### *1. Introduction*

Begin the essay with your main question, argument, and general context:

Question example: How did French colonialism in Algeria in the late 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries change the role and status of Algerian women in the rural areas?

Your thesis, proposition or argument example: In this essay, I propose that colonialism and the expansion of capital destroyed the local economy and led to the redistribution of power and wealth, the emergence of new classes and transformation in the gendered division of labor.

Context example: French colonialism in Algeria (1830-1962) resulted in the death of a million people, massive displacement, and undermined the traditional economy, including the handicraft sector, service, and agriculture. Women had played a significant role in handicrafts and production, such as making tents, clothing, mats, rugs, pottery, household utensils, and in the service sector, including healers, midwives, marriage brokers, musicians, entertainers, domestic servants, etc. (this is an abridged example of context which should be a bit more elaborate).

### *2. Body of the Essay*

The body of the essay is where you present your in-depth discussion that support your main thesis or argument.

All your discussion and points raised in the body should be in support of the main question and argument you provided in the introduction. That is, don't include material that is irrelevant to the topic. Your discussion and supportive arguments here should draw on scholarly sources. Do not rely on one or two sources, but draw on a number of articles and books and make sure you paraphrase and cite the source. Try to avoid direct quotes, or use direct quotes sparingly.

### *3. Conclusion*

Summarize the main arguments.

You may also end by raising new questions for future research.

You need to cite the ideas from articles and books within the text and at the end of the essay.

At the end of the essay list the books, articles etc. you cite in the paper; be consistent with the citations and references. **Wikipedia is not a scholarly source.**

Write clearly! Use spell check AND read your paper before handing it in. Pay attention to spelling mistakes and do not confuse words such as "there and their", "here and hear". Avoid long quotes; it is much more effective to paraphrase.

**Submission:** You need to submit a **hard copy** as well as an electronic one to **Turnitin**.

**Late Assignments:** 2% of your essay grade will be deducted for each day you are late in submitting the paper, no assignments will be accepted five days (including weekends) after the due date.

### **Class Environment**

Students may have different and sometimes opposing views. This is healthy and expected. I strongly endorse an environment that is encouraging and conducive to the expression of various opinions. I expect you to

engage in debates where you focus on how and why you agree and disagree with a particular point of view based on academic arguments. We all should work on creating a lively and respectful environment.

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

1. All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined (with links to the full policies) at:

[http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/course\\_information/academic\\_policies.html](http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/course_information/academic_policies.html)

2. Accommodation for Medical Illness

Please note that it is your responsibility to communicate with me and/or the TA about alternative assignments including tests or exams which you have missed due to a justifiable reason as determined by Academic Counseling. For missing assignments less than 10% you do not need to get medical documentation; please make an appointment with me to discuss the reasons, and possible alternatives.