

History 4796G (001)
Arab-Western Encounters in Modern History
Race, Gender, Empire, and Mutual Perceptions

Winter 2024

Instructor: **Sara Khorshid**

Email: skhorshi@uwo.ca

This is a **draft** syllabus. Please see the course site on OWL for a final version.

Course Description

Friends or foes? Different or alike? Reconcilable or forever at odds? How did Arab-Western mutual perceptions originate? What images have they constructed of each other since the 19th century?

In seeking answers to these questions, this course approaches modern Middle Eastern history through a transnational lens that brings Arab historical protagonists together with American and European protagonists with the aim of understanding the historical roots of Arab-Western relations and mutual perceptions today. After exploring how the discipline of Middle Eastern history has evolved and how it was impacted by imperialism and orientalism, and ultimately by Edward Said's influential book *Orientalism*, we will look at several 19th and 20th century case studies where Arabs and Westerners interacted—and where race, gender, and/or imperialism were at play.

This course relies on recent as well as seminal scholarship primarily in the discipline of modern Middle Eastern history, but it also borrows from the disciplines of international history and postcolonial studies. In addition to secondary sources, it employs primary sources, popular culture (such as movies and songs), documentaries, and op-eds so as to allow for close engagement with modern Arab societies and cultures, especially in relation to Arab images of the West and Western images of Arabs.

Prerequisite(s):

2.0 courses in History at the 2200 level or above.

Course Syllabus

The course is designed to achieve the learning objectives listed below, so keep an eye out for them while you are doing the readings and watching the assigned films, and keep them in mind and highlight them while completing your assignments and presentations.

Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, you will have acquired the following:

- Familiarity with orientalism as a tradition, the impact of Edward Said's influential 1978 book *Orientalism*, and the historiographical evolution of the discipline of modern Middle Eastern history in general.
- Familiarity with the historical roots of Arab and Western mutual perceptions.

- In-depth understanding of the role of race, gender, colonialism, imperialism, and postcoloniality in shaping Arab-Western relations and mutual perceptions in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- Basic familiarity with Arab popular culture in the 20th century.
- Ability to locate and assess the historical significance of English-language primary sources that reflect Arab perspectives and voices. This comes against the backdrop of understanding the significance of amplifying subaltern and non-Western voices through the careful choice of source material.
- Ability to connect events in the Middle East today, especially events that are related to Arab-Western relations, to historical encounters.

Methods of Evaluation

Summary:

| | | |
|--|-----|----------------------------------|
| 1. Participation | 20% | Weekly in class |
| 2. Primary source presentation | 15% | Dates to be assigned in 1st week |
| 3. Short response on <i>Contending Visions</i> | 15% | Due Feb. 5 |
| 4. Research paper | 35% | Due Mar. 25 |
| 5. Simulation & debate (role play) | 15% | In class on Apr. 8 |

Details:

1. Participation (20%)

- **What's the big deal?** Effective class discussions leave all participants thinking about the topics at hand in a different light and with fresh perspectives. Everyone benefits from an informed and thoughtful discussion that utilizes the readings and links them to class attendees' outside knowledge and varied lived experiences. Given that there will be no exams in this course, participation in class discussions is even more important for getting the best out of the course.
- **What are the grading criteria?** For your participation to be effective, it needs to be...
 1. Frequent and consistent participation: You need to participate every single week.
 2. Informed participation. Read/watch the assigned material thoroughly and with an analytical eye before our meetings. Bring in what you learned, as well as your own thoughts on the readings, and share them with everyone.
 3. Thoughtful, critical, and analytical participation: This includes linking the material to (other) case studies and other areas of knowledge (e.g. other courses you took).
- **Minimum attendance required for passing:** Attending a minimum of 7 out of 13 meetings is required to pass the course.
- **Minimum for receiving high grades:** Attendance is necessary for passing the course but mere attendance without consistent participation is not enough for receiving a high participation grade.

2. Primary source presentation (15%)

- A list of primary sources and corresponding weeks to be made available on OWL during 1st week of classes
- Presentation dates and primary source items to be assigned by 2nd week of classes
- Presentation to consist of:
 1. Presenting the content of the item at hand with an analytical focus

2. Placing the item in its historical context
 3. Answering the questions: why is this item historically significant? How does it help us understand and write the history of Arab-Western encounters and/or the history of the Middle East (where possible)?
- Additional presentation criteria:
 1. Clarity of points and of purpose
 2. Insightfulness and analytical approach
 3. Persuasiveness
 4. Creativity
 5. Liveliness and audience engagement
 6. Clarity of voice

3. Short response paper on Zachary Lockman's *Contending Visions of the Middle East* (15%)

- Due February 5.
- 600-1000 words (2-4 pages)
- Citation: When referring to ideas from Lockman's book, cite them by including the page number(s) in question in parentheses within the text. Footnotes are not necessary. Other than Lockman's book, the use of outside sources is not required. In the event that you use an outside source for any reason, you need to cite it.
- In your response, make sure to summarize what you learned about the following:
 1. Orientalism and its relation to colonialism and European imperialism
 2. American involvement in the region and its impact on the academic field of Middle East studies
 3. Edward Said and the impact of his 1978 book *Orientalism* on Middle East studies.
 4. Any other point that intrigued you
 5. Conclude your response paper with your own reflections/commentary. What did you think of all of that? Feel free to link the topics discussed in the book to your own background and/or knowledge.
- **Grading criteria:**
 1. Your paper covers all the points and meets all the requirements listed above—and is not shorter than required. You may lose marks if your response is shorter than 500 words.
 2. Your summaries of points 1-3 above demonstrate that you read the book carefully and developed in-depth and thorough understanding of these points.
 3. Your conclusion (point#5) is adequate, thoughtful, and demonstrates analytical engagement with the topics at hand.
 4. Your writing is coherent *enough*—your ideas are not messy. Given that this is a short response that is meant to assess your understanding of this book and engagement with your content, you are not required to include a thesis statement or a superb level of coherence to get an A in this response. But having a good thesis statement and integrating it cohesively into your short paper, linking all points back to it, would be a bonus. It could get you an A+ on the condition that your paper meets all the assignment's other requirements.

4. Research paper—case study (35%)

- Due March 25.
- 3000-3500 words (around 12-15 pages) not including the bibliography. You might lose marks for writing an essay that is shorter than 2500 words.
- Chicago style citation, footnotes and bibliography

- Argumentative essay that centres around a key compelling argument (thesis) about a case study
- A case study from modern history about an encounter between Arab and North American or European historical protagonists. These actors could be travelers, colonizers, colonial agents, orientalist, researchers, sex workers, foreign (expat) workers, invaders, missionaries, archaeologists, expats, migrants, students, soldiers, etc.
- Be sure to present Arabs perspectives and voices in your essay besides European/North American perspectives.
- Engages the scholarly literature. Draws on academic, peer-reviewed secondary sources as well as primary sources
- Cohesively written and organized. Makes sure all ideas and evidence connect to your thesis.
- Be sure to proofread your paper before you submit it

5. Simulation & debate (role play): Theodore Roosevelt's 1910 visit to Egypt (15%)

- Takes place in class on Apr. 8.
- Simulation of Theodore Roosevelt's 1910 Visit to Egypt and a debate between the historical protagonists who were involved at the time.
- To be followed by reflections on the simulated incident and the debate.
- Character list to include Theodore Roosevelt, American and European missionaries, British colonial officials, Ottomans, Ottoman-Egyptians (monarch and ruling elite), members of the Egyptian nationalist movement, Arab attendees who were not Egyptian, members of foreign minority communities who were living in Egypt (e.g. Italians, Greeks, Armenians, etc.).
- Manual will be made available on OWL. It will consist of a full character list, context/details, and design of simulation and subsequent debate.

Absences and Late Assignments:

There is a late penalty of 2% per day for all assignments submitted after the due date. Weekends and statutory holidays will not be counted. You may be excused for illnesses or any other reason **through Academic Counselling**.

Students must attend at least 7 of our 13 seminar meetings in order to pass the course regardless of grades received for other assignments.

Students must complete, submit and pass the assigned final essay in order to pass the course, regardless of grades received for other assignments.

Course Materials

- Each week, it could be helpful to read/watch the assigned materials in the same order they are listed on the syllabus/OWL.
- Whether the readings and assigned course materials are primary or secondary sources, finding out about the authors and date of publication, or about the filmmakers and producers in the case of films and documentaries, is highly recommended. This is important for contextualizing the content; it enables us to better assess and understand the content's historical significance in

the case of primary sources and films, and its historiographical/scholarly significance in the case of secondary literature.

- We will use a variety of primary and secondary sources that include scholarly monographs, journal articles, book chapters, op-eds, movies, and documentaries.

Course Schedule and Readings

Week 1 (Jan. 8, 2024) **Early Encounters: The Origins of Orientalism**

- Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: History and Politics of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
Read the introduction, preface, and chapters 1-3

Week 2 (Jan. 15, 2024) **Academic Encounters: Said's *Orientalism* and an Evolving Historiography**

- Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: History and Politics of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
Read chapters 4-6.

Week 3 (Jan. 22, 2024) **Colonial, Settler-Colonial, and Anti-Colonial Encounters**

→ Read and watch the assigned material on **ONE** of the following case studies:

Case study #A: British colonization of Egypt and Egyptians' anti-colonial resistance

1. For background/context:
 - "Egypt" reference entry by Assem El-Dessouki in the Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern World
 - William Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Westview Press, 2016).
Read the **first 5 pages** of chapter 6, under the heading, "England on the Nile: The British Occupation of Egypt, 1882-1914.
2. Ziad Fahmy, *Ordinary Egyptians: Creating the Modern Nation Through Popular Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).
Read Chapter 5.
3. Movie: *A Man in Our House*, 1961

Case study #B: French settler colonialism of Algeria and Algerian anti-colonial resistance

1. For background/context:
"Algeria" reference entry by Julia Clancy-Smith in the Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern World
2. Julia Clancy-Smith, *Rebel and Saint: Muslim Notables, Populist Protest, Colonial Encounters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
Read the introduction.
3. Movie: Watch **ONE** of the following:
 - *The Battle of Algiers*, 1966
 - *Djamilah*, 1958

Week 4 (Jan. 29, 2024) **Military & Revolutionary Encounters: The Arab Revolt and WWI**

1. For background/context: William Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Westview Press, 2016).
Read chapter 9 (“World War I and the End of the Ottoman Order”).
2. Alia Mossallam, “‘Ya ` aziz ` aini ana bidi arawwah baladi ...’: Voyages of an Egyptian tune – from estrangement at home to longing on the fronts of the First World War,” in *Cultural Entanglement in the Pre-Independence Arab World: Arts, Thought and Literature*, ed. Anthony Gorman, and Sarah Irving (London: I. B. Tauris, 2021), 51-70.
3. Documentary: *World War One Through Arab Eyes* (Aljazeera English three-part series). Watch episodes 1 and 3.

Week 5 (Feb. 5, 2024) **Religious Encounters: American and European Missionaries in the Arab World** *Response on Lockman’s Contending Visions due*

Read **ONE** of the following:

- Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).
Read the introduction, chapter 2, and chapter 7.
- Beth Baron, *The Orphan’s Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Berkeley: Stanford University Press, 2014).
Read the preface, prologue, Chapter 5, and Chapter 6.
- Paul Sedra, *From Mission to Modernity: Evangelicals, Reformers, and Education in Nineteenth Century Egypt* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011).
Read the introduction, Chapter 2, and Chapter 6.
- Or these three journal articles together:
 - Catherine Woodward, “The Discourse and Experience of the Arabian Mission’s Medical Missionaries: Part I 1920-39.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 47, no. 5 (2011): 779–805.
 - Catherine Woodward, “The Discourse and Experience of the Arabian Mission’s Medical Missionaries: Part II 1939-60.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 47, no. 6 (2011): 885–910.
 - Paul Sedra, “John Lieder and His Mission in Egypt: The Evangelical Ethos at Work Among Nineteenth-Century Copts.” *Journal of Religious History* 28, no. 3 (October 1, 2004): 219–39.

Week 6 (Feb. 12, 2024) **Gendered Encounters: Colonialism, Womanhood, and Masculinity**

Read **THREE** of the following:

- Munira Khayyat, Yasmine Khayyat, and Rola Khayyat, “Pieces of Us: The Intimate as Imperial Archive,” *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 14, no. 3 (Nov. 2018): 268–91.
- Dana Ahmad, “The Arabian Mission in Kuwait, 1910–67: Effects of Modern Medicine on Women’s Healing Practices and Ideals of Womanhood,” *Gender & History* 30, no. 2 (July 1, 2018): 465–89.
- Marie Grace Brown, “Fashioning Their Place: Dress and Global Imagination in Imperial Sudan,” *Gender & History* 26, no. 3 (Nov. 2014): 502–18.
- James L. Gelvin, “‘Modernity,’ ‘Tradition,’ and the Battleground of Gender in Early 20th-Century Damascus.” *Die Welt des Islams* 52, no. 1 (2012): 1-22.
- Beth Baron, “Colliding Bodies: Prostitutes, Soldiers, and Venereal Diseases in Colonial Egypt,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 96, no. 2 (2022), 211–3.

- Wilson Chacko Jacobn, *Working out Egypt: Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity, 1870-1940* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).
Read chapters 1 and 2. For context, you can check out Hoda Satta's review of this book.

-----READING WEEK-----

Week 7 (Feb. 26, 2024) Literary Encounters: Postcolonial Novels, Autobiographies, and Memoirs

Read **ONE** of the following:

- Zohra Drif, *Inside the Battle of Algiers: Memoir of a Woman Freedom Fighter* (2013)
- Latifa Zayyat, *The Open Door* (1960)
- Waguih Ghali, *Beer in the Snooker Club* (1964)
- Tayeb Saleh, *Season of Migration to the North* (1966)
- Hammour Ziada, *The Longing of the Dervish* (2014)
- Leila Aboulela, *River Spirit* (2023)
- Bahaa Taher, *Sunset Oasis* (2007)
- Ahdaf Soueif, *The Map of Love* (1999)

Week 8 (Mar. 4, 2024) Postcolonial & Anti-Imperialist Encounters: "Tripartite Aggression" or "Suez Crisis"?

1. For background/context: BBC Timeline: "The Suez Crisis," http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5194576.stm
2. Reem Abou-El-Fadl, *Foreign Policy as Nation Making: Turkey and Egypt in the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
Read Chapter 9.
3. Aliaa Mosallam, "Beyond the Din of the Battle: Stories from the Struggle of Port Said," *Mada Masr*, Nov. 7, 2016, Watch Nasser 56
4. Movie: Watch Nasser 56

Week 9 (Mar. 11, 2024) Feminist Encounters: Arab Women Against Empire

1. Read **ONE** of the following:
 - Jeffrey Drew Reger, "Ba`athist State Feminism: The General Federation of Iraqi Women in the Global 1970s," *Journal of Women's History* 32, no. 4 (2020), 38–62.
 - Nadge Al-Ali and Nicola Pratt, "Positionalities, Intersectionalities, and Transnational Feminism in Researching Women in Post-Invasion Iraq," in *Researching War: Feminist Methods, Ethics, and Politics*, ed. Annick T. R. Wibben (London: Routledge, 2016), 76-91.
 - Laura Bier, *Revolutionary Womanhood: Feminism, Modernity, and the State in Nasser's Egypt* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).
Read the introduction, Chapter 1, and Chapter 5.
2. Movie: Watch **ONE** of the following:
 - *I Am Free*, 1959
 - *The Open Door*, 1963

Week 10 (Mar. 18, 2024) Oil Encounters: Race in Aramco and the Origins of US-Saudi Relations

1. For background/context -- infographic: Timeline of US-Saudi relations. Scroll to the bottom of the page to be able to find the infographic: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/5/18/us-saudi-relations-a-timeline>
2. Robert Vitalis, *America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).
Read chapters 1, 5, 6, and 7.

Week 11 (Mar. 25, 2024) Comrades' Encounters: Arab and European Workers in an Age of Radicalism *Research paper due*

Read **ONE** of the following:

1. Joel Beinin and Zachary Lockman, *Workers on the Nile: Nationalism, Communism, Islam, and the Egyptian Working Class, 1882-1954* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).
Read Chapter 4 ("1919: Labor Upsurge and National Revolution")
2. Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860-1914* (University of California Press, 2013).
Read chapter 5 ("Workers, Labor Unrest, and the Formulation and Dissemination of Radical, Leftist Ideas")

Week 12 (Apr. 1, 2024) Nostalgic Encounters: Remembering the Crusades During the Cold War & Beyond

1. Omar Sayfo, "From Kurdish Sultan to Pan-Arab Champion and Muslim Hero: The Evolution of the Saladin Myth in Popular Arab Culture," *Journal of Popular Culture* 50 (2017), 65-85.
2. Salim Yaqub, "Chapter 15: The Cold War and the Middle East," in Richard H. Immerman and Petra Goedde (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 246-264.
3. Movie: *Saladin the Victorious*, 1963

Week 13 (Apr. 8, 2024) Fantastical Encounters: Class Simulation and Debate on Theodore Roosevelt's 1910 Visit to Egypt + Reflections and Wrap-Up

Simulation takes place in class today

No readings assigned. Simulation and debate take place and are followed by reflections on the debate and the course.

Additional Statements

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.

Communication policies: I am happy to answer your questions during office hours or via email. I will try to reply as soon as I can, but it could take me up to 48 hours to reply. I will not be able to reply to your emails during weekends.

If you have questions about a marked assignment, I am happy to answer your questions but please wait for 48 hours before contacting me (by email or during office hours) regarding your assignment/grade.

Use of electronic devices: You may use your electronic devices to take notes during class, access the readings and OWL, or to look up information that may prove handy during our discussions. You may not use your devices for personal reasons (e.g. texting or watching anything that is not related to the course material and class discussions).

Use of generative AI tools: All work submitted in this course must be your own. You may not make use of generative AI tools like ChatGPT to write your assignment for you. That said, the use of generative AI tools like ChatGPT is permitted in this course for activities such as brainstorming and refining your ideas, drafting an outline to organize your thoughts, or checking grammar and style. Any use of such tools should be properly documented and cited. If in doubt, please ask me for clarification.

DRAFT