

0626418401 - American Orientalism

MA Seminar, Spring 2016-7

Seminar will be held on Mondays, 4-8 pm, in Webb 501.

Reception hours: Thursdays, 2-3 pm, or by appointment

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This MA seminar will trace the representation of the "orient" in America and the influence of "the East" on the development of American culture from the time of the early settlement to current US policy in the Middle East. Among topics covered: nationalism and orientalism, 19th-century travelers to the Near East, Arabs and Islam in American literature, Protestant imaginings of the Holy Land, orientalism and visual culture, orientalism, gender and sexuality, Hollywood's early treatment of the Middle East, and more.

REQUIREMENTS

Participation: You are expected to come to class prepared and to participate in class discussion. You are required to bring the relevant texts with you to class. Attendance is mandatory. You are also expected to check announcements and updates in Moodle on a regular basis.

Presentations: In the course of the semester you will be required to give three oral presentations. These presentations will be prepared in pairs. A short written version of each assignment will be posted on Moodle by one student in each pair. Please follow guidelines for each presentation below.

Discussion Questions: For most classes, you will be asked to compose a question for discussion in advance of our meeting. These questions will most often (though not always) relate to the secondary source(s) you will be reading for that day, and will reflect your understanding of the source's main argument and your critical thoughts about any aspect of that argument. The questions will be posted in the discussion forum below by 2 pm on the day of class at the latest.

Referat/Seminar Paper: Each student is required to submit either a referat paper (10-12 pages long) or a seminar paper (20-25 pages long). The papers are expected to conform to the standards required by the English department, including in terms of structure, formatting, and use of secondary sources.

EVALUATION AND COURSE INFORMATION

Participation and discussion questions – 30%

Three presentations - 30% (10% each)

Seminar or referat paper - 40%

SCHEDULE

Part One: Edward Said's Orientalism: Origins, Paradigm, Debate

March 13 - INTRODUCTION

This will be an introductory meeting where the topic, themes, and requirements of the seminar will be presented.

We will then take advantage of the opportunity to hear a guest lecture by Prof. Stacey Margolis.

March 20 - EDWARD SAID'S ORIENTALISM

Required Reading:

- Gramsci, "On Hegemony and Direct Rule."
- Foucault, "Truth and Power."
- Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage, 1979. Introduction, pp. 1-28; Part 1, "The Scope of Orientalism," chaps. 1, 2, and 4 (pp. 31-73 and 92-110); Part 3, chap 1, "Latent and Manifest Orientalism," pp. 201-225.

Assignment:

- Post a discussion question on any part of Said's book in the discussion forum.

March 27 - DEBATING ORIENTALISM

Presentation #1 - Mock panel on Orientalism, with the participation of:

- Sadik Jalal al-'Azm, "Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse" (1981).
- Bernard Lewis, "The Question of Orientalism" (1982).
- James Clifford, "On Orientalism," from *The Predicament of Culture* (1988).
- Aijaz Ahmad, "Between Orientalism and Historicism" (1991).
- Sara Mills, from *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (1991).
- Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, from *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies* (2004).
- Ibn Warraq, "Edward Said and the Saidists," from *Defending the West* (2007).
- John M. MacKenzie, "Orientalism in Arts and Crafts Revisited" (2013).
- Robert Irwin, "Flaubert's Camel: Said's Animus" (2013).

- Joanna de Groot, "How Much is Enough Said? Some Gendered Responses to Orientalism" (2013).
- Edward Said, "Orientalism Reconsidered" (1985).

Required Reading:

- Melani McAlister. *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and US Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2000*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001. 1-42.

Additional Reading:

- Zachary Lockman. "Said's *Orientalism*: A Book and its Aftermath." , *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004. 182-214.
- Malini Johar Schueller. *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature, 1790-1890*. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1998. 1-23.
- Douglas Little. *American Orientalism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002. Introduction and chap 1, "Orientalism, American Style." 1-42.

Part Two: Muslim Captivity and the Building of the Nation

April 3

Required Reading:

- Royall Tyler, *The Algerine Captive* (1797), vol. I, chaps 30-32, and vol. II, chaps 1-7, 13-14, 32-end.
- Maria Martin, *History of the Captivity and Suffering* (1807), pp. 41- end.
- James R. Lewis, "Savages of the Seas," *Journal of American Culture* 13.2 (1990): 75-84.

Assignment:

- Post a question on the discussion forum, but this time your question should point to a specific passage in either Tyler or Martin's narrative, one which you would like us to discuss in class. What question did this passage trigger and why?

Recommended Reading:

- Michael Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy*, chap. 1, New York: Norton, 2008.
- Paul M. Baelpler, "The Barbary Captivity Narrative in American Culture," *Early American Literature* 39.2 (2004): 217-46.
- Malini Johar Schueller. *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature, 1790-1890*. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1998. chap. 1 and chap. 2
- Timothy Marr. *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. chap. 1, 20-62. Robert J. Allison, *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World 1776-1815*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. chap. 4.

Part Three: Orientalism, Fantasy, Desire

April 24

Required Reading:

- Edgar Allen Poe, "[Ligeia](#)" (1838).
- William C. Prime, "The Greek Beauty," from *Tent-Life in the Holy Land* (1857), pp. 25-40.
- Meyda Yegenoglu, *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. 39-67.

Assignment:

- Your question for today's discussion should be on Yegenoglu's chapter. Since this is a theoretically intricate text, your question could be simply "what does she mean by X?" if you come across a particularly baffling part. But all types of thoughtful questions are welcomed!

Recommended Reading:

- Malini Johar Schueller. *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature, 1790-1890*. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1998. 109-28.
- Mojha Kahf, *Western Representations of the Muslim Woman*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999. 111-75. (eBook in Sourasky library).
- Mary Roberts. *Intimate Outsiders: The Harem in Ottoman and Orientalist Art and Travel Literature*. Duke University Press, 2007.

Part Four: Biblical Orientalism: 19th-c. Travel to the Holy Land

May 8 - HOLY LANDSCAPE

2nd Round of Presentations: Holy Land Paintings

Required Reading:

- WJT Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," *Landscape and Power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994. pp. 5-34.
- John Davis, "Identification with the Holy Land," *The Landscape of Belief*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996. pp. 13-26.

Suggested Reading:

- Shalom Goldman, *God's Sacred Tongue: Hebrew and the American Imagination*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

May 15 - TWAIN AND THE EXHIBITIONARY ORDER

Required Reading:

- Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad or The New Pilgrims Progress* (1869), chaps 1-15, 33, 34, 38-40.
- Timothy Mitchell. "Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order." In *Colonialism and Culture*, ed. By Nicholas Dirks. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992.

Assignment:

- Your question for discussion today should focus on Mitchell's article, but can you think of a way to bring Twain's travel narrative into it as well?

Suggested Reading:

- Hilton Obenzinger, from *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania*. Princeton: Princeton University press, 1999. Chapter Five.

May 22 - TWAIN, ARABS & JEWS

Required Reading:

- Twain, *The Innocents Abroad or The New Pilgrims Progress*, chaps 41-end.
- William C. Prime, from *Tent Life in the Holy Land*, pp. 55-60.
- Sander Gilman, "Mark Twain and the Diseases of the Jews." *American Literature* 65.1 (Mar 1993): 95-115.

Assignment:

- Question on Gilman's article please.

Suggested Reading:

- Hilton Obenzinger, *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania*, Chapters 10-end.
- Brian Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land in American Travel Writing 1790-1876*, Burlington: Ashgate, 2007.
- Brooke Sherrard, " 'Palestine sits in Sackcloth and Ashes': Reading Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* as a Protestant Holy Land Narrative," *Religion and the Arts* 15 (2011): 82-110.
- Jeffery Alan Melton, *Mark Twain, Travel Books, and Tourism*, Chapter 3.

Part Five: Modernity's Orient

May 29 - CAMERA ORIENTALIS

Presentation #3: Reading Photographs from the [American Colony Collection](#).

Required Reading:

- Ali Behdad, "The Orientalist Photograph," in *Photography's Orientalism: New Essays on Colonial Representation*, eds. by Ali Behdad and Luke Gartlan, Los Angeles: Getty Institute, 2013. pp. 11-32.

June 5 - HOLLYWOOD'S ORIENTALISM

Required Reading:

- Ella Shohat. "Gender in Hollywood's Orientalism." *Middle East Report* 162 (1990): 40-2.

Required Viewing:

- The Sheik (1921)

Assignment:

- Please write a question about the film. If your question refers to a specific scene, please include the scene's location (hour/minute).

June 12 - BOWLES, BEAT, AND THE EAST**Required Reading:**

- Paul Bowles, *The Sheltering Sky* (1949), Parts One and Two.

Assignment:

- Your question should be targeted to a specific passage (scene, paragraph, dialogue, even sentence!) in the novel.

Recommended reading:

- Brian T. Edwards, "Sheltering Screens: Paul Bowles and Foreign Relations," *Morocco Bound: Disorienting America's Maghreb, from Casablanca to the Marrakech Express*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. pp. 78-119.

June 19 - QUEERING THE EAST**Required Reading:**

- *The Sheltering Sky*, Part Three.
- Joseph Boone, from *The Homoerotics of Orientalism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.

Assignment:

- You have a choice: your question can refer to either the last part of *Sheltering Sky* or Boone's chapter (but you need to read both of course!).

Part Six: Neo-Orientalism? Post-Orientalism?

June 26**Required Reading:**

- Moneera Al-Ghadeer, "Cannibalizing Iraq: Topos of a New Orientalism," in *Debating Orientalism*, London: Palgrave, 2013. pp. 117-133.
- Brian T. Edwards, from *After the American Century: The Ends of U.S. Culture in the Middle East*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2016.