

Orientalism and Representation

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Course Description

With a specific focus on orientalist conventions in architecture, art, and scholarship, this seminar examines how politics and ideology inform the construction and reproduction of knowledge. Adopting a flexible historical framework, we will explore selected cases of cultural encounters between Europe and the "Orient" from Antiquity to the present. We will analyze particular events, texts, projects, and images that have been influential in shaping Western representations of and Western attitudes towards the "Orient." We will investigate how revisionist and modernist "Orientals" similarly appropriate culture and history in constructing their national identities. And, at the end, we will touch upon the contemporary critical issues of post-colonial identity, exile, multiculturalism, and hybridity that are influencing how we see, represent, and react to the world around us today.

The discussions will be informed by the recent literature in post-colonial studies and cultural criticism and the growing interest in hybridity and multiculturalism which challenge both traditional orientalist and nationalist narratives. Our chief guide will be Edward Said's classic *Orientalism* and its followers, reviewers, and detractors. The objective of the seminar is to help the participants gain a historically grounded awareness of the complexities of cultural identities, always contesting and sometimes subverting the representations that claim to realistically depict and define them.

Introduction

Aims and mechanics of the course

Theoretical and historiographical sources: Foucault, Said, and post-colonial theorists

The East/West Problematique: A brief history.

Festival of Islam Film: "Orient/Occident"

Theoretical and Critical Foundations:

The relationship between the post-structural and post-colonial theories

Reading

- Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, (New York, 1973), preface, xv-xxiv.
- Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of knowledge* (New York, 1972), Intro: 3-17.
- Edward Saïd, *Orientalism*, Introduction and chapter 1, 1-110.

A Rhetoric of Otherness: Classical and Medieval Encounters

Mutual perceptions and misconceptions from Antiquity to the Middle Ages

The Greek construction of otherness

The Crusades and cultural exchanges

Reading

- Paul Cartledge, The Greeks, "Significant Others: Us vs. Them," 8-17.
- Martin Bernal, "Race, Class, and Gender in the Formation of the Aryan Model of Greek Origins," in S. Hassan and I. Dadi, eds., Unpacking Europe: Towards a Critical Reading (Rotterdam, 2001), 26-41.
- Thierry Hentsch, Imagining the Middle East, (New York, 1992) Chptr. 1 and 3.
- Maria Rosa Menocal, The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History (Philadelphia, 1987), Preface and pp. 1-25: "The Myth of Westernness in Medieval Literary Historiography."

Background Reading

- R.W. Southern, Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1962).
- Norman Daniel, The Arabs and mediaeval Europe (London ; New York, 1979).

From the Age of Discovery to Colonialism:

Enlightenment culture and the discovery of distant lands

Exoticism

Taxonomic studies of "Oriental" Architecture: Von Erlach, De Vogue, Texier, Jones.

Cultural politics of proto-colonialism: La description de l'Égypte 19th century European Colonial

Adventure

Reading

- Hentsch, Imagining the Middle East Chptrs. 2 and 4.
- Bernard Lewis, Islam and the West. (1993), 295-308.
- Bryan S. Turner, "Orientalism and the Problem of Civil Society in Islam," in A. Hussain, R. Olson and J. Qureshi, Orientalism, Islam, and Islamists (Brattleboro, 1984), 23-42.
- Alain Grosrichard, The Sultan's Court: European Fantasies of the East (1998), 3-25.
- Lisa Lowe, Critical terrains: French and British orientalisms (Ithaca, 1991), 30-74.

Background Reading

- Charles Coulston Gillispie and Michael Dewachter (eds), Monuments of Egypt: the Napoleonic Edition: the complete archaeological plates from la Description de l'Égypte. (Princeton, 1987), Introduction.
- Maxime Rodinson, "The Western Image and Western Studies of Islam," in C. Bosworth and J. Schacht, The Legacy of Islam (Oxford, 1974), 9-62.
- Lucette Valensi, The Birth of the Despot: Venice and the Sublime Port (Ithaca, 1993).

Orientalist Painting and Literature:

Orientalist painting: Ingres, Delacroix, Gerome, Matisse, etc

Orientalist literature: Goethe, Flaubert, Nerval, Lamartine, etc.

Reading

- John M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory, and the Arts* (Manchester, 1995), chapter 3,
- Linda Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient," in *The politics of vision : essays on nineteenth-century art and society*. (New York, 1989), 33-59.
- Caroline Willimas, "Jean Lèon Gérôme: A Case Study of an Orientalist Painter," *Fantasy or Ethnography? Irony and Collusion in Subaltern Representation*, S. Webber and M. Lynd, eds., (*Papers in Comparative Studies* 8, 1993-94), 117-48.
- Zeynep Celik, "Colonialism, Orientalism, and the Canon," *The Art Bulletin* 78, 2 (June 1996): 202-5.

Background Reading

- H. Edwards ed. *Noble Dreams, Wicked Pleasures: Orientalism in America, 1870-1930* (2000)
- John Sweetman, *The Oriental obsession* (Cambridge and New York, 1988).
- Lynne Thornton, *The Orientalists : Painter-Travellers, 1828-1908*. (Paris, 1983); and idem, *Women as Portrayed in Orientalist Painting*. (Paris, 1985).
- Rana Kabbani, *Europe Myths of Orient*(Bloomington, Ind., 1986).
- Francis Steegmuller, *Flaubert in Egypt: A Sensibility on Tour* (Boston, 1972).

Expositions Universelles: Islamic Architecture in the West:

Islamic architecture in the West: Pavilions, pleasure gardens, great expositions, cemeteries

Neo-Islamic Renaissance in art and architecture: Romanticizing a depoliticized past.

Reading

- Martin Heidegger, "The age of the world picture," in: William Lovitt tr., *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (New York, 1977), 115-54.
- Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth Century World's Fairs* (Berkeley, 1992), Intro.
- Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, Chapters 1, 1-33.
- Leila Kenney and Zeynep Çelik, "Ethnography and Exhibitionism at the Expositions Universelles," *Assemblage* (December 1990): 35-58.
- J. Volpe and Findlater, M., "Leighton House: contemporary link with Islamic Arts," *Arts & the Islamic World* 26, (1995): 44-48.

Background Reading

- Michael Darby *The Islamic Perspective: An Aspect of British Architecture and Design in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1983).
- François Béguin, *Arabisances: décor architectural et tracé urbain en Afrique du Nord 1830-1950* (Paris, 1983).

Reinvention of Tradition: the Case of Egypt

The Napoleonic Expedition and the Contact with Europe.

Modernization project of Muhammad Ali.

Neo-Islamic Renaissance in art and architecture

Reading

Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in Hobsbawm and Ranger eds. *The Invention of Tradition*. (Cambridge, 1983), 1-14.

Roger Owen, "Egypt and Europe: from French Expedition to British Occupation," in Hourani et al., *The Modern Middle East : a reader*, 111-23.

Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, Chapters 2-3, 34-94.

Nasser Rabbat, "The Formation of the Neo-Mamluk Style in Modern Egypt," in *The Education of the Architect*, Martha Pollak, ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), 363-86.

Background Reading:

Jacques Berque, *Egypt: Imperialism & Revolution*, ed. tr. Jean Stewart (1972).

Edward William Lane, *An account of the manners and customs of the modern Egyptians written in Egypt during the years 1833-1835*, (London, 1978).

Architectural Expressions of National Identity:

Post-Colonial/National Architecture.

The Aga Khan Awards and the politics of the enterprise.

Reading

- John Hutchinson & Anthony Smith, eds., *Nationalism, a Reader*(Oxford, 1994), Ernest Gellner, "Nationalism and Modernization," idem, *Nationalism and High Cultures*, " 55-70; Benedict Anderson, "Imagined Communities," 89-96; Homi Bhabha, "Narrating the Nation," 306-12.
- Sibel Bozdogan, "The Aga Khan Award for Architecture: A Philosophy of Reconciliation," *JAE* 45, 3 (May 1992): 182-88; idem, "The Predicament of Modernism in Turkish Architectural Culture: An Overview," in Bozdogan and Kasaba, eds., *Rethinking modernity and national identity in Turkey*, (Seattle, 1997), 133-56.
- Larry Vale, "Designing National Identity: Post-Colonial Capitols as Intercultural Dilemmas," in AlSayyad, *Forms of Dominance*, 315-38.
- J.C.Scott, "The High Modernist City: An Experiment and a Critique" in *Seeing Like a State* (1998), 103-132.
- Anthony King, "Rethinking Colonialism: An Epilogue," in AlSayyad, *Forms of Dominance*, 339-55.

The Critique of Orientalism

The debate around Edward Said

Reading

- James Clifford, "Orientalism: Review Essay," in his *The predicament of culture: twentieth-century ethnography, literature, and art* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988).
- Edward Said, "Orientalism Reconsidered," *Race & Class* 27, 2 (Autumn 1985): 1-15.; idem, "The Politics of Knowledge," *Raritan* (Summer 1991): 17-31.
- Hentsch, *Imagining the Middle East*, Chptr. 5.
- Arif Dirlik "Placing Edward Said: Space, Time and the Travelling Theorist," in Ashcroft and Kadhim, eds., *Edward Said and the Post-Colonial*. (Huntington, N.Y., 2001), 1-29; also Patrick Williams, "Nothing in the Post?—Said and the Problem of Post-Colonial Intellectuals," 31-55.

Background Reading

Emmanuel Sivan, *Interpretations of Islam Past and Present* (Princeton, 1985), "Edward Said and his Arab Reviewers," 133-54

Post-Orientalism? Hybrid Identities

Immigrant experiences in Europe and America

Registers of hybridity in art, architecture, film, literature, critical writing

Film: "Tales from Arab Detroit."

Reading

- Edward Said, "Intellectuals in the Post-Colonial World," *Salmagundi* 70-71 (Spring-Summer 1986): 44-64; idem, "Intellectual Exile: Expatriates and Marginals," in his *Representation of the Intellectual* (New York, 1996), 47-64.
- Michael M.J. Fischer, "Orientalizing America: Beginnings and Middle Passages," *Merip Report* 22, 178 (Sept.-Oct. 1992): 32-37.
- Idem, "Is Islam the Odd-Civilization Out?," *New Perspective Quarterly* (Spring 1992): 54-59.
- Hentsch, *Imagining the Middle East*, Chptrs 6 and 7
- Salman Rushdie, "Imaginary Homelands," (9-21); "Commonwealth Literature Does not Exist," (61-73); "Outside the Whale," (87-101) in his collection, *Imaginary Homeland: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991* (London, 1992).
- Ali A. Mazrui, "Pretender to Universalism: Western Culture in a Globalizing Age," in Hassan and Dadi, eds., *Unpacking Europe*, 96-111.

Background Reading

- Hanif Kureishi, *Buddha of Suburbia*