

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

Department of Political Science

Political Science 211-270 Mon: 3:10-5:00 p.m.

Spring Semester 1999 Office: DGH 134

Office Hours: T-Th

10:30-12:30 am & Mon. 2:00-3:00

Office Tel. 806-9345

The Middle East in World System

Description of the Course:

This seminar is designed to review the major intellectual developments that have shaped the recent studies of the Middle East and its relationship to the world. We will begin with a discussion of how the study of the region was governed by orientalism as a dominant Western discourse whose primary concern was to define its relationship to the "other". Not only was this discourse prominent in the discussion of Islam, but also the debate on Palestine, Zionism and the Sephardium in Israel. More recently, it was reflected in the "clash of civilizations" thesis designed to guide U.S foreign policy.

Next, we will turn to the modernization discourse as a developmental discourse and how it has dominated the discussion of the contemporary political economy of the region. This discourse has recently been subjected to a powerful poststructuralist critique which has challenged its assumptions, key concepts and theories.

Finally, we are going to look at the new perspectives offered debate on political liberalization and democratization in the Middle East. The debate offers new perspectives on the region, the rise of Islamism and the discussion of gender relations and roles.

Organization:

To develop both theoretical and empirical familiarity with the region, each student will write 3 short critical papers on these theoretical debates and perspectives (10-15 pages each).* Late papers will not be accepted after the specified date.

The following books have been ordered through the Howard University bookstore to guide our discussions.

-Edward Said, Orientalism (New York: Pantheon books, 1978).

-Timothy Mitchell, Colonizing Egypt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

-Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany and Paul Noble, eds., Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995).

Other articles and books listed in the attached schedule have been placed on library reserve.

Grading:

The primary criterion for grading will be individual performance over the term reflected in the student's oral participation and paper assignments. Each one of the paper assignments will count for 25% of the grade. The remaining 25% will be based on the quality of the oral presentations that students will be regularly asked to do.

Good Luck and Welcome to the Course.

Course Outline

I. Introduction to the Course: (Jan. 11)

II. Orientalism and the Study of the Middle East (Jan. 25)

Edward Said, Orientalism, chs. 1, 3: pp. 1-112, 201-329.

III. Critical Responses to Orientalism (Feb. 1)

Bernard Lewis, "The Question of Orientalism," New York

Review of Books, (6/24/82), pp. 49-56.

Basim Musallam, "Review of Said's Orientalism" in MERIP REPORTS, No. 79, (July-Aug 1979), pp. 19-26.

Sadek Jalal Al-Azam, "Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse", Khamsin, pp. 5-26.

Edward Said, "Orientalism Reconsidered" Race and Class, XXVII, 2 (1985).

IV. Orientalism and Interantional Discussions of the Middle East (Feb. 8)

A. Palestine and Zionism

Edward Said, The Question of Palestine, ch. 1.

Ella Shohat, "Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Point of View of its Jewish Victims", Social Text 19/20 (Fall 1988), pp. 1-36.

B. International Conflict and Foreign Policy

Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" in Foreign Policy 72,3 (Summer 1993), pp. 22-49 and response by Fuad Ajami in Foreign Policy 72,4 (Fall 1993), pp.2-9.

*** First paper is due on Feb. 16.**

*** Late papers will not be accepted.**

V. Approaches to the Political Economy of Development in the Middle East:

A. Modernization Theory (Feb. 22)

Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society, Ch. 2: pp. 43-75.

Manfred Halpern, The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa, Parts 1-2: pp. 3-118.

Leonard Binder, "The Natural History of Development Theory with a Discordant Note on the Middle East", in Binder Islamic Liberalism, pp. 24-84.

Lisa Anderson, "Policy-Making and Theory Building: American Political Science on the Islamic Middle East" in Theory, Politics and the Arab World, ed. Hisham Sharabi, pp. 52-81.

VI. Post Structuralist Critique of Modernization: (Mar. 1, 8)

Timothy Mitchell, Colonizing Egypt.

Timothy Mitchell, "America's Egypt" Middle East Report

169 (March-April 1991), pp. 18-34; response by Alan Richards and reply by Mitchell in Middle East Report, no. 174 (Jan./Feb. 1992).

***Second paper is due on Mar. 15.**

***Late Papers will not be accepted.**

VII. Alternative Perspectives:

A. Gender & The Study of the Middle East:(Mar. 29, April 5

Leila Ahmed, "Western Ethnocentrism and Perceptions of the Harem," Feminist Studies, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Fall 1982), pp. 521-534.

Rima Hammami and Marina Reiker, "Feminist Orientalism and Orientalist Marxism", New Left Review 170 (1988), pp. 93-106.

Leila Ahmed, Women and Gender in Islam, chs. 1-2: pp.1- 38.

Fatima Mernissi, The Veil and the Male Elite, part I: pp. 1-102.

Mervat Hatem, "Egyptian Discourses on Gender and Political Liberalization: Do the Secularist and the Islamist Views Really Differ?", Middle East Journal (Winter 1994), pp. 1-17.

B. Political Liberalization in the Middle East: (April 12, 19)

Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany and Paul Noble, eds. Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World.

***Last paper is due on April 26.**

***Late papers will not be accepted.**