

GL/HIST 3330 6.0

ARABS IN THE AMERICAS: THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORIES OF JEWISH, CHRISTIAN, AND MUSLIM MIGRANTS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST, 1870 TO THE PRESENT

Lecture: Tuesdays 12:00-15:00 (YH A100)

Course Instructor:

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Course Description:

This course examines the history of Arab migration from the Middle East and all of its various historical incarnations. 'Arab' has not been a static, unchanging concept throughout history, and in this course we will seek to understand why and how definitions of 'Arab' have changed over the years, and how Middle Eastern migrants have been identified and treated through time. Lectures and readings will provide an overview of several key themes in the history of Arab migration, including: patterns of migration and settlement, occupational characteristics, orientalism and racism, popular culture, consumer culture, the politics of identity (religion, ethnicity, gender, race, and nationality), and the personal experiences of people on the move. Arab immigration—as social experience, as cultural phenomenon, and as diasporic formulation—formed the basis for the development of numerous social and intellectual institutions and communal strategies. By examining the immigrants' strategies of mobility, settlement, and community building and Western society's responses to Arab immigration, we will attain a higher understanding of how 'Arabness' and 'whiteness' came to be defined by both migrants and American societies.

Students will work with both primary and secondary sources in order to better understand contemporary interpretations of 'Arabness', individual experiences of migration, and the manner in which historiographical approaches affect our own sense of the Arab community, its history, and identity.

Course Evaluation:

Students will be evaluated based upon a series of assignments, to be submitted and graded. Any conflicts related to assignment submission or grading may be addressed to the course instructor.

First Term

One 5-page essay (due October 20th) 10%

One 10-page essay (due December 1st) 20%

Second Term

In-class presentation (March 1, 8, and 15) 10%

One 15-page essay (due April 5th) 25%

Class participation		15%
Final Exam	(DATE TBA)	20%

The course will be presented in one weekly 3-hour seminar. Students will be expected to arrive for the lecture on time and having finished their weekly readings. Students will be expected to discuss the week's readings in depth and contribute consistently to class.

Assignment Details:

In the first term, students will submit two papers. For the first assignment, students will be expected to submit a 5-page essay on the film *Jews and Muslims: Intimate Strangers*, presented in class. Using the readings for that week, as well as your own original research, you will assess the historical value of the film, as well as identifying key themes on the evolution of "Arabness". For the second assignment, students will select one of the lecture topics from course (approved by me) and present a review of the literature (historiography), outlining the major advancements and debates in that field (excluding the first two weeks of classes).

The first assignment of the second term will consist of a brief (10 minute) presentation on the original primary research conducted for the final assignment of the course. The final assignment will consist of a 15-page research essay on a subject of your choice (approved by me). An annotated bibliography for the paper must be submitted before March 1st. The class will conclude with a cumulative final exam.

Details for all assignments will be provided one month in advance of the due date.

University and Course Policies:

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism occurs when a person represents the ideas, writing, words, or intellectual property of another as his or her own work. The University has a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to instances of plagiarism, and as such, any offence will have severe consequences for your grade, and possibly for your academic future.

You can avoid plagiarizing by using quotation marks and proper Chicago Style citations when referencing the intellectual property of others (see York's website, researchguides.library.yorku.ca/styleguides for more information). Also, do not simply reword an original work and omit the citation—this still constitutes plagiarism and will be dealt with accordingly.

Academic Accommodation

This course follows York University's regulations regarding academic accommodation for students with disabilities. For more detailed information regarding York's academic accommodations, see www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=68.

Extensions and Other Course-Specific Rules

Extensions will be given for students in extenuating circumstances. Your instructor will use their discretion in this matter. Tests and exams may only be rescheduled with proper documentation (eg. a doctor's note).

Finally, please remember that this course will provide an equitable and safe space for all of its students and instructors. Any hate speech, harassment, or violence will result in expulsion from this course and possibly further academic punishment. Students are encouraged to share their own individual thoughts and opinions in a respectful and considerate fashion.

Students are welcome to use tablets, laptops, and other technologies in a manner which does not interrupt their fellow students or the instructor.

September 15th—Course Introduction, Overview
NO READINGS THIS WEEK.

September 22nd— Defining 'Arab'

READINGS:

Janice Terry, "The Arab World: An Introduction", in *The Arab World and Arab-Americans: Understanding a Neglected Minority*, edited by Sameer Y. Abraham and Nabeel Abraham, (Wayne State University Center for Urban Studies, Detroit, 1981), p. 3-16.

Darcy A. Zabel, "Introduction: The Arab Diaspora in the Americas: Latin America, The United States, and Canada" in *Arabs in the Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on the Arab Diaspora*, edited by Darcy A. Zabel, (Peter Lang, New York, 2006), p. 1-15.

Short film from the website of the book (Princeton UP): *Jews and Muslims: Intimate Strangers*, Dominique Barbier, 20 min. <http://press.princeton.edu/titles/10098.html>

Edward W. Said, "Introduction", in *Orientalism*, (New York: Random House, 1978), p. 1-28.

September 29th—What is Migration History?

READINGS:

Christiane Harzig, Dirk Hoerder, and Donna Gabaccia, *What is Migration History?*, (Polity press, Cambridge, 2009). **Read** Chapter 3, "Theories of Migration and Cultural Interaction", p. 53-86.

Jon Gjerde, "New Growth on Old Vines: The State of the Field: The Social History of Immigration to and Ethnicity in the United States," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18.4 (1999): 40-65. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27502470>.

Roberto Perin, "Themes in Immigration History," in *The Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, edited by R.P. Magocsi, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999), p. 1258-67.

October 6th— Why Emigrate? The Syro-Lebanese on the Move

READINGS:

Michael W. Suleiman, "Introduction: The Arab Immigrant Experience", in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, edited by Michael W. Suleiman, (Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1999), p. 1-21.

Liz Hamui-Halabe, "Re-Creating Community: Christians from Lebanon and Jews from Syria in Mexico, 1900-1938," in *Arab and Jewish Immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities*, edited by Ignacio Kilch and Jeffery Lesser, (London, Frank Cass, 1998), p. 125-145.

Louise E. Sweet, "Reconstituting a Lebanese Village Society in a Canadian City," in *Arabic Speaking Communities in American Cities*, edited by Barbara C. Aswad, (New York Centre for Migration Studies, 1974), p. 39-52.

October 13th—Thanksgiving – No Class

October 20th—Guarding the Gates: Immigration Policy in Canada and the United States [5-page Paper Due in Class]

READINGS:

Ninette Kelley and M. J. Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, (Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 1998). **Read** the Introduction (3-20).

David A. Gerber, *American Immigration: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford UP, 2011). **Read** the Introduction, chapters 1, 2, and 4 (1-44, 65-85).

October 27th— Guarding the Gates: Immigration Policy in Brazil

READINGS:

Jeffrey Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil, 1808 to the Present* (2013). **Read** chapter 1 "Creating Brazilians" (1-23) and chapter 5 "How Arabs Became Jews, 1880-1940" (116-149).

November 3rd—Settlement Patterns in the New World

READINGS:

"Part One: Historical Overview and National Profile", in *Arabs in the New World: Studies on Arab-American Communities*, edited by Sameer Y. Abraham and Nabeel Abraham, (Wayne State University Center for Urban Studies, Detroit, 1983), p. 8-83. **Read all four articles by Naff, Saliba, Kayal, and Haddad.**

Dina Dahbany-Miraglia, "Yemenite Jewish Immigration and Adaptation to the United States, 1905-1941", in Eric J. Hooglund ed. *Crossing the Waters: Arabic-Speaking Immigrants to the United States before 1940*, (Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1987), p. 119-132.

November 10th—Immigrant Labour: The Peddler, The Entrepreneur, and The Factory (Part 1)

READINGS:

Alix Naff, *Becoming American: The Early Arab Immigrant Experience*, (Southern Illinois University Press, 1985). **Read** Introduction (1-17) and chapter 4 "Pack Peddling" (128-160).

Baha Abu-Laban, *An Olive Branch on the Family Tree: The Arabs in Canada*, (McClelland and Stewart Limited, Generations Series, 1980). **Read** chapter 4, "Canada's Reception: Images of the Arabs" and chapter 5, "Economic Adaptation" (82-127).

Jeffrey Lesser, "(Re)Creating Ethnicity: Middle Eastern Immigration to Brazil", *The Americas*, Vol. 53, No. 1, 1996, 45-65.

November 17th— Immigrant Labour: The Peddler, The Entrepreneur, and The Factory (Part 2)

READINGS:

Evelyn Shakir, *Bint Arab: Arab and Arab American women in the United States*, (Praeger Publishers, Westport, 1997). **Read** chapters 4-6 on women, peddlers, Mill girls, factory hands, and entrepreneurs (27-51).

Alix Naff, "Growing up in Detroit: an Immigrant Grocer's Daughter" in *Arab Detroit: From Margin to Mainstream*, edited by Nabeel Abraham and Andrew Shryock (2000), p. 107-145.

November 24th— Immigrant Labour: The Family Economy and the Home (Part 3)

READINGS:

Alix Naff, *Becoming American: The Early Arab Immigrant Experience*, (Southern Illinois University Press, 1985). **Read** chapter 5, "On the Road" (161-200) and chapter 6, "Off the Road" (201-266).

Baha Abu-Laban, *An Olive Branch on the Family Tree: The Arabs in Canada*, (1980). Read chapter 7, "Arab-Canadian Family Life" (158-180).

Rula Sharkawi, "Being Arab: Growing Up Canadian" in *Arabs in the Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on the Arab Diaspora*, edited by Darcy A. Zabel, (Peter Lang, New York, 2006), p. 211-230.

December 1st— Interwar Activism and Constructing "imagined communities"
[10-page Paper Due in Class]

READINGS:

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 1991). **Read** "introduction", 1-7.

Denis Charbit, "The Balfour Declaration and Its Implications", *A History of Jewish-Muslim relations: from the origins to the present day*, ed. Abdelwahab Meddeb and Benjamin Story (Princeton Univ. Press, 2013), p. 320-328.

Lawrence Davidson, "Debating Palestine: Arab-American Challenges to Zionism, 1917-1932" in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, edited by Michael W. Suleiman (1999), p. 227-240.

Hani Ismael Elayyan, "The Syrian World in the New World: the Contextual Beginnings of Arab American Literature and the Part it Played in Identity Formation" in *Arabs in the Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on the Arab Diaspora*, edited by Darcy A. Zabel (2006), p. 45-58.

Raouf J. Halaby, "Dr. Michael Shadid and the Debate over Identity in *The Syrian World*", in Eric J. Hooglund ed. *Crossing the Waters: Arabic-Speaking Immigrants to the United States before 1940*, (Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1987), p. 55-68.

Evelyn Shakir, "Good Works, Good Times: The Syrian Ladies' Aid Society of Boston, 1917-1932", in Eric J. Hooglund ed. *Crossing the Waters: Arabic-Speaking Immigrants to the United States before 1940*, (1987), p. 133-146.

January 5th — Locating the Arab community: Race, Citizenship, and Belonging

READINGS:

Peter Kolchin, "Whiteness Studies: The New History of Race in America", *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 89, No. 1, 2002, 154-173.

Sarah M. A. Gualtieri, "Strange Fruit? Syrian Immigrants, Extralegal Violence, and Racial Formation in the United States" in *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, edited by Amarey Jamal and Nadine Naber (Syracuse University Press, New York, 2008), p. 147-169.

Suad Joseph, "Against the Grain of the Nation - The Arab-" in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, edited by Michael W. Suleiman (1999), p. 257-271.

Helen Hatab Samhan, "Not Quite White: Race Classification and the Arab-American Experience" in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, edited by Michael W. Suleiman (1999), p. 209-226.

January 12th—Post-World War Two Immigration Policy in the Americas

READINGS:

David A. Gerber, *American Immigration: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford UP, 2011).
Read Chapters 3, 5, and 6 (45-64, 86-120)

Harold Troper, "Canada's Immigration Policy since 1945", *International Journal*, (Vol. 48, No. 2, Spring, 1993), 255-281.

January 19th—Orientalism and Western Conceptions of the "Other"

READINGS:

Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, (1978). **Read** Chapter 3: "Orientalism Now" (201-225, 284-328)

Lori Anne Salem, "Far-off and Fascinating Things: Wadeha Atiyeh and Images of Arabs in the American Popular Theater, 1930-1950" in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, edited by Michael W. Suleiman (1999), p. 272-283.

January 26th— Arab Foodways: Culinary Hegemony, Self-Orientalism in Space and Place, and the Sanitization of *Arabian Nights*

READINGS:

Matthew Jaber Stiffler, "Consuming Orientalism: Public Foodways of Arab American Christians," *Mashriq and Mahjar* 4 (2014), 111-138.

William G. Lockwood and Yvonne R. Lockwood, "Continuity and Adaptation in Arab American Foodways," in *Arab Detroit: From Margin to Mainstream*, edited by Nabeel Abraham and Andrew Shryock, (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 2000), 515-550.

Joanna Kadi eds, *Food For Our Grandmothers: Writings by Arab-American and Arab-Canadian Feminists*, (Boston: South End Press, 1994). **Read** excerpts on "Olives" (p.3), "Bread" (p.63-4), "Thyme" (p.111), "Laban" (p.147-8), "Grapeleaves" (p.189), and "Mint" (p.229). **Also read** Theresa Saliba's "Sittee (or Phantom Appearance of a Lebanese Grandmother)" (p.7-17), Joanna Kadi's "Five Steps to Creating Culture" (p.231-237), and Anne J.M. Mamary's "Mint, Tomatoes, and the Grapevine" (p.250-258)

February 2nd—Religion and the 'Visibility' of the New Immigrants

READINGS:

Nadine Naber, "Introduction: Arab Americans and U.S. Racial Formations" in *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, edited by Amarey Jamal and Nadine Naber, (2008). p. 1-45.

Ghada Botros, "Religious Identity as an Historical Narrative: Coptic Orthodox Immigrant Churches and the Representation of History," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 19.2 (2006): 174-201.

Philip Kayal, "So, Who Are We? Who Am I?" In *Community of Many Worlds: Arab Americans in New York City*, edited by Kathleen Benson and Philip Kayal, (New York: Syracuse Univ. Press, 2002), p. 90–106.

February 9th— Work, memory, and Identity

READINGS:

Yinon Cohen, "Economic Assimilation in the United States of Arab and Jewish Immigrants from Israel and the Territories," *Israel Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1996, p. 75-97.

John Tofik Karam, "Margins of Memory on the *Rua 25 de Marco*: constructing the Syrian-Lebanese Past in Sao Paulo, Brazil" in *Arabs in the Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on the Arab Diaspora*, edited by Darcy A. Zabel (2006), p. 29-43.

Nabeel Abraham, "On the Road with Bob: Peddling in the Early Sixties," in *Arab Detroit: From Margin to Mainstream*, edited by Nabeel Abraham and Andrew Shryock, (2000), p. 181-195.

February 16th—Reading Week – No Class

February 23rd—The Middle East at War: Egyptian, Iraqi, and Yemini Migrations

READINGS:

Gregory Orfalea, *The Arab Americans: A History*, (Olive Branch Press, Massachusetts, 2006).
Read chapter 5, "The Third Wave: West Bank Captured, Lebanon Torn Asunder, Iraq Wars with Iran, Kuwait, and the US (1967-2005)", p. 189-212.

Fouad Assaad, "Egyptians," in *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, edited by Paul R. Magocsi, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999), p. 453-62.

Baha Abu-Laban, "Arab-Canadians and the Arab-Israeli Conflict," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1988, 104-126.

March 1st— Muslim Migration and a Community in Flux

[In-class Presentations Begin]

READINGS:

Sharon Lopez and Katharine S. Speer, "Arabs in Honduras: Immigration, Integration, and the Palestinian Presence" in *Arabs in the Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on the Arab Diaspora*, edited by Darcy A. Zabel, (2006), p. 112-129.

Linda S. Walbridge, "A Look at Differing Ideologies Among Shi'a Muslims in the United States" in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, edited by Michael W. Suleiman, (1999), p. 53-65.

March 8th— Youth and Inter-generational Tensions

[In-class Presentations Continued]

READINGS:

"Tales from Arab Detroit", produced by ACCESS and Olive Branch Productions, written and directed by Joan Mandell, produced by Sally Howell and Joan Mandell, Distributed by New Day Films, 1995. DVD available through Scott Library, SMIL Desk.

Paul Eid, *Being Arab: Ethnic and Religious Identity Building among Second Generation Youth in Montreal*, (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007). **Read** chapter 3, "Ingroup and Outgroup Boundries: Structural Factors" (47-61), and chapter 7, "Perceived Prejudice and Discrimination" (151-178).

March 15th— Is 'Diaspora' a useful category of analysis?

[In-class Presentation Continued]

READINGS:

Kevin Kenny, *Diaspora: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2013).
Read chapters 1 and 2 (1-39) and chapters 5 and 6 (87-109)

March 22nd— The Homeland, Diaspora Nationalism, and the Diasporic Imagination

READINGS:

Richard J. Jones, "Egyptian Copts in Detroit: Ethnic Community and Long-Distance Nationalism," in *Arab Detroit: From Margin to Mainstream*, edited by Nabeel Abraham and Andrew Shryock, (2000), p. 219–240.

May Seikaly, "Attachment and Identity: the Palestinian community of Detroit" in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, edited by Michael W. Suleiman (1999), p. 25-38.

Cecilia Baeza, "Palestinians in Latin America", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 2, 2014, 59-72.

Kenneth D. Wald, "Homeland Interests, Hostland Politics: Politicized Ethnic Identity among Middle Eastern Heritage Groups in the United States", *International Migration Review*, Vol. 42, No. 2, 2008, 273-301.

March 29th—What is an Arab community? Identity and Belonging

READINGS:

Jeffrey Lesser and Raanan Rein, "Challenging Particularity: Jews as a Lens on Latin American Ethnicity," *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 1.2 (2006): 249-63.

Ibrahim Hayani, "Arabs in Canada: Assimilation or Integration?" in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, edited by Michael W. Suleiman (1999), p. 284-303.

Lisa Suhair Majaj, "Arab-American Ethnicity: Locations, Coalitions, and Cultural Negotiations" in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, edited by Michael W. Suleiman (1999), p.320-336.

April 5th— Activism, Racism, and 9/11: The Future of Arabs in the Americas

[15-page Paper Due in Class]

READINGS:

Nadine Naber, *Arab America: Gender, Cultural Politics, and Activism*, (New York University Press. 2012). **Read** "Introduction: Articulating Arabness" (1-24), chapter 5 "Diasporic Feminist Anti-Imperialism" (203-246), and "Conclusion: Toward a Diasporic Feminist Critique" (247-254).

Kathleen M. Moore, "A Closer Look at Anti-Terrorism Law: *American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee v. Reno* and the construction of Alien's Rights" in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, edited by Michael W. Suleiman (1999), p. 84-99.

Jen'nan Ghazal Read, "Discrimination and Identity Formation in a Post-9/11 Era: A Comparison of Muslim and Christian Arab Americans" in *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, edited by Amarey Jamal and Nadine Naber (2008), p. 305-317.