

HIST 4555/5510
A Dream Palace or a Bitter Reality:
Arab Intellectuals and Their Ideologies in the Modern Period

Henry Hicks Academic 232
 Wednesday: 11:35 pm - 2:25 pm



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Office Hours: Wednesday 3:00 – 5:00

The purpose of this course is to unravel the dynamics of Arab thought since the late nineteenth century and to explore the ideas of some of those considered influential Arab thinkers. This is not done as an abstract exercise. Rather, we are here to understand the different intellectual transformations in the Arab world and their origins and the role of the intellectual in responding to those trends or shaping ideas and ideologies. This course delves into the meanings of religion, tradition, modernity, the “West” and the “East” as understood and interpreted by Arab intellectuals -- whether Muslim, Christian or Jewish-- and the several layers of history that those intellectuals have been trying to investigate, explain and challenge.

Our starting point is the late nineteenth-century transformations taking place within the Ottoman Empire and the responses to them from the intellectual circles of the Arab provinces of the Empire. There is more weight given throughout this course to Arab intellectuals from the Arab East (Mashriq) than to those from the Arab West (Maghrib). This is not a matter of ‘favoritism’ but more as a matter of fact and of convenience.

Reading Material

Required Texts:

For Discussion

*Hisham Sharabi. *Arab Intellectuals and the West: the Formative Years*. (The John Hopkins Press, 1970) On Reserve

*Ibrahim Abu-Rabi`. *Contemporary Arab Thought: Studies in Post-1967 Arab Intellectual History*. (Pluto Press, 2004)

For the Book Review (One book for undergraduate students, two (integrated in one review – not separate- for graduates)

- * Hisham Sharabi, *Embers and Ashes: Memoirs of an Arab Intellectual: The Formative Years 1875-1914* (Interlink, 2007)
- *Edward Said, *Out of Place: A Memoir* (Vintage Books, 2000)
- *Fouad Ajami. *The Dream Palace of the Arabs: A Generation's Odyssey* (Vintage Books, 1998).
- *Jean Said Makdisi, *Teta, Mother and Me: Three Generations of Arab Women* (W. W. Norton & Co., 2006).

Course Reader: two copies available in the general office of the history department.

Recommended texts:

- *William L. Cleveland. *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 3rd edition (Westview, 2004).
- *Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* (any of the latest editions)

All books, except Sharabi's *Arab Intellectuals*, are available at *Outside the Lines*, 6265 Quinpool Road, Halifax. For books availability and price, check <http://outsidethelinesbooks.blogspot.com/>

Presentations (undergraduates and graduates)

All students should read the material assigned for each week. The class will be divided in two groups. The groups alternate weekly with their presentations. The presentation should provide a **brief** summary of the key themes and issues raised in the material and then focus on a critique of the material. The presentation is followed by a class discussion.

Presentations (graduates only): In addition to participation in group discussion, graduate students should do individual presentations that relate to the topic of their papers. Details to be discussed in class.

Book Review. Due November 12

Undergraduate students should choose one of the four books assigned to be reviewed. Graduate students should read two books and write a review not of each individually but comparing and contrasting the two together. Length: 6-8 pages undergraduates; 10-12 pages graduates.

Paper. Due December 11.

Topic to be discussed with me.

Papers should be around 13-15 pages for undergraduates and 20-22 for graduates. Details will be discussed in class.

Grade Breakdown

Undergraduates:

Discussion/Participation:	25%
Presentations:	25%
Book Review:	20%
Paper:	30%

Graduates:

Discussion:	20%
Presentations:	20%
Book Review:	25%
Paper:	35%

Grade Scale

Undergraduate

A+	90-100	C+	67-69
A	85-89	C	61-66
A-	80-84	C-	55-60
B+	77-79	D	50-54
B	73-76	F	Below 50
B-	70-72		

Graduate

A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
F	Below 70

Policies

Plagiarism. All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on plagiarism and academic honesty as referenced in the Undergraduate Calendar at <http://registrar.dal.ca/calendar/ug/UREG.htm#12>. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

Disabilities. Students with disabilities should register with Student Accessibility Services. Please telephone 494-2836, e-mail disabilities@dal.ca, or visit Killam G28.

Students should turn their cell phones and pagers off before entering the classroom.

Schedule

Week 1 (Sep. 16): An Introduction to Modern Arab History, Arab Thought and Arab Intellectuals.

*Edward W. Said, *The Representations of the Intellectual: the 1993 Reith Lectures* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994), 3-24; 47-64.

Week 2 (Sep. 23): Changing Worlds: Arab Intellectuals between Ottomanism and European Imperialism

*Hisham Sharabi, *Arab Intellectuals and the West: the Formative Years, 1875-1914* (The John Hopkins Press, 1969. (for a better critique of Sharabi, you may compare it with Hourani's).

* "Bahithat al-Badiya Advocates Greater Educational and Economic Rights for Egyptian Women, 1909" in Akram Fouad Khater, *Sources in the History of the Middle East*, (Houghton, 2004).

Week 3 (September 30): Debating Secularism: Government, Politics and the non/Sacred

*Abu-Rabi`: Introduction, chapters 2, 3 and 4

* Talal Asad, "Secularism, Nation-State, Religion," in idem., *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam Modernity* (Stanford, 2003),

*Ali 'Abd al-Raziq, *an Egyptian Religious Scholar, Argues for the Separation of State and Religion, 1928*, in Akram Fouad Khater. *Sources in the History of the Modern Middle East* (Houghton Mifflin, 2004), 67-70. (course reader)

Week 4 (Oct. 07): Faces of Nationalism: Religion, Ethnicity and Culture



*Abu Rabi`: chapter 5 & 6.

* Kemal H. Karpat (ed.) *Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East* (Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 87-114. (course-reader)

*Amal N. Ghazal, "The Other Frontiers of Arab Nationalism: Berbers, Ibadis and Salafism in the Interwar Period," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (course-reader).

Week 5 (Oct. 14): The Arab Left



* Abu Rabi`: chapters 15, 16.

* Kemal H. Karpat (ed.) *Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East* (Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 122-132, 156-175, 185-197 (course reader)

*Paul Salem, "Marxism," in *Bitter Legacy: Ideology and Politics in the Arab World* (Syracuse University Press, 1994), 147-201. (course reader)

Week 6 (Oct. 21): Arab Nationalism, Nasserism and the Twilight of an Ideology



For some background reading on Arab Nationalism, see Hourani and Cleveland.

*Kemal H. Karpat (ed.) *Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East* (Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 55-65.

*Adeed Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: from triumph to despair* (Princeton University Press, 2003), 282-314.

* Youssef M. Choueiri, "Epilogue: Civil Society and Democracy," in idem., *Arab Nationalism: A History* (Blackwell, 2000), 207-218.

* As'ad AbuKhalil, "A New Arab Ideology?: The Rejuvenation of Arab Nationalism," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Winter, 1992), pp. 22-36. Online

Week 7 (Oct. 28): The Palestinian Question: the Heart and Mind of Arab Intellectuals



*Abu-Rabi`: 1 & 14

*Reuven Snir, "'Till Spring Comes': Arabic and Hebrew Literary Debates among Iraqi Jews in Israel (1950-2000), *Shofar: an Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* (online)

*Ella Shohat, "Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of its Jewish Victims," in Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti and Ella Shohat (eds.), *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation and Postcolonial Perspectives* (University of Minnesota Press, 1997). (course reader)

Documentary: *Forget Baghdad*.

Week 8 (Nov. 04): Gendered Thought: Feminism and the New Order

*Qasim Amin argues for the Emancipation of Women in Egypt, 1900, in Akram Fouad Khater. *Sources in the History of the Modern Middle East* (Houghton Mifflin, 2004), 74-83. (course reader)

- *Amal Amireh. "Framing Nawal el-Saadawi: Arab feminism in a Transnational world," *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 26(2000): 215-249. (online)
- * Nawal el Saadawi, "Preface," in idem., *The Hidden Face of Eve: Women in the Arab World* (Zed Books, 2007).
- * Noga Efrati, "The Other 'Awakening' in Iraq: The Women's Movement in the First Half of the Twentieth Century," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, November 2004, **31(2)**, 153-173. (online)

Week 9 (Nov. 11): University Closed

Week 10 (Nov. 18): Islamic Resurgence: Disenchanted Politics



*Abu-Rabi`: Chapters 7 & 8

*Mona El-Ghobashy, "The Metamorphosis of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37(2005), 373-395.

Week 11 (Nov. 25): Video-Conference with Professor Ibrahim Abu-Rabi`. Details will be provided later.

Week 12 (Dec. 02): The Voices of Radical Reformism

* Abu Rabi`: chapters 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

*Michaelle L. Browers, "Shahrur's reformation: Toward A Democratic, Pluralist and Islamic Public Sphere," *Historical Reflections*, vol. 35, no.2, summer 2009.

NOTE: Usually we hold the last session off-campus and we do a summary and informal discussion but because of the university closure on Nov. 11, we need to make up for the missing session. We can meet off campus on another day to celebrate the end of the seminar course and the end of the fall term.



Pandemic H1N1 Influenza Advisory in relation to Academic Continuity

In the event of an escalation of the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus, the University may need to authorize Academic Units to change elements of class schedules and/or evaluation plans as outlined in course syllabi. Any change is intended to support the primary goal of reducing the risk of spreading a pandemic influenza among students, faculty and staff.

Although it is difficult to predict the severity of the pandemic, the University is committed to minimizing the impact on student's academic progress. Therefore, every effort will be made to provide students with options for continued learning and for continued fair evaluations.

Changes may include but are not limited to:

- . Adjustments to course assignments;
- . Changes to the dates of exams;
- . Arrangements for alternative evaluations for students affected by H1N1 influenza virus;
- . Adjustments to work terms;
- . Modification of marks awarded for participation;
- . Adjustments to attendance policies.

Any alternative plan made in individual courses may be superseded by University-wide or Government measures to reduce the spread of the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus.