

ID 1, Section 11: Muslim Literary Landscapes

Office hours: T 2-4 pm, Pearson's 201A

zkassam@pomona.edu

Fall 2005

Course Texts

Edward W. Said. *Culture and Imperialism*.

Salman Rushdie. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*.

Abdelrahman Munif. *Variations on Night and Day*.

Cheikh Hamidou Kane. *Ambiguous Adventure*.

Mahmoud Darwish. *Unfortunately, It Was Paradise*.

Khaled Hosseini. *The Kite Runner*.

Leila Ahmed. *A Border Passage*.

Class will be held at Honnold-Mudd Library, information desk, Sept 13.

No classes on Oct 18, Nov 22, Nov 24

Texts can be bought at Huntley Bookstore. Copies have also been placed on 2-hour reserve at Honnold-Mudd Library, Reserve desk, and may be read on location at Pearson's Library, in the basement of Pearson's Hall.

Course Goals

1. To read critically

- * for whom is the author writing [AUDIENCE]
- * what issues does the author raise [ISSUES]
- * what positions do the characters hold on the issues [MULTIPLE VOICES]
- * what is the context in which the work is written [CONTEXT]
- * how does the author use language and frame the story [FORMAL ASPECTS]

2. To write clearly

- * does your reader know what you're writing about
- * do you have a thesis that you're going to argue
- * do you give evidence in support of your thesis
- * do you present counter viewpoints
- * have you paid attention to grammar and stylistic features
- * did you use a writer's reference work for correct citation procedures
- * did you take your work to a writing fellow for editing
- * did a peer give you feedback on your thesis, arguments, and writing?

3. To learn about the issues pertaining to the study of the Islamic world

- * does the media image of Islam color how we see the Islamic world
- * what kinds of conclusions about Islam and Muslims do we draw from recent political events?
- * what are our own assumptions and presuppositions about Muslims

4. To extend our knowledge of works written by Muslim authors
 - * can we assume that just because a Muslim wrote it, it is about religion
 - * what connection is there between a work and the worldview of the author
 - * how does context inform the work, locally and globally
 - * how do Muslims themselves define their issues and present their view of the world: is this the same as any author anywhere, or is there something distinct
5. To draw connections between Said's framework and the novels examined and to ask how any of this relates to contemporary events
6. To enjoy and extend our learning about our global community.

Course Assignments

Library research bibliography, due **Sept 20**
5 assignments, due **Sept 29, Oct 13, Nov 1, Nov 15, Nov 29**

Due Tuesday, September 20th, 2005.

Use the library to prepare a bibliography of secondary sources (books+ articles; either four articles or 1 book and 2 articles) on five of novels assigned. One of these must explore the background context of the novel. Please have a research librarian initial your bibliography.

Due Thursday, September 29th.

Write a five-page essay on the political, social and cultural background of the period (The Context) covered for any one of your six books pertaining to that country. Please show a prior draft with editing comments/marks from a Writing Fellow.

Due Thursday, October 13th.

For your second book, explore The Issues raised by the author in this work. Relate these to The Context of the book. Please show me a prior draft with editing comments/marks from one of your peers.

Due Tuesday, November 1st.

For your third book, delineate The Characters and their relationships with each other. How do each of them express a different "take" on the issues? Relate these to The Context and The Issues. Bring in evidence of writing fellow edit.

Due Tuesday, November 15th.

For your fourth book, write a Book Review for your favorite high school teacher giving them compelling reasons why they should read the book. Bring into your review The Context, The Issues, The Characters, The Formal Elements. I expect you to also bring in evidence that you have mailed this to your teacher (xerox of envelope with address and stamp), and I need to see the cover page you wrote to your teacher. Please leave your evidence in my mailbox, Pearson's, Room 209.

Due Tuesday, November 29th.

Write a ten to twelve-page Letter to your best friend, drawing all our readings together, including the two books on which you did not write an essay. Use a personal tone, as befits a letter. Tell them what we did in class. Show them the connections between the novels and issues raised by Said. Outline for your friend any themes and issues that are of common concern, and some that relate only to the specific context of the book. Treat this assignment, if you will, as providing a window for your friend about what this course meant for your growth: intellectual, social and personal. I need to see evidence that this letter has been mailed.

Each of your essays except the Letter must be edited by fellows in the Writing Center or by your peer as requested in the course assignment. Contact them in time to set up an appointment to discuss your work with them and implement any changes they might suggest. Remember to follow standard academic formats as set out in style guides such as Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference* for citation procedures. You will be permitted rewrites to improve your grade, with one week in which to do so. Negative points will be earned for failure to do so.

Course Format and Responsibilities

This is a discussion rather than a lecture class, which means you are in charge. Good discussions ensue from good preparation. This means that you will each take the responsibility of working individually and in groups to present the work under discussion to the whole class, and creatively designing discussion techniques.

Class attendance is mandatory. 3 percentage points will automatically be deducted for absences without EXTREMELY good reasons.

For good citizenship, and to enhance our enjoyment of class as well as our class discussions, we will all read each of the books required.

To facilitate our class goals, all course assignments must be submitted on time. Each of you is allotted three (3) late days, which you may use however you wish. Otherwise, 3 percentage points will be deducted for each day your paper is late.

To increase our confidence in speaking publicly, as well as in using reasoned arguments, each participant is expected to engage in class discussion. No matter how scared or shy you are, make your point, as expressing cogent arguments or viewpoints gets better with practice. Learn how to balance presenting your ideas with keeping time so that others also have a chance to speak.

As part of our course responsibilities, we will observe civil discourse procedures and learn to listen to the views and opinions offered by each one of us without taking them personally, and offering our own viewpoints using balanced feedback. Balanced

feedback means acknowledging what is important in the prior person's viewpoint, and adding how we might differ, and why.

Each assignment will earn 10 points (Bibliography); 15 points (essays). Please also submit a reflection on the three required lectures: Jamaica Kincaid, Robert Gibb, and Vincent Cornell (Clark-Horowitz lectures).

Enjoy the class!