
Visual and Literary Encounters in the Middle East: Between Production and Distortion of Knowledge

This reading group will examine the representation of the Middle East from the early modern period up to the contemporary era. The focus is on the critical junctures during which global encounters gained new impetus through diverse media. Each meeting will center on a cultural practice that became a vehicle for the circulation and transformation of ideas, cultures, peoples, and artifacts beyond borders or at contact zones. The focus will be less on the historical techniques of representation than on how cross-cultural interactions at the intersection of visual/bodily, as well as literary/imaginary experiences, produce, erase, distort, or transform knowledge of places— understood not as an empty phenomenon, but as lived spaces for human action. The outline of the reading group is general enough to allow participation by non-experts, who are interested in thinking about the current trends in the representation and dissemination of the image of the Middle East through new social media, with a historical awareness. There might be suggested primary materials related to images, narratives, films, and exhibitions accompanying main readings.

(The sources are available online though McGill library and the group is planned to meet on Tuesdays at 16:00 PM at the IPLAI)

Suggested schedule and readings**September 20/Week 1--Travelling, mapping, and image making**

Palmira Brummett, “Authority, Travel, and the Map,” in *Mapping the Ottomans: Sovereignty, Territory, and Identity in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2015), 239–276.

Benjamin Schmidt, “Seeing the World: Visuality and Exoticism,” in *Inventing exoticism geography, globalism, and Europe's early modern world* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 83–162.

*Bronwen Wilson, “Assembling the Archipelago: Isolarii and the Horizons of Early Modern Public Making,” in *Making Space Public in Early Modern Europe: Performance, Geography, Privacy*, eds. Angela Vanhaelen and Joseph P. Ward. (New York ; London : Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2013).

September 27/Week 2--(Un)dressing the Exotic Body

Elisabeth A. Fraser, ““Dressing Turks in the French Manner”: Mouradega D'Ohsson's Panorama of the Ottoman Empire,” *Ars Orientalis* 39 (2010): 198–230.

Kader Konuk, “Ethnomasquerade in Ottoman-European Encounters: Reenacting Lady Mary Wortley Montagu,” *Criticism* 46, 3 (2005): 393–414.

*Benjamin Schmidt, ‘Exotic Bodies: Sex and Violence Abroad,’ in *Inventing Exoticism Geography, Globalism, and Europe's Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 163–226.

October 11/Week 3--Displaying and Classifying in Museums

Wendy Shaw, "Museums and Narratives of Display from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic," *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 253–279.

Mercedes Volait, "History or Theory? French Antiquarianism, Cairene Architecture and Enlightenment Thinking," *Ars Orientalis* 39 (2010): 231-54.

*Wendy Shaw, "Antiquities Collections in the Imperial Museum," in *Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archaeology, and the Visualization of History in the late Ottoman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California, 2003), 1–24.

October 18/Week 4--The World Fair as a Stage Set

Zeynep Çelik, "Islamic Quarters in Western Cities," in *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-century World's Fairs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 51–94.

*Zeynep Çelik and Kinney Leila, "Ethnography and Exhibitionism at the Expositions Universelles," *Assemblage* 13 (1990): 35–59

For a modern comparison, see the pavilions of Africa in the Expo 67 at: <http://expo67.ncf.ca>

November 8/Week 5--Filming the Middle East and the Middle East in Cinema

Lina Khatib, "The Politicized Landscape," in *Filming the Modern Middle East: Politics in the Cinemas of Hollywood and the Arab World* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 15–61.
Films TBD

*Selected articles on films from, Gönül Dönmez-Colin, *The Cinema of North Africa and the Middle East* (London: Wallflower Press, 2007)

November 15/Week 6--Presenting the Middle East in Contemporary Exhibits and Biennials

"'Open Sesame!' David J. Roxburgh on the Musée du Louvre's Galleries of Islamic Art". *Art Forum* 51.5 (2013): 51, 5, 61–64.

"The New Galleries for 'The Art of the Arab Lands, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, and Later South Asia,' the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York," *The Art Bulletin* 94, No. 4 (December 2012): 641–644

Nada Shabout and Linda-Rose Hembreiker, "The Politics of Presentation," *The Arab Studies Journal*, 13/14, 2/1 (2005): 234–240.

Nada Shabout, "Reviewed Work: MAKING WORLDS // HACER MUNDOS // FARE MUNDI," *The Arab Studies Journal* 18, 1 (2010): 356–60.

*additional suggested readings