

Attention!

This is a representative syllabus. The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.

The Lore and Lure of the Contemporary Arab World: Folk and Popular Culture Yesterday And Today

Instructor:

COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN THE HUMANITIES and ARABIC 377

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Meeting Time/Location:

This Non-Western or Global Cultures and Ideas GEC course, offered for the first time in Winter 2004 will introduce students to a wealth of Arabic folklore, including the lore of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Arabs as well as Berbers, Kurds and other Arab world communities. Folklore is defined here as traditional expressive culture: verbal art (e.g., myths, legends, folktales, riddles, jokes); material culture (e.g., the construction of shrines, homes, boats as well as production of pottery, jewelry, embroidery, carpets); visual presentation of self (e.g., applications of henna, tattoos, dress, hairstyles); folk religion, rituals, and festivals; and folk music (e.g., lullabies). Emphasis will be not on finished products but on cultural process.

We will look at what Arab world "Folk," from different regions, religions, and language and ethnic traditions have in common in regard to ethos, world view, practical and aesthetic needs and how they differ, as well as at national and international appropriations of local lore.

Requirements: Research bibliography for your final paper topic—3 pages or more (20%), Class presentation of your folklore term (10%), Midterm (30%), Final Paper—7 pages (40%)

Please always bring your course packet and 1001 Nights to class.

Week I: Getting Started & a Classic

Tuesday, January 6

Introductions and First 16 pages of 1001 Nights (Arabian Nights). Bring your book we will read together and discuss in class.

Thursday, January 8

Reading Due: 1001 Nights pp. 33-150 "The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad"

Film: *Son of the Sheikh*

Week II: Folklore Verbal Art Genres: An Overview

Tuesday, January 13

Reading Due: Finish "The Porter and the Three Ladies." We will go over this in class.

Be sure to have three or four comments or insights to share with the class.

Thursday, January 15

Reading Due: "Oral Traditions in North Africa" pp. 105-128. What are some of the issues that come up in studying Arab world folklore that might be anticipated by this small overview of verbal art in North Africa—Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco?

Introduction to Myth: Film: *Family Feud*

Week III: Folklore Genres

Tuesday, January 20

Selecting a Genre or Term from Folkloristics. On Tuesday, January 27 I will ask you for a one page summary and also present your discoveries to the class (10 minutes)

Reading Due: "Arabic Folk Literature and Political Expression" and "Arabic Traditions" pp. 15-29, Yemeni Poetry 239-241. ALSO: Read one more story in 1001 Nights and talk about it in class—your choice. Write a paragraph showing how it reflects (a) folktale characteristics (b) 1001 Nights themes and explain it to the class.

Thursday, January 22

The Fluidity of Genres

Reading Due (to be discussed on Tuesday): "A King, A Queen and the Riddle In-between" pp. 273-283

Meeting with Mrs. Marti Alt, Humanities Librarian or film: *Yemen, Land of the Queen of Sheba*

Week IV: Personal Experience Narratives/Local Legends

Tuesday, January 27

Due: Presentation to the class of your term (9 students) and submission of one page summary (all students).

Reading Due: Personal Experience Narratives: 175-188 (Introduction)
"The Structure of Male Storytelling Events" 189-202 (end of first story)

Thursday, January 29

Finish Presentations

Reading Due: "The Structure of Male Storytelling Events" Finish (be sure to read all footnotes)

Week V: Folk Art and Folk Religion

Tuesday, February 3

Readings Due: "The Doum Tree of Wad Hamid" 225-230, "The Riddle of Ramadan" 231-237

Thursday, February 5

Reading: Canonicity pp. 1-8 and 10-13 and Review of materials covered to date.
Egyptian Haj painting slides

Week VI: Folk/Popular Music

Tuesday, February 10

Varieties of Arab World Music: A Brief Introduction

Reading Due: Sirat Beni Hilal Epic pp. 135-173 also Yemeni poetry 239-341 and Sudanese and Berber women's performance TBA

Thursday, February 12

Reading Due: "Sad Songs..." pp. and Syrian-Jewish music pp. 285-300

Film: Middle East Music and Dance

Week VII: World Music?

Tuesday, February 17 "Rai, Rap, and Franco Maghrebi Identities" pp. 55-73

Thursday, February 19: No Class. Review reading and work on presentation and paper.

Week VIII: Visual Presentation of Self

Tuesday, February 24

Reading : Presentation of Self: Dress: 245-271

Thursday, February 26

Annotated Bibliographies for Presentations Due

Reading Due: "Life Stories of Female Entertainers" pp. 321-334 and "Marginality" pp. 335-345

Week IX:

Tuesday, March 2: Midterm

I will, with Sheila's help, by Feb 15 e-mail you a set of questions from which I will select the midterm questions.

Thursday, March 4

Presentations: 15 minutes each by 6 students (20 minutes for questions)

Week X:

Tuesday, March 9

Presentations: 6 students

Thursday, March 11

Presentations: 6 students

Papers Due Monday, March 15, by 5:00 in Jennings 203, Webber's mailbox

Epic Folk History Folklore Myth Legend Folktale Proverb
Riddle Superstition Joke, Humor Folk Speech Folk Art Foodways
Worldview Functionalism Structuralism Performance Theory

Gesunkenes Kulturgut Motif Oikotype (oicotype) Folk Fakelore
Blason Populaire Superorganic Rites of Passage Oral Formulaic Theory
Folk Music (Ethnomusicology) Folk Dance Trickster, Frame stories, Aarne-
Thompson Motif, Tale-Type Indexes.