MES 76900

Topics in Arabic Literature and Culture: ARAB CINEMAS

The CUNY Graduate Center - MA in Middle East Studies Program

instructor

Christopher Stone
Associate Professor of Arabic
Hunter College
cst@hunter.cuny.edu

course meeting:

Wednesdays 6:30 to 8:30
Room ?

office hours:

?

course requirements:

- attend each class
- watch each film
- do the weekly readings
- weekly discussion questions
- Final Paper:

You will be required to write an analytical and/or research paper of 18-25 double-spaced pages (12 point font).

You will choose a topic with my help, drawing upon topics we discuss in class and films we have watched throughout the semester. The paper can cover multiple films but must be centrally based on at least one film that we did not watch as a class. Final paper topics are due via email no later than Wednesday, November 30 at 11:59 p.m.

A detailed outline and bibliography is due no later than Friday December 9 by 11:59 p.m. This outline will be graded and no late submissions will be accepted.
Your final paper is due on Friday December 21 by 11:59 p.m. Papers must be properly referenced according to MLA or other approved conventions. Final papers must be submitted via email in either .doc or .rtf format. Also, please cc yourself and include a copy of the paper in the body of the message when you send your final paper.

**grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>discussion questions</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participation</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>final paper</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**attendance and lateness policy:**

Each absence beyond one absence will lower your final grade by 4%.

Class will begin promptly at 6:30. Being between 0 and 5 minutes late equals 1/4 of an absence, being between 5 and 20 minutes late equals 1/2 of an absence, being between 20 and 45 minutes late equals 3/4 of an absence, and being more than 45 minutes late equals a full absence.

**course materials:**

There is nothing to buy for this course.

All films will be available for online streaming/downloading.

All articles will be available either on Blackboard or for download via links I will provide you.

Please note that I reserve the right to change the readings, films, and course requirements throughout the course of the semester. If I do so I will notify you in writing and update the syllabus.
1. Introduction to the course

8/31

We will discuss the course syllabus and your and my expectations from the course. I will also introduce the material for week 2.

2. Early Egyptian Cinema: Determination/Resolution (Egypt, Selim, 1936).

9/7

- Determination/Resolution

- optional secondary film: The White Rose (Egypt, Karim, 1933):

- read:

  - Armbrust, “Classic, clunker, national narrative.” This is a chapter from Armbrust’s Mass Culture and Modernism in Egypt.

3. The Early Egyptian Musical: song meets dance meets comedy: The Flirtation of Girls (Egypt, Wagdi, 1949)

9/14

- Flirtation of Girls

-optional secondary film: Genie Lady (Egypt, Barakat, 1950):

- read:

  - Armbrust, "The Golden Age Before the Golden Age"
Draft Syllabus - Stone

4. Egyptian Realism: *Cairo Station*, Egypt, 1958, Chahine and *A Beginning and an End*, Egypt, Abu Sayf, 1960

9/21

- *Cairo Station*

- Optional Secondary film: *A Beginning and an End* (Egypt, Abu Sayf, 1960)

Read:

- Gordon, “*Cairo Station*”

5. Egyptian Melodrama: *Sleepless*, Egypt, 1957, Abu Sayf and *Call of the Nightingale/Nightingale’s Prayer*, Egypt, 1959, Barakat

9/28

- *Sleepless*

- Optional Secondary film: *Nightingale’s Prayer*

- read:
  
  - Armbrust, "*New Cinema, Commercial Cinema, and the Modernist Tradition in Egypt*".

  - Gordon, "*Class-Crossed Lovers: Popular Film and Social Change in Nasser’s New Egypt*.”


10/12

- *The Ring Seller*

- *We Loved Each Other So Much*:

  - read:

    - Stone, *The Ba’labakk Festival and the Rahbanis: Folklore, Ancient History, Musical Theater and Nationalism in Lebanon*

    - Massad, “*Art and Politics in the Cinema of Youssef Chahine*”

10/19

- *My Father is on the Tree*
- *A Voice Like Egypt*
- *Watch out for Zouzou* (Egypt, al-Imam, 1972)

- read:
  - Gordon, “*The Slap Felt Around the Arab World.*”
  - Gordon, "*The Nightingale and the Ra'is.*"


10/26

- *The Dreams of Hind and Camilia*

- *Kit Kat* (Egypt, Abd Elsayed, 1991):

- read:
  - Stone, “*Ahmad Zaki and Mohammed Khan: icons of Hollywood on the Nile's Unlikely Golden Age*”
    - just the few pages starting on page 44 on by Stone).
  - Arte East file on Ahmad Zaki (all articles)

11/2

- *Terrorism and Kebab*

- link to *The Terrorist* (Egypt, Galal, 1994): (not subtitled)

- read:
  
  - Armbrust, "Terrorism and Kabab: A Capraesque View of Modern Egypt" (link to come)
  
  - Armbrust, *Egyptian Cinema On Stage and Off*
  
  - Armbrust, *Islamists in Egyptian Cinema*


11/9

- *Bab El-Oued*

- read:

  - Volkan Yücel & Ziya Toprak, “Cinematic Orientalism: Bab el Oued City & The Time that Remains”


11/16

- *The Dupes*

- read:

  - Kanafani, *Men in the Sun*
  
  - Massad, *The Weapon of Culture: Cinema in The Palestinian Liberation Struggle*
FINAL PAPER TOPICS ARE DUE BY 4 PM WEDNESDAY 11/30


11/23

- *Paradise Now*

- *Divine Intervention* (Suleiman, Palestine, 2002)

- read:
  


11/30

- *Nights of the Jackal*

- *The Extras* (Malah, Syria, 1993):

- read:


FINAL PAPER BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND OUTLINES ARE DUE BY 4 P.M. FRIDAY 12/9


12/7

- *The Yacoubian Building*

- *Halim* (Arafa, Egypt, 2006):

  - Armbrust. "When the Lights Go Down in Cairo: Cinema as Secular__Ritual"

FINAL PAPERS DUE FRIDAY 12/21 BY 4 P.M.