

# 4.621

## Orientalism, Colonialism, and Representation



This is a seminar on the politics of representation. It examines how political, historical, ideological, and religious views inform — and sometimes dictate— the representation and codification of knowledge. The seminar focuses on Orientalism, a discursive category that has been constructed over the long history of encounter between the “West” and the Islamic “Orient” from Antiquity to the present. It explores selected instances of exchange and reviews the associated texts, art, architecture, and institutions, which have influenced the shaping of Western knowledge about the Islamic world as well as informing modern Islamic self-representations. The seminar ends with a consideration of phenomena that impact how the Islamic world is viewed today. The aim is to gain a historically grounded awareness of the complexities of cultural identities, which always defy and sometimes subvert the representations that purport to depict and define them.

**INSTRUCTOR:** NASSER RABBAT • **TIME:** WEDNESDAY 2-5 PM • **ROOM:** 5-216  
**LEVEL:** 3-0-9 G • **REQUIREMENT FOR AKPIA MARCH & SMARCHS STUDENTS**