

MIT

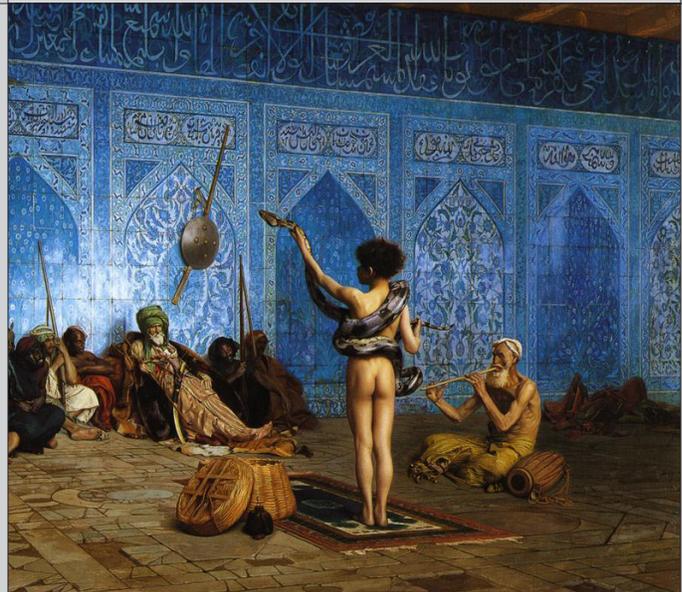
FALL 2000

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

With a specific focus on orientalist traditions in architecture, art, and scholarship, this seminar examines how politics and ideology inform the construction and reproduction of knowledge. During the semester we will explore selected historical cases of cross-cultural encounters between Europe and the “Orient” from Antiquity to the present. We will analyze particular events, texts, projects, and images which have been influential in shaping European representations of the “Orient.” We will also investigate how opposing and revisionist “Orientals” similarly appropriate culture and history in the making of national identities.

The discussions will be informed by the recent literature in cultural criticism and the growing interest in hybrid identities and multiculturalism which challenge both the traditional orientalist and the nationalist counter-orientalist narratives. The objective of the seminar is to help the participants gain a historically grounded awareness of the complexities of cultural identities, always contesting the representations that claim to define them.

The course includes weekly reading and writing assignments and requires active participation in discussions. A research paper is to be first presented in class and then submitted at the end of the term. Topics should be decided in consultation with the instructors by the end of the third week of the semester. A short abstract and preliminary bibliography should be submitted by the fourth week. The required texts are available at the Coop and area bookshops. All other readings will be available on reserve in Rotch.



4.621 ORIENTALISM AND REPRESENTATION

**Time:** Tuesdays 2-5, 5-216

**Instructor:** Nasser Rabbat (nasser@mit.edu)

**TA:** TBA

**Units:** 3-0-9, H-Level Grad Credit

**Prerequisite:** Consent of instructors

**Textbooks:** Edward Saïd, *Orientalism* (New York, 1979); Thierry Hentsch, *Imagining the Middle East* (New York, 1992).