**Between the Middle East and the Americas**

Edited by Evelyn Alsultany and Ella Shohat

**Statement to Professors**

This volume of original essays examines Orientalism and Middle Eastern diasporic culture from a transnational perspective. By comparing differing and overlapping forms of Orientalism in North America, Latin America, and parts of Europe, the volume challenges the Area Studies model in which each geographical area is examined within the confines of its borders. Transcending a nation-state approach, the book aims to begin a transnational conversation about the production of meanings of Middle Eastern identities across time and space. The volume takes a cultural studies approach that engages the question of “cultural politics” or “the politics of culture” to unravel the ways in which identities become sites of contestation, politicization, and struggle in the context of national narratives and transnational cultural flows.

**Classroom Discussion questions:**

#1: How does examining the cultural politics of the Middle East differ if using a national lens or a transnational lens? What do we learn about the cultural politics of the Middle East when examining the U.S. alongside Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Denmark, and France?

#2: How is culture political? Provide examples from two of the essays to describe the ways in which culture becomes politicized. Why do you think culture becomes politicized?

#3: In what ways have people from the Middle East been misrepresented and in what ways have they challenged misrepresentations through self-representations? Provide examples from at least three of the essays.