

The Link

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By Jack G. Shaheen

The American comic strip first appeared in the 1890's during the newspaper wars between William Randolph Hearst's New York Journal and Joseph Pulitzer's New York World.

Comic books first appeared in 1911, when a collection of Mutt and Jeff comics was reprinted in the Chicago American.

In June, 1938, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, two Cleveland teenagers, introduced in Action Comics #1 a refugee from the doomed planet Krypton. (A mint condition of that copy can now bring as much as \$15,000.) Superman soon became the superhero model of today's super \$275 million industry.

Other types developed to fit demographic niches, including: characters out of nursery rhymes or animals invested with human characteristics, such as Walt Disney's Mickey Mouse; adult comics that found their genesis in the underground movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's; and a wide range of comic books specializing in hobbies, sports, and education.

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It is the image of the Arab in these comic books that we examine in this study. What we will find is this: everywhere the Arab is the enemy: Arabs vs. Donald Duck, Batman, Sgt. Rock, Hawkman; Arabs vs. Americans, Israelis, Europeans; Arabs vs. common human decency.

Nearly all these Arab villains fall into one of three categories: the repulsive terrorist, the sinister sheikh, or the rapacious bandit. And all of them, Arab men and Arab women, come with their own distorted sex roles.

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About This Issue...

Item: The average comic book reader is 21 years old.

Item: The average comic book reader spends \$10 a week on his or her consumption of comics.

Item: There has never been a major study of Arab stereotyping in comic books.

Jack Shaheen's 1980 Link issue, "The Arab Stereotype on Television," became the basis for his book **The TV Arab**. In this issue we are pleased to present the results of Jack's research into Arab stereotyping in comic books, a preview of his forthcoming book, **The Comic Book Arab**.

Research credits on this issue go to: Leonard Rifas, who helped to assemble the material (Michigan State and Bowling Green Universities alone have over 67,000

comic books in their archives); the Swann Foundation for Caricature and Cartoon for their project grant; and to Michael who, according to the author, was the project's heart and soul (Michael, be it noted, is the author's associate, editor and son.)

Dr. Shaheen requests Link readers to send him comic books that they (or their children) feel perpetuate the disfigurement of Arabs and their culture. His address is: Southern Illinois University, Box 1775, Edwardsville, IL 62026.

Our Holiday Book & Video Offerings are found on pages 12-14. Also, on page 12, under Notices, we bring two new resource publications to your attention.

John F. Mahoney
Executive Director

ARAB AS TERRORIST

At least fifty instances of Arab terrorist activity were recorded in our study. Indeed, one could easily conclude that terrorism is the most favored subject of writers and illustrators.

Tragically, they ignore realistic portraits. Generations and nations of Arabs have negotiated compromises, agreements, and settlements based upon conciliation and cooperation. Saudi Arabia is one of the United States' most trusted allies and trading partners. Yet, if we are to believe images portrayed in comic books, Arabs are sinister fanatics who wish to subjugate the western world through a reign of terror. Consider terrorist portraits in the following comics.

Batman: A Death in the Family (DC Comics, #426-429, Jim Starlin, 1988). This four-part series begins as the Joker escapes from a mental hospital. He plans to sell Arab terrorists a nuclear Cruise missile to obtain much-needed funds. In pursuit of the lunatic escapee, Batman accidentally discovers the Joker's plan. The action shifts to "the North-western Mediterranean coast of Lebanon," where Batman encounters resistance from a "Shiite Extremist Group," which does not care to give up the C-130 transport plane the Joker has hijacked to deliver his cargo. Batman does battle with suspicious-looking Arab men dressed in green combat garb. They tote submachine guns and wear blue headdresses.

As the Joker concludes his nuclear arms deal with Jamal, identified as the leader of the Arab terrorists, one of the Joker's entourage asks, "You get the money from these BANDITS-IN-BED-SHEETS?" Jamal appears as an overweight, double-chinned Arab type his mouth permanently affixed in a sneer. The others are sketched

as an uncouth lot—most with unkempt facial hair and brandishing weapons. Jamal is delighted with his new toy and is prepared to fire it immediately. His intended target? Tel Aviv!

Batman foils Jamal's scheme to destroy the Israeli city, but the Joker escapes and subsequently meets the Ayatollah Khomeini who offers him the job of Iranian Ambassador to the United Nations. Ever the opportunist, the Joker accepts. Batman is present when the Joker, garbed in Arab headdress and robe, addresses the United Nations' General Assembly—



I am proud to speak for the great Islamic Republic of Iran. That country's current leaders and I have a lot in common. Insanity and a great love of FISH. But unfortunately we also share a MUTUAL PROBLEM. We get NO RESPECT. Everyone thinks of Iran as the home of the TERRORIST ZEALOT! They say even worse things about ME, would you believe? We've both suffered unkind ABUSE and BELITTLEMENT!

WELL, WE AREN'T GOING TO TAKE IT ANYMORE!! You'll no longer be allowed to kick us around. In fact, you aren't going to be able to kick ANYONE around ever again!

The Joker then proceeds to rip off his costume and gas the entire chamber. Fortunately, Superman, disguised as a security guard, saves the day by inhaling the toxic fumes.

Thus, Arabs are equated with terrorists who are equated with Iranians who are equated with Batman's insane arch-nemesis, the Joker. (It is clear that the writers of *Batman* do not know the difference between a Persian and an Arab. Batman speaks Farsi in Beirut!) The Joker's insanity is their insanity; his destructiveness is their destructiveness. Batman's arch-enemy finds his home with Arabs/Iranians, America's enemies. This is the most prevalent of the themes involving Arabs in comic books, that is—Arabs [Them] vs. the West [Us].

In **Mark Hazzard: MERC "Cestus Dei"** (Marvel Comics, #8, Gray Morrow & Vince Colletta, 1987) Arab terrorists in Northern Lebanon capture Father Capistran, a priest on a quest to find the "Ring of the Fisherman." Bearded, brutal and wielding automatic weapons, the terrorists slay twelve of the priest's companions while kidnapping him without apparent reason. The church enlists Mark Hazzard, an American mercenary, to free Father Capistran from the terrorists' clutches. Hazzard asks, "Why me?" The Monsignor, gold cross hanging from his vestments, answers: "Because you are a man of principle, Mr. Hazzard, a moral man, willing to fight even a friend when you think you are right." The implication being that Arabs clearly are NOT "moral men."

Hazzard eventually tracks down

the Arabs to an abandoned church. They have chained Father Capistran against the church wall, arms outspread, just beneath a giant cross. The symbolism is obvious. "Let's do our job!" yells one of Hazzard's buddies—a priest, no less—as the heroes open fire on the Arabs. They slay many. Realizing that the fight goes poorly for him, the terrorist leader puts his gun to Father Capistran's head, threatening to kill him if the others do not retreat. Says the priest: "No! Do not believe him! He and his are all liars!" Hazzard hurls a knife into the villain's neck, killing him. So Arabs are not only anti-West, but anti-Christian.

In *The Punisher: Nuclear Terrorists Over Times Square* (Marvel Comics, #7, Mike Baron, 1988) a group of Arabs steal a kilo of plutonium. The object of their theft? To "blow a hole in the American dream." An agent of the Israeli Secret Service, Rose, is a young woman whose parents were killed by fanatical terrorists (presumably Arab) when she was sixteen. In an effort to stymie the lunatics, Rose links up with the American superhero, Punisher. She explains that the terrorists' leader is a Muslim fanatic called "Yassir." The killer is introduced early in the story through a video taped message: "To the garbage eating dogs of the West" begins Yassir. He wears sunglasses and a turban. "We have brought this war to your homes, your cities! Because your values are garbage, we have reduced your greatest triumph, the symbol of your colonial brutality to garbage! Death to the enemies of Islam! Long live the revolutionary Jihad!"

Near the end of her mission the lovely Rose is caught off-guard by an obese Arab in a Turban. The Arab, called Ahmed, holds a jagged knife to Rose's back and grasps her by the neck. The comic artist focuses on Ahmed's grinning face. The features are blackened in shadow and his eyes shine a malignant orange. Nearby, the stolen plutonium hangs precariously over Times Square. The Punisher can see the theater crowds

"spilling gaily into the street."

The Punisher must act. He moves to confront Ahmed. Ahmed raises his gun to shoot him. Suddenly, a hand snatches the gun from Ahmed's ankle holster (he is a well-armed terrorist) and Rose opens fire. Ahmed is hit but retains enough strength to pick up Rose and hurl her to the streets below. The Punisher is overcome with rage. He hurls his body at Ahmed, who falls earthward. The caption reads, "...sometimes the mountain must come to Mohammed." The comic ends with the Punisher standing with head bowed, mourning his loss. Although the terrorists have been foiled, Rose is dead.

The political message implicit in this issue of *The Punisher* is clear. Rose, who represents Israel, is the victim. She is young, beautiful, spirited. Like the State of Israel, she is a rose, just beginning to bloom, but full of thorns for those who threaten her. She is also a victim of Arab aggression, both as a child and as an adult. Yassir and Ahmed, the terrorist leaders represent the Palestinians (one cannot help but think of "Yasser Arafat") and the rest of the Arab world. Both appear as terrible men, brutally violent and disgusting to behold. Both are violently anti-West (whose values are "garbage") while Rose, the representative of the Israelis, fights the good fight—she is one of us.

In *Action Comics* (DC Comics, #598, John Byrne & Paul Kupperberg, 1988) Superman and Checkmate team up to foil Arab terrorists who have hijacked an American nuclear aircraft carrier in Metropolis harbor. The defense minister of the oil-rich country of Qurac, an unsavory sheikh in dark sunglasses and head-dress, and Lois Lane have also been taken hostage. The minister's name? "Khareemali." (As in, "cream Ali" with terrific emphasis on the "CA-REEM.") The superhero Checkmate quickly rescues both the Quracan Minister of Defense (who, interestingly enough, has come to America to denounce Superman at the U.N. Conference) and Lois. Meanwhile, Superman lands aboard the aircraft

carrier where he is confronted by a large man in orange metal armor flanked by Arabs garbed completely in black wielding automatic weapons. No part of the leader's features can be seen through his armor (the suit lacks even eye-slits). The hijacker points his right arm (which is of metal and clearly a devastating weapon) at the head of the ship's captain. Ever the diplomat, Superman asks the armor-clad man what he wants.

"SILENCE, Capitalist tool!" booms the terrorist. "I am the FIST OF ALLAH—I will do the SPEAKING! The ANGELS OF ALLAH have seized this American warship. Its crewmen are our PRISONERS...prisoners in the war to UNITE the Arab brotherhood against the HEATHEN WORLD!"

The Fist of God goes on to say that they have taken over the ship to prevent the American authorities from attempting to recover the Quracan Minister of Defense, whose "nation's independent acts of violence are the greatest barrier to [Arab] unity." The problem the terrorists find with the Quracan minister is not that he is violent, but that his acts of violence are not coordinated with that of the rest of the Arabs.

As Superman considers his options, the ship's captain warns: "They're SERIOUS Superman. They've rigged the NUCLEAR REACTORS to explode!" The captain goes on to explain that while this could not trigger a nuclear blast, a radioactive cloud would form and spread "all over the Eastern Seaboard." Superman attempts to reason with the faceless, armored terrorist: "You'd be DOOMING THOUSANDS of innocent people to lingering, PAINFUL deaths." Answers the terrorist: "NO American is innocent!" At that moment, Checkmate bursts on the scene, taking the Fist of Allah and his black-clad Angels by surprise. In moments, the two superheroes have disposed of the threat. Metropolis and the entire Eastern Seaboard are safe for another day.

At comic's end, Checkmate es-

corts the Quracan defense minister to his private plane. The superhero eyes him with distaste and says: "There he goes—the man RESPONSIBLE for God knows how many deaths...SCOT-FREE!" He is angry that, for political reasons, the minister cannot be disposed of in America. But Checkmate and his companions have an answer for that. Says one: "HAH! That towel-headed bozo will never know what hit him!" As the Minister's plane passes over international waters, Checkmate pushes a button and the jet explodes, the sheikh CA-REEMED.

This seems to have been the point of the entire comic book: to ca-reem Ali, to ca-reem the Arabs, to defame and degrade our image of them.

To the imagemaker, it seems perfectly acceptable (even praiseworthy) to blow up a plane with Arabs but a heinous act of terror to slay other racial or ethnic groups in a similar fashion. A double standard? You bet.

ARAB AS SINISTER SHEIKH

With his dark sunglasses, white headdress and fierce beard, the sheikhs of comic book lore vary little in the malevolence of their aspiration to world domination.

Sheikh Ahmed Azis of Moon Knight "Fist of Khonshu" (Marvel Comics, #1, Alan Zelenetz, 1985) is a model example. The sheikh, who first appears in long flowing robes and sandals, is a Kuwaiti megalomaniac obsessed with restoring Egypt's ancient empire. "Soon ANUBIS THE JACKAL shall reign as pharaoh supreme...And all the world shall bow to me—or die," he states, as maidens place the golden head of Anubis on his head.

To save the world from the sheikh, Mark Spector, a red headed American who was once the superhero Moon Knight, must recover the magical statue of Khonshu, the ancient Egyptian god of the moon and guardian of mankind. It is Khonshu's spirit which saved Spector many

years before when he was stranded in the desert. Now Mark returns to Egypt, where the priests rebuke him for allowing the statue of Khonshu to fall into "evil hands" and charge him with the task of recovering it. When Spector protests that he is through with being a superhero, the leader of the priests delivers a rousing monologue: "One man can set example for eternity. One man can kindle hope in ten thousand hearts." Finally, Mark Spector agrees to resume his role as Moon Knight. In thanks, the ancient Egyptian priests give him several powerful gifts to aid him in his quest, including a golden ankh. Upon leaving, Spector is waylaid by Arab assassins on camels. Apparently unfamiliar with the use of firearms, the Arabs launch spears, but miss. On the desert floor and weaponless, Spector is jumped by an Arab with a dagger in each hand. Spector out duels the assassin and demands information. Preferring death over dishonor, the Arab swallows a poison capsule. Despite this setback, Spector soon learns of the location of his nemesis and makes his way to the sheikh's palace, where he is forthwith captured and mummified. Death appears imminent. But then the full moon rises and the spirit of the ancient Egyptian god Khonshu fills the Moon Knight with power. With the aid of a giant sandstorm, the hero vanquishes the evil sheikh. The comic book ends with the Moon Knight standing alone in the desert, the moon high and full above his head, the ankh glowing golden upon the chest of his costume "...I guess for the time being, Khonshu...I owe you one." he says.

What is perhaps most interesting about the comic is that despite the fact that the American hero derives his power from an ancient Egyptian god, there is not a single good Arab in the entire comic book. Indeed, every Arab portrayed is evil, from the megalomaniacal sheikh to his personal servant (who, at one point, assassinates a rich American businessman with poison gas), to the Arab thugs who attack Spector in the desert. Remarkably, the ancient

Egyptian priests do not appear Arab. Their skin is white, their eyes are blue, and their garb decidedly un-Egyptian. No wonder Khonshu sought "a mortal of the West" to carry out his battles. In the world of comic books, one is about as likely to find a good Arab as the camel is to pass through the eye of a needle.

In *Fantastic Four "Fasaud!"* and *"Danger from the Air"* (Marvel Comics, #308-9, Englehart-Buscema, 1987) the comic book reader is introduced to a super villain called Fasaud. The former oil minister of the oil-rich kingdom of Aqiria, Sheikh Farouk Al-Fasaud was at one time the driving force behind OPEC. He was "one of those men so POWERFUL, so RICH, that almost NO ONE knew him before last year," explains a newspaper reporter. His wealth exposed to the international press, Sheikh Fasaud became uneasy. Angry with the publicity and with something to hide, Fasaud attacked one of the CBS correspondents with a dagger. The sheikh missed, striking instead a nearby television camera and thereby electrocuting himself.

Far from killing him, the jolt transforms the sheikh into the super-villain, Fasaud, a being half TV image, half lunatic, but at all times 100 percent Arab — his white headdress inseparable from his hideous face. Thus transformed, Fasaud goes after Gregory Dunbar, the CBS correspondent he had failed to kill. Learning of Fasaud's intentions, the *Fantastic Four* speed to the CBS building to find Fasaud attempting to electrocute Dunbar. A battle quickly commences, in which Fasaud's image is "disrupted" by the *Fantastic Four* and Dunbar saved. In the conflict, the superhero Torch was almost killed. Determined to exact revenge, the *Fantastic Four* split up: half travel to Fasaud's home kingdom of Aqiria to destroy the villain once and for all, the others remain in New York to protect Dunbar. In Aqiria they are met by his majesty, King Khafir, another sheikh. The king explains to the *Fantastic Four* that Fasaud, once a trusted associate, has become a

major "source of embarrassment." He warmly welcomes the Fantastic Four and wishes them luck in their endeavor. As they walk through the desert, the Thing comments on the great number of oil wells on the horizon. "Of course," answers the king, "that is why Fasaud was the RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD—" "Yeah, I REMEMBER the long lines at the gas stations!" answers the Thing. While the Thing and Ms. Marvel are in Aquiria, the other members of the Fantastic Four are attacked by Fasaud, but again repel him. Forced back to his homeland, Fasaud surprises the Thing and Ms. Marvel who have just discovered a space shuttle in the Aquirian desert. He electrocutes both. The super heroes fall unconscious. The comic book ends with

enormity of his fortune, Uncle Scrooge appears at the tailor's looking for a garment made entirely of gold. "Mr. McDuck, I COULD make you a coat from this bar of gold, but you would not like it. The cloth would be crinkly, like tinfoil." The tailor goes on to explain that if he had some "magical golden wool—like the Golden Fleece of the Ancient myth" he could create the sort of coat Scrooge desired. While the two ducks discuss the prospects of a golden coat, a creature with a horrible, dog-like snout dressed in a robe and headdress spies upon them. As McDuck travels home, moneybag in hand, he notes a man following him. Scrooge flees, yelling, "It's the evil-looking foreigner who was in the tailor shop! He's up to no good! I can

tell by his looks!" Eventually the dog-Sheikh convinces Uncle Scrooge to come aboard his ship where they might conduct a business deal. "Mr. McDuck, meet my sis—I mean BROTHERS—Eikral Senga, Eikral Zeni, Eikral Eisseb, and Eikral Yaf! I by the way, am Eikral Ali! We are the dau—I mean the SONS—of the Queen of Seikral!" introduces the foreigner. The sheikhs are identical looking: all clothed in headdress and robe, they possess horrible, black tipped-noses, pointed black beards, and huge, black brows. The fact that these "men" are actually "women," the daughters of the Queen of Seikral, merely

adds insult to an already racist depiction. As Mr. McDuck is introduced to them, the sheikhs wring their hands in greed, anticipating a quick buck. Closing in on Scrooge their noses sniffing, the dog/men/women salivate. "Mr. McDuck is very, very rich!" says one. "M'mm!" says another. "Smell the money!" cries the third, grinning. "I didn't come here to be SNIFFED AT!

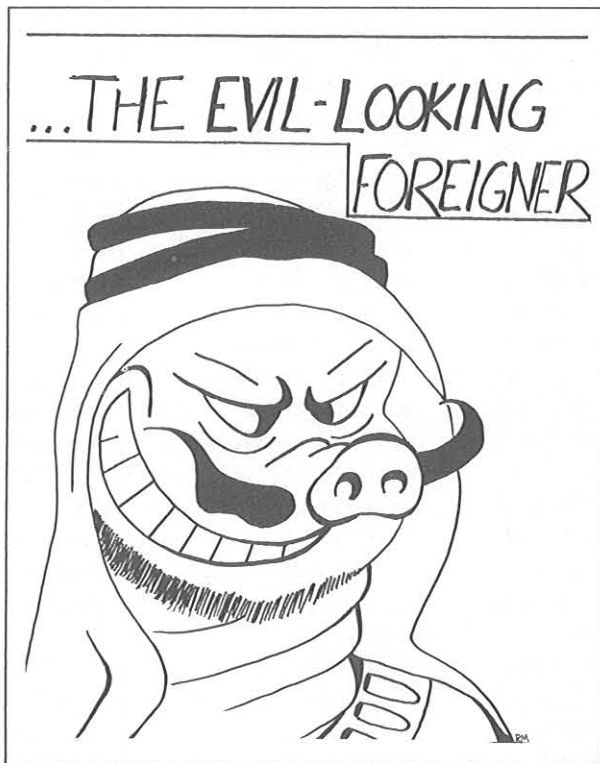
I came to talk BUSINESS!" yells Scrooge, miffed. "Gir—I mean BOYS! Mr. McDuck wants to know our price for guiding him to the GOLDEN FLEECE!" says Seikral Ali. In answer the gleeful Sheikhs form a circle, saying: "He's rich enough for our purpose!" and "Hee! Hee! Let's sail back to Conchis now!" and "I'll cast the mooring lines! Hee! Hee!"

Will Uncle Scrooge survive the terrible fate that awaits him or will his nephews surface in time to save him? The comic book ends there, leaving the climax for another issue. One can only hope that the bearded sons—I mean, daughters—of the Queen of Seikral get their due.

BANDITS

In general, comic books featuring Arab bandits fall into two categories: those that attempt some form of balance by presenting some sympathetic or helpful Arabs and those that do not. Balance, however, is almost never achieved, and the Arab image most prevalent in each of these comics is that of a killer, dirty, backward, and anti-west.

In T-Man "The Riffs of Morocco" (September #27 1955) ace T-man Pete Trask is flying over Morocco towards Algiers as the body guard for the American diplomat carrying new NATO plans for the defense of the Mediterranean against the Nazis. Below, Makaco, leader of a group of Arab bandits, orders his men to open fire on the aircraft. The bandits quickly rush the downed plane, firing indiscriminately at its occupants. Pete Trask reaches the "mob of apes" first, fists pumping. He delays the bandits just long enough to enable the diplomat to escape, but his own chances of freedom are slim. As he runs from the scene of the crash, the T-man laments: "These hill bandits are like mountain goats in this terrain...may be hundreds of them." Trask's fears are realized when, moments later, he is jumped by the Arab bandits and taken prisoner. The nar-



King Khafir congratulating his old oil minister for a job well done: "You've saved the kingdom once AGAIN, my trusted friend..."

One would hope to find more sympathetic Arab sheikhs in a comic book put out by the family-oriented Walt Disney Co. In Uncle Scrooge "The Golden Fleecing" the opposite is true. Determining that his wardrobe does not accurately reflect the

row-faced Makaco, bearded with a sinister scar on his right cheek, interrogates him: "Now Mr. Trask, if you wish to live, reveal where the Allied Defense papers are hidden!" Trask answers: "Why would a hill bandit be interested in espionage work? Don't tell me you intend on fighting the ALLIED POWERS!" Responds Makaco: "You fool! The communists will pay many pounds of gold for those documents! I do business where I can get the largest return of gold!" Thus, the Arab is established as a creature without morals, selling his services to the highest bidder.

Eventually, with the help of a communist spy who desires to betray both Trask and the Arabs (a prevalent theme when Arabs are involved; even the baddest of the bad are too good for the Arabs), Trask flees in a jeep. The Arab bandits follow, but are eventually thwarted in their pursuit when Trask destroys the bridge separating them. The bandits shake their fists and fire their rifles repeatedly to no avail. The American has escaped.

Tarzan "The Ape Man and the Mangani" (Marvel Comics, #8, Roy Thomas, 1977) contains perhaps the most racist portrayal of Arabs in comic books that this author has had the misfortune to be exposed to. "Fire DESERT—DEVILS..." challenges Tarzan to the group of Arabs aiming their rifles at him on the comic's cover. The magazine's subtitle? "APES VS. ARAB RAIDERS with TARZAN caught between them in a duel to the death!" The story opens with Tarzan, surrounded by apes, wondering what has happened to his beloved "golden-haired, white-fleshed She," Jane. The leader of the apes, Taglort, informs Tarzan that his companion has been kidnapped by the Arabs. Desperate to recover her, Tarzan enlists the apes as helpers. Meanwhile, we see Jane weeping in the saddle of the Arab chieftain Achmet Zek.

Tarzan and his furry friends reach the outskirts of the Arab encampment. They surprise several Arab guards, slay them and don their

kufiyahs. Says the leader of the apes, an incredibly ugly creature: "I do not understand, Tarzan. What good is it to put on these EVIL-SMELLING RAGS?" The message is clear: these disgusting apes are cleaner, more civilized than the Arabs. As they slip through camp, Tarzan overhears the malicious Achmet Zek saying: "And, with the morning, you will take the WOMAN from the far tent and SELL her north. She will bring A PRETTY PRICE here—because she is WHO SHE IS." Tarzan hears a woman's scream. He rushes to the tent where his beloved is held. Upon arrival, he gives a cry of anger. The stench of the ape Taglort fills the chamber. The ape has betrayed him!

The Arabs, hearing the howl, think there must be a beast within, and saturate the tent with bullets. The anxious Arabs appear as demons, red faced, hooked-nosed, with bulbous eyes and scraggly, unkempt beards. "FIRE into the tent!" they scream "Whatever is within must DIE!" But Tarzan has escaped and the Arabs have only managed to slay one of their own. The comic book ends with Tarzan chasing after Taglort the ape, just as he pursued Achmet Zek the Arab. Thus, Arabs are equated with Apes. The only difference? The apes have better hygiene.

In Sgt. Rock: "Traitor's Blood!" (DC Comics, #227, 1971) a WW II American tank battalion in the North African desert heads towards a nomad village whose sheikh has promised them information on the location of Rommel's camp. On the village outskirts, the Americans startle a short, ugly Arab (who the Americans refer to as "the little guy in the bedsheets") who introduces them to the head sheikh. "Forgive me master," begins the messenger, trembling. The sheikh slouches in his chair, a cup of wine in his palm. Unsavory in appearance, he sports a goatee, a shadowed, bulbous brow, and a dark, double chin. A line of bullets is strapped across his breast.

"We're Americans, sheikh—sent here on your request—on your offerin' to help the allies! Or have we stepped

outa line?" asks a soldier, politely. "But, NO, my friend—you are absolutely CORRECT!" answers the sheikh. "I have come by VITAL INFORMATION concerning the Germans' tank movement. The Nazis have demanded we help THEM... can you imagine? Help THEM against my friends? RIDICULOUS!"

In order to provide some diversion (the sheikh improperly says "divertisement.") from the "rigors of war," the sheikh orders his servants to "Bring on the dancers!" The soldiers settle down for a fine meal of lamb and wine to watch the scantily clad women. To prolong the Americans' amusement, the sheikh calls in his wrestlers. One American takes on two of the sheikh's best at once. The Arabs play foul, one grabs the American from behind while the others pummel him in the midsection. Angry, the American strikes back, defeating both with a single blow. "Ooh, you are SO BIG, SO STRONG" coo a pair of belly dancers, stroking the American's bare arms.

Suspicious of the sheikh's hospitality, Sgt. Rock takes a little walk around the village. "Maybe I'm getting battle fatigued...or my sergeant antenna's gettin' rusty, but somethin' don't sit right here!" he muses. A beautiful dark-haired belly dancer calls to him from the dark: "Quietly, sergeant—your LIFE and the lives of YOUR MEN are in mortal danger! The Sheikh is NOT what he seems to be! He helps NO ONE—but HIMSELF! A traitor to ALL! He secretly dispatched a messenger to the NAZIS...who will attack! Even while he entertains you!" Sgt. Rock listens intently, but is unsure if he can trust her. He asks for proof. In answer, the belly dancer leads the American to a tent on the other side of the village. "Is this the proof you wanted Sergeant?" she asks, "Look closely. First the sheikh calls you for aid...tells the NAZIS who pay him... then he strips your dead of all valuables!" "I-I recognize 'em...these're EASY uniforms all right. But—WHY did you tell me?" "My father fought

with the British. He was NO TRAITOR! My people are NOT to be judged by the action of their leader!"

Convinced, the sergeant returns to the sheikh's tent. He orders his men to switch clothes with the Arabs. The Arabs protest but Sgt. Rock carries a machine gun. Later that night, the Nazis arrive. They note what seems to be the shadows of American troops within the tent and open fire. All the evil Arabs die. Too late the Nazis learn of their mistake. Sgt. Rock and company throw off their Arab garb and quickly dispense with the Germans.

At comic's end, Sgt. Rock turns to the beautiful belly dancer who has come to see the Americans off. "Thanks, miss" he says, "If it wasn't for YOU—WE might be sittin' with the REST o' the swag the sheikh collected! Is-is there anythin' WE can do for YOU?" The next frame is a beautiful one and worthy of praise. The artist focuses on the maiden's stunning face. Her wonderful wide eyes and full lips are framed by a snow-white headdress swaying in the wind. "Only remember...that my PEOPLE were not traitors..." she asks. The comic closes with the young woman waving goodbye to the Americans, the slain sheikh in the foreground. The caption? "A traitor's blood is like desert rain...THIN, and soon disappears, unnoticed, into the grains of sand!"

Is the portrayal of Arabs in this Sgt. Rock issue a balanced one? No. The belly dancer's plea to remember that her people are not traitors would seem a powerful one, but suffers from a fatal flaw. Although she explains that her father fought with the British, we never see (not even in a flashback) him or any other Arab fighting with either the British or the Americans. Nor do we meet any other Arabs who seem sympathetic to the soldiers. The belly dancer waves goodbye to the Americans, alone. Where are the other "good" Arabs, the people who are not traitors? How can we believe this lovely belly dancer if all the other Arabs we have seen in the comic book were evil?

ARAB SEX ROLES

If the Arab male's attitude towards females (both foreign or native) as portrayed in comic books is a truthful one, then woe to the woman who falls into the Arab's clutches. If she is herself an Arab, she is doomed to one of two illustrations, either a scantily-clad and salivated-upon belly dancer, or a faceless housewife, whose thick-set form is bundled up in dark robes. As belly dancer, the Arab woman at least has the opportunity to attract the attentions of some virile superhero who might take pity on her and whisk her away, like Prince Charming coming to the doorstep of Cinderella. As a housewife, alas, she is doomed to insignificance, a total non-entity. Her most important role in comic books (and this can be said, in part, for belly dancers as well) is as a set piece among which the real action takes place. In comics, a housewife, unlike a belly dancer, never speaks, is never spoken to. Voiceless, featureless, and, for all intensive purposes, mindless, she is wholly devoid of personality. Such being the case, the Arab wife is noticed by none—hero, heroines or villain.

As a case in point, I submit the opening frame of *Checkmate "Welcome to Qurac!"* (DC Comics #7, Kupperberg, 1988). The setting, as we are told, is El Kuwait, Qurac, 6:42 PM. Arab men populate the background. Heads wrapped in turbans and headdresses, they wave their arms enthusiastically, marketing their wares. Clearly this is a souk. In the foreground, a heavily-draped figure walks with a basket of fruit on its head. The figure is totally featureless, the gray-black folds of its robes covering every inch of the body, including the face. The being resembles a piece of furniture covered with sheets in a deserted house. A similarly garbed figure can be seen in the background. Apparently both beings possess X-ray vision, for the cloth that drapes their faces appears heavy and possesses no eye slits. Reads the caption: "I've gathered my

groceries like a good little Quaracin housewife and no one's giving me a SECOND look. Why should they? Women aren't treated MUCH better than cattle here. It gives me a GREAT cover." We need go no further. This, in a nutshell, is the lot of the Arab wife in comic books. To the comic book reader, her presence in the storyline is indeed like cattle in the fields beside a highway. One glances towards the fields, comments on their presence, then quickly forgets them. Unless, that is, a westerner should find them in the least way attractive.

In *G.I. Combat "Stop at the Corner of Hades"* (National Periodical Publications, #139 - Jan 1970) an American G.I. falls in love with an Arab woman. The story opens with the Americans paratrooping a tank division into the North African desert in search of the Nazis. The G.I.s' spot a light over the horizon which turns out to be a giant bonfire. Stacked perhaps twenty feet high, two-by-fours form a great funeral pyre upon which a beautiful young woman mourns a dead man. Arab tribesmen garbed in headdress and robes form a circle around the scene. Another Arab ignites the base of the pyre. Arms raised above his head like a warlock summoning demons, the Arab leader proclaims—"Princess Azeela...You must join your dead husband—Prince Akmed—as is our people's custom. LIGHT THE FUNERAL FIRE!" One American G.I. cannot believe his eyes, "That beautiful girl up there—SHE'LL BURN!" he exclaims.

Despite the fact it has never been an Arab tradition to encourage a widow to immolate herself upon the death of her husband (such a tradition exists in some rural parts of India), it appears clear that the Arab tribesmen are really going to go through with this horrible ritual when the American G.I. parks his tank beside the pyre to rescue her. "The infidel is contaminating our holy place! STOP HIM!" screams the evil Arab leader. Warns the beautiful princess: "The-the Mufti will set the

people AGAINST you!" Adds the soldier, reaching out his arms to grasp her: "You're too beautiful to die, princess!"

Enraged, the mufti screams: "Do not be deceived by the American! They care NOTHING for Princess Azeela!...They use her to win your support against our REAL friends, the NAZIS! AND I WILL PROVE IT!" Satanic in appearance and sinister in gesture, the mufti, whose eyes glitter with cunning menace, continues: "Is it not the Zahillan custom that any man who saves a widow's life is responsible for her?...But the American will NEVER marry one of our tribe! HE will only use the Princess Azeela as a toy! To be cast aside when she is no further use to him!" Enraptured by the lovely maiden, the G.I. agrees to marry her right then and there. The mufti, secretly enraged, must conduct the ceremony before his assembled tribesmen.

The princess, as brave as she is beautiful, accompanies the G.I. into combat. She is sad to leave her people, but happy to accompany her young husband. Later, as the Americans accompanied by members of the mufti's tribe attack the Nazis together, the mufti, with "demonic eyes livid with bottomless hatred," attempts to shoot the G.I. Shielding her husband with her body, the princess cries: "No... NO Mufti! You will not harm him..." She is shot dead. Bemoans the narrator: "The slim body, fragile as a bird of paradise, receives the blazing bullet..." The teary-eyed G.I. clasps her in his arms, mourning her fate. The mufti? Killed by a Nazi shell.

The attraction and trust between Arab woman and American heroes in the aforementioned comic books would be encouraging if not for the fact Arab men react with hostility to such events. It is not the Nazis who are the enemies of the happiness of these maidens, but their kin. The Arab men remain evil. The Arab woman is come to be perceived as oppressed, a second class citizen

who undergoes such indignities as being sold into slavery or burnt alive. In short, the Arab woman is perceived as a victim of her Arab kin. It is not enough that Arab men be hostile to westerners. They subjugate their own women as well.

If relations between western men and Arab women exhibit rare signs of warmth, relations between Arab men and western women are almost without exception icy, overflowing with hate, lust and mutual contempt.



In *Fantastic Four "Danger on the Air"* (Marvel Comics, #309, Dec 1987) the voluptuous blonde super heroine Ms. Marvel is requested by his majesty King Khafir of Qurac to make a rather significant change in her attire: "In THIS part of the world, ladies do not expose their LEGS and FACES, so if Ms. Marvel—" Ms. Marvel's current costume resembles a bathing suit with boots. Protests the heroine: "If Ms. Marvel WHAT? What kind of CHAUVINIST NON-SENSE—" Her *Fantastic Four* companion, the Thing restrains her. Ms. Marvel complies to the king's request, thinking "You MACHO PIG!" Moments later, she is covered from head to toe in what resembles a voluminous white sheet. Only her eyes

are visible. Ms. Marvel groans inwardly: "I'm BROILING in this monstrosity." A notoriously outspoken individual, Ms. Marvel suddenly seems to lose her voice. As the men discuss business, she glides in the background, silent. It is as if the donning of the cumbersome white robes had transformed her into the stereotypical Arab housewife, outwardly passive and unable to speak her mind. Later, when the King is no longer a constant companion, Ms. Marvel rips off her Arab garb, announcing, "ENOUGH of this silly rag!" Suddenly she is the superhero we all know and love, active and outspoken.

In *Moon Knight "Spirits in the Sand"* (Marvel Comics, #28, Doug Moench, 1983) the Arab villain, Jellim Yussaf, a terrible looking man with squinting eyes and a set of teeth that are not only incomplete, but yellow and misshapen, as if his gums are too rotten to hold them, greets the Moon Knight's beautiful blonde girlfriend, Marlene Alraune, at the Sudan airport. He is cordial, saving her the trouble of going through customs. That night, however, Yussaf breaks into Marlene's bedroom, abducting her. They make an odd couple, these two. One blonde, fair, smooth-complexioned, delicately featured, clad in scanty underwear, wholly vulnerable; the other, dark-haired, bearded, with brutish features and permanently squinting eyes (very much resembling the old Chinese villains) wrapped in lengthy robes and brandishing a crooked dagger. Eventually, Moon Knight saves the day and Yussaf is slain. But the comic book reader is hardpressed to forget the image of the uncouth, malicious Arab threatening the lovely American heroine. It is a prevalent theme: ugly Arab males holding captive beautiful Western women.

In the previously discussed *Tarzan "The Man and the Mangani,"* the evil Arab chieftain reveals his in-

tention to sell Tarzan's mate, Jane, into slavery. Action Comics' (DC Comics, #598, John Byrne & Paul Kupperberg, 1981) Sheikh Khareemali would probably bid on Lois. Interviewing the sheikh, spunky reporter Lois Lane asks, "You have a PROBLEM with women?". Answers the Quracan Minister of Defense: "Indeed, NOT...in their PROPER place. The females of Qurac KNOW that place. UNLIKE their American cousins." Lois, never one to back down, counters: "Well, WELCOME to the 20th century, pal." Thus, the interview proceeds, neither side liking the other. Eventually Lois' pointed questions get under the minister's skin. "ENOUGH, woman!" he shouts, furious. "America or NOT, you OVERSTEP your station. GUARDS!". Two Arabs in military fatigues and headdress grab Lois' arms and pull her to the wall. Protests Lois: "HEY! What's the IDEA...?! I'm an AMERICAN!. You CAN'T..." "But I just HAVE, Miss Lane," answers the Defense Minister, smiling. "As I have said, in Qurac, we know how to TREAT our women." As his soldiers pin Lois to the wall, Khareemali removes his riding crop and prepares to strike her with it, saying "It is time you LEARNED that lesson! HOLD HER steady!" Fortunately for Lois, Arab terrorists burst in and save her from this indignity by kidnapping her. The message is clear: Quracan women are treated as slaves (or cattle, take your pick) in their homeland, routinely ordered about and beaten.

At story's end, when Khareemali is escorted to his private jet preparing to leave the country, the sheikh raises his fist at, Lois, saying: "But know THIS woman...You will still be PUNISHED for your IMPUDENCE. I shall NOT forget it!" Answers Lois: "Better do as the man says before I forget I'm a lady, SLEEZEBAG." It is with great pleasure, then, that the comic book reader watches Khareemali's plane explode to smithereens a few frames later. Justice has been done.

REAL ARABS

The Arab comic book caricature is a fallacy which does an injustice to a people who have made tremendous contributions to society. Contrary to comic depictions, Arabs are intelligent, educated, caring people numbering more than 200 million from North Africa, Southwest Asia and the Arabian peninsula, 65% of whom are under 20 years of age. The 21 Arab countries are equivalent to 50 American states, each different in culture and local dialect. The region is one-and-a-half times as large as the United States. They live and work in cities, suburbs, farms and villages and share the most admirable traits of moral world dwellers: respect for life, love of family and duty as responsible citizens. They have the same dreams, hopes and aspirations for a better world as all upstanding residents do.

Out of 218 Arab types appearing in 215 comic books, this author found 149 characters portrayed as "evil," 30 characters portrayed as "good," and 39 characters portrayed as "common people." Hence, the comic book reader sees three villainous Arabs to every heroic one. Not a flattering ratio. In reality, the imbalance is much greater.

How so? The thirty Arab types the author has classified as "good" are almost without exception passive and play minor roles. They are not actively good in the same way nearly all 149 villains are actively evil. In other words, the comic book reader rarely sees an Arab "fighting the good fight." A common portrayal of a good Arab is as a benevolent monarch who enlists the heroes help to save his people. We see him briefly in a frame or two explaining his troubles to westerners at tale's opening before disappearing completely until he again appears in a final frame or two at story's end to express his gratitude.

Not once did the author encounter a benevolent Arab prince leading his people into battle to fight against evil. A man's actions are the strongest evidence of his nature. Sadly, the few benevolent Arabs of comic books

seem content to let the super heroes do all their work for them.

The Arab villains, on the other hand, dominate the scenarios. Zestfully, they pursue their evil ends frame after frame after frame. They wade into personal combat against our heroes, spitting upon them and deriding them. They carry out acts of torture with Mephistophelian glee. Their features are frequently bestial, demonized and dehumanized. Their faces drip with hatred and fanaticism. They have no honor, eager to slay both soldier and civilian alike. They are megalomaniacal, with no social consciousness. They are anti-American, anti-West, anti-Israel, anti-Jewish, anti-Christian. Despising freedom and democracy, they give their allegiance to tyranny and servitude. They oppress women from all lands. They are uncouth, unclean, unkempt; their clothes soiled and too smelly even for apes.

In short, as the good Arab does nothing, we feel nothing for him, but we properly despise the evil Arab for his terrible appearance, words and actions. While the author noted well over a hundred Arab villains, he noted not a single Arab hero or heroine, one that actively pursues good.

Such a gross imbalance in the portrayal of an ethnic group leads to the inevitable question: Why? Why do images reveal an Iron Curtain between Arabs and Americans, a barrier unlike that in any other relationship between Americans and other peoples? What makes Arabs such attractive whipping-boys for writers and illustrators? The author feels there is no single answer to this query. Rather, the status quo is due to a number of factors.

Perhaps the greatest of these is ignorance. The average American knows little about Arabs or the Arab world; those involved in the creation and publication of comic books are clearly no exception. One need only to recall the instances in *Batman: A Death in the Family* where Batman addresses the Arabs in Farsi. Arabic, French or English would have served Batman better. Apparently never

having traveled to the Arab world these imagemakers familiarize themselves with Arabs not through personal contact, but through already pervasive stereotypes: Arabs have harems. Arabs oppress their women. Arabs are desert bandits. Arabs are fanatical terrorists. Arabs are fabulously wealthy oil sheikhs. Arabs hate America, its people, its culture, its values, etc...

Imagemakers and publishers need to be made aware of the tremendous discrepancy between their Arab caricatures and reality. Herein lies the second factor for the prevalent negative images: the number of Arab-Americans is relatively few, approximately 3 million. Hence, unflattering Arab stereotypes are rarely challenged. There are few to say, "Hey, that's not how Arabs are. Look at me. My family is from such and such a place in the Middle East, and they don't look, or act, like that." The relative small number of Arab Americans allows those in the comic book industry to get away with negative portrayals of their ethnic group without fear of attack. Can you imagine comic books portraying Jewish or African-Americans as they do Arabs? The industry would be rightly accused of racism. Most groups are generally well-represented in the industry. Such is not the case with Arabs, or Arab-Americans.

A third factor is politics. For whatever reasons, the United States has chosen Israel as its ally par excellence in the Middle East to the chagrin of the Arab world. Perceiving U.S. interests as being linked with Israel's, America has in the past looked with little sympathy on Arab grievances against the West and the Jewish State. To many, if Arabs are allied against Israel then they are allied against America, and thus Israel's enemies become our enemies. It should come as no surprise then, that we find in comic books Arabs attempting to blow up Times Square (*The Punisher*). Such a plot is an embellishment and extension of what is already believed to be true: Arabs would destroy Americans and their

way of life if they but had the chance. Since Arabs are America's villains in comic books, American super heroes should thrash them at will.

A fourth factor is fear. The characterization of Arabs as bandits, desert nomads, greedy sheikhs, and terrorists is a longstanding one. These images have become part of the folklore. Breaking with traditional stereotypes more often brings criticism than praise. Imagemakers fear the loss of the Arab as an everyday villain. Some worry that the Arab's defection from the ranks of the enemy will cause a villain vacuum. Who, in short, will play their bad guys?

The motion-picture industry survived when they lost blacks, Indians, Germans and the Japanese as stock characters and grew better for it. And lest one think that positive ethnic portrayals cannot appeal to a large mass audience, consider "The Cosby Show," or "Dances with Wolves." And consider Azeem, the Moor in the film "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves." Beloved of Kevin Costner's Robin Hood, Azeem is beloved of the movie audience as well. And a devout Muslim too!

But enough of "why?" Rather, let us consider ways in which this imbalance can be combated. Surely, the most important step is to develop a regular dialogue with the comic book writers, illustrators and executives. Disagreeable portrayals of Arabs should no longer be met with silence, but with personal meetings, letters and phone calls expressing our displeasure and outrage. Concerned humanists need to persuade the industry that racist depiction of Arabs is as morally reprehensible as those of any other ethnic group. Imagemakers must acknowledge that Arabs are real people, worthy of our sympathy, respect and attention, and not the one-dimensional cardboard caricatures they are portrayed as.

Comic book images do not exist in a vacuum. They are read by millions of impressionable children and young adults, many of whom identify with the super heroes and her-

oines. Those in the comic industry are perhaps more aware of the power of their creations to impress than anyone else. Writes DC Comics editor Dennis O'Neil in the postscript to *Batman: A Death in the Family*:

But these sagas [comic books] are more than just entertainments, at least to many readers; they are the post-industrial equivalent of folk tales and as such, they have gone pretty deeply into a lot of psyches. Some would say they should not be compromised because they touch the innocent part of us that can wonder, aspire, be amazed.

But, like traditional folk tales, they must evolve. If they don't, they may become irrelevant to THE REAL WORLD THEY MIRROR [emphasis mine] and thus lose their power to satisfy and amuse; they risk degenerating into mere curiosities instead of remaining vital fiction.

Yet, in DC Comics' *A Death in the Family* Arabs are characterized as gun-toting terrorists, awkward, ill-groomed and anti-West. By continually portraying Arabs as villainous, comic books form an obstacle to understanding real Arabs. Mr. O'Neill insists that comic books must evolve to stay "vital fiction." But the very images of Arabs as terrorists he considers a prime ingredient of the story's realism. The Arab image has hardly evolved at all. Now is the time it did.

The comic Arab needs to be retired to the Acme Comic Book Graveyard of distorted images. The vision of Arabs as billionaires, bombers and belly dancers has become a tired, worn and dangerous cliché which has no place in a modern, sensitive and thinking America.

NOTICES

The Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations has introduced a scholarly, biannual Journal, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*. The Journal focuses on the relationship between Islam and cultures, ideologies and faiths, particularly Christianity. For information, write: CSIC, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham B29 6LQ, UK.

Resource Materials on the Middle East is a bibliography of books (including children's books), periodicals, videocassettes and educational materials for elementary and high schools. Information sources for Judaism, the Eastern Christian Churches and Islam also included. Booklet is available for \$5.00 from Catholic Near East Welfare Association, Educational Services, 1011 First Avenue, NY, NY 10022; or phone 212-826-1480.



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PALESTINE: A Photographic Journey
By George Baramki Azar, Univ. of California Press
This NEW, cloth bound album makes a memorable gift. Intimate and powerful photographs taken during 1988 reveal the beauty of the land and the pain of its people. Photos are enhanced by the poetic verses of Fouzi al-Asmar and Mahmoud Darwish, among others. A fine introduction by Villanova professor Ann Mosley Lesch documents the overwhelming loss and remarkable endurance of this dignified people.
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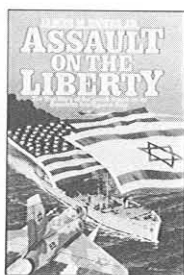
Through a grant, we are able to make a one-time-only offer at the
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LEST WE FORGET

Available again by Popular Demand:
ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY

James Ennes, Random House, 1979, 299 pp., cloth.
The author was an officer on the bridge during the prolonged and brutal attack on the *USS Liberty* by Israeli planes and torpedo boats in 1967 that killed 34 American crewmen and wounded 171 others.

List: \$14.95; AMEU: \$11.50



USS LIBERTY SURVIVORS: OUR STORY
Sligo Productions

The 68 minute documentary presents interviews with the *USS LIBERTY* survivors taken during their 20th anniversary reunion. Also included is film footage from the US Navy archives and private sources. If the book doesn't bring tears to your eyes, this will.

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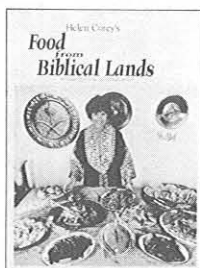
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GOOD STORIES WITH GOOD FOOD

FOOD FROM BIBLICAL LANDS

Helen Corey, 1990, 154 pp., paper
This 8" x 10" book, profusely illustrated, shows both the method of preparation and the way the finished product should look. It contains typical Arabic menus for each month of the year.

List: \$16.95; AMEU: \$12.95



ARAB FOLKTALES

Inea Bushnaq, Pantheon Books, 1986, 386 pp., cloth.
A marvelous collection of popular tales, engagingly told and beautifully edited. A book to be read and re-read many times.

List: \$19.95; AMEU: \$13.95

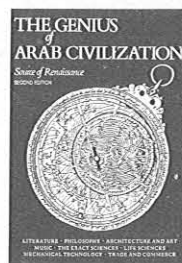
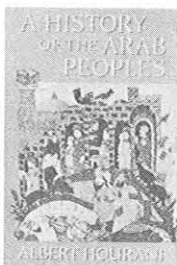
COMBINATION BOOK OFFER: \$25.00

HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION

A HISTORY OF THE ARAB PEOPLES

Albert Hourani, Harvard Univ. Press, 1991, 551 pp., cloth.
Elegantly written and broad in its coverage of the whole Arab world from pre-Islamic Arabia to contemporary times. A New York Times best seller.

List: \$24.95; AMEU: \$19.95



THE GENIUS OF ARAB CIVILIZATION

ed. John R. Hayes, M.I.T. Press, 1983, 260 pp., paper
The wealth of illustrations in this acclaimed collection of essays makes a splendid complement to Albert Hourani's insightful text.

List: \$14.95; AMEU: \$11.95

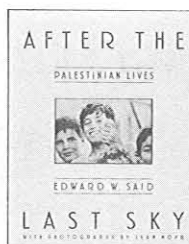
COMBINATION BOOK OFFER: \$30.00

JERUSALEM - PALESTINE

JERUSALEM IN HISTORY
ed. K. J. Asali, Olive Branch Press, 1990, 295 pp., cloth

Nine studies comprehensively cover Jerusalem's history in chronological order, offering an authentic picture of the city's unique history.

List: \$16.95; AMEU: \$12.95



AFTER THE LAST SKY: Palestinian Lives
Edward W. Said, Pantheon Books, 1986, 174 pp., paper

A prominent Palestinian writer uses a collection of startling black and white photographs as starting point for a moving description of his people.

List: \$14.95; AMEU: \$12.95

COMBINATION BOOK OFFER: \$25.00

BEIRUT - LEBANON

PITY THE NATION: The Abduction of Lebanon

Robert Fisk, Simon-Schuster/Touchtone, 1990, 678 pp., paper

The author, who witnessed almost 15 years of terror in Beirut, brilliantly portrays the horror of a war-torn nation. He covers the key events in Lebanon's betrayal and introduces the reader to the major figures in the conflict.

List: \$16.00; AMEU: \$13.50



BEIRUT FRAGMENTS: A War Memoir

Jean Said Makdisi, Persea Books, 1990, 253 pp., paper
An incisive, personal response to history, this author bears witness to the civilian experience of war in Lebanon from 1975 through the spring of 1990. She brings the reader into the heart of war-torn Beirut and shows the enduring vitality of its people.

List: \$9.95; AMEU: \$8.95

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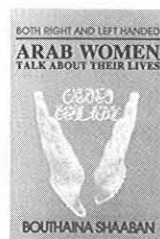
ARAB WOMEN - YESTERDAY AND TODAY

A WOMAN OF NAZARETH

Hala Deeb Jabbour, Olive Branch Press, 1988, 223 pp., paper

Weaving a tale of love and tragedy set in Beirut in the 1960's and 70's, this novel depicts the life of a young Palestinian woman from Nazareth who leaves the protective circle of her refugee community to discover the world beyond its borders.

List: \$9.95; AMEU: \$8.95



BOTH RIGHT AND LEFT HANDED:

Arab Women Talk About Their Lives
Bouthaina Shabban, Indiana Press, 1991, 256 pp., paper

This vivid documentary records the lives and struggles of ordinary and extra ordinary women in the Arab world. In voices often spirited and brilliant, these women from Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Algeria tell how they are shaping the world they have inherited.

List: \$12.95; AMEU: \$11.75

COMBINATION BOOK OFFER: \$20.00

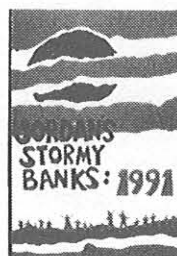
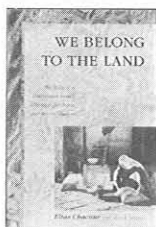
CHRISTIANS IN THE HOLY LAND

WE BELONG TO THE LAND

Elias Chacour, Harper, 1990, 212 pp., cloth

A compelling portrait of a Palestinian Catholic priest from Galilee and his courageous pursuit of peace and reconciliation. Father Chacour is the author of BLOOD BROTHER.

List: \$16.95; AMEU: \$11.25



JORDAN'S STORMY BANKS: 1991

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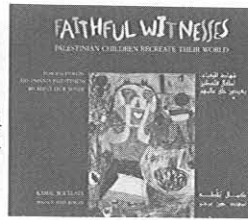
- * published in Jerusalem
- * notes U.S. and Palestinian holidays
- * full page colored photos
- * all proceeds go to the Palestine Aid Society

HOLIDAY PRICE: \$10.00

- FAITHFUL WITNESS: Palestinian Children Recreate Their World**
By Kamal Boullata, Olive Branch Press, 1990,
120 pp., cloth.

Palestinian school children depict their occupied world in watercolors. Called by *Life Magazine* "a touching, often disturbing collection of sketches." Illustrated: over 140 plates; 76 in color. 9 3/4" x 5 3/4".

List: \$19.95; AMEU: \$16.95



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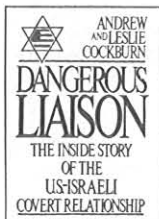
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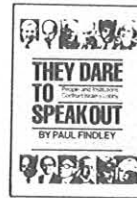
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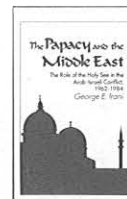


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