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CALL FOR PAPERS

## THE ARAB WORLD: SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Events within and beyond the Middle East mean that Arab societies are under unprecedented scrutiny by Western media and commentators. Such coverage is often negative in tone, while some of it blatantly fuels a growing antipathy towards Arabs. Most such criticism is actually highly “uncritical” when it comes to its use of pejorative terminology, and its limited analyses of Middle Eastern politics, history and religion. It is understandable, then, that Arabs complain of being misunderstood in the West: The Arab world is highly complex, diverse and multicultural; the vast majority of Arabs do not engage in terrorism; women are making rapid and significant advances into the worlds of work and politics; Islam is not monolithic or necessarily anti-Western, but is complex, fragmented and characterized by high levels of internal dissent and debate - such as that among liberal scholastic traditions that are as ‘enlightened’ and ‘modern’ as other major faiths.

This *Call for Papers* seeks sociological insights and analyses that challenge current characterizations of Arab societies. One notable problem in the interpretation of the Arab world is the assumption that it is best analyzed using Western intellectual concepts. The Arab world has its own sociological traditions, such as that rooted in the work of the great Maghrib scholar Ibn Khaldun, whose analyses of social change, authority and domination parallel those formulated later by Max Weber. Such indigenous Arab sociologies would be of particular interest to this *Special Edition*, particularly if applied to current issues. Other areas of interest are: lived realities of Islam; the experience of women; Arab family structures and change; politics and representation; resistance and new forms of radicalism; peace movements; crime; Arab business; social stratification; humor; leisure; social change; corruption; gender relations; the Arab *diaspora*; entrepreneurialism; cultural change; the ‘demographic timebomb’; Arab media; representations of the West; or sport. These are only suggestions of course, and submissions dealing with other current Arab issues would be welcome.

Submissions can be emailed to Dr. Mark Neal on [markneal@squ.edu.om](mailto:markneal@squ.edu.om) or [markneal100@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:markneal100@yahoo.co.uk). Deadline for submission: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2006.