

Hello! Welcome to the Arabic Language Talk

مرحباً!.. أهلاً وسهلاً بكم

مرحباً أهلاً وسهلاً بكم **slide 1**

Hello everyone. My name is Nejme and I would like to welcome and thank you for sharing this event i'vent with us

I would like to thank Rockdale library and Ms Stephanie Lee for organizing this event i'vent and making every effort to accommodate us all.

Let me start by asking you why we, as Australians, might be interested in the Arabic language **slide 2**

- Because it is the mother tongue of a big ethnic communities in the country including Lebanese, Egyptians, Iraqis, Syrians, Palestinians, and others.
- Because it is the religious language for many Australians who believe in Islam
- Because some of us have Arab partners, or work as educators in institutions that have a big ratio of Arabs such as ESL teachers in language centres, or workers in law firms or medical centres...

- Because Hundreds of Australians travel to the Arab world each year to volunteer in humanitarian aid in places like Iraq, Palestine and Syria, or who move to Arab countries for work.
- Because trade is flourishing between Australia and the Arab world especially the Gulf countries. Australian goods such as meat, wheat, live sheep and other farm products find a welcoming export market in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Likewise, Australian import goods from Arab countries. For example, The United Arab Emirates and Australia are currently expanding their trade agreements to allow for crude petroleum imports from the UAE and the increased export of Australian motor vehicles

A Glimpse of History [slide 3](#)

Arabic originated in the Arabian Peninsula *pe nin su la* , or what is modern day Saudi Arabia. It was first spoken by nomadic tribes. In fact, Arabic, means “nomadic.” Arabs (aka nomads), primarily *prī'me(ə)rālē* occupied the area between Mesopotamia *mesəpə'tāmēə* to the east, the Lebanon mountains in the west, and Mount Sinai in the south.

Arabic belongs to a family of Semitic languages that form a branch of the Afro-Asiatic *āzHē'atik* language phylum. Semitic languages were spoken in the ancient world throughout North Africa and Southwest Asia *'āzHə* and have played preeminent *prē'emənənt* roles in the linguistic

and cultural landscape of the Middle East for more than 4,000 years. Semitic languages include the Akkadian language, which, like Arabic, is also from the north of the Arabian peninsula *pə'ninsələ*. Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac were spoken to the east and west of the Arabian Peninsula, *pə'ninsələ* and the Abyssinian language (Habasha Ethiopia) was spoken in the south. [Slide 4](#)

In his article “Arabic language” Mustapha Shah indicates that Arabic is a Semitic language, and that the term “Semitic” was coined in the late eighteenth century and inspired by the Book of Genesis, and the story of how the descendants of Noah *'nōə* dispersed throughout the lands, speaking a number of tongues. Shah adds that Semitic languages are members of the Afro–Asiatic phylum *فائلم* of languages which have similar characteristics in morphology, phonology and lexical features.

He adds that Arabic “was the most prolific of the surviving Semitic languages,” because Arabic preserved numerous linguistic sources from earlier languages that didn’t survive but that helped Arabic become what it is today. “Despite the differences in opinions regarding the classification of the branches of the Semitic languages and their identification,” Shah continues: “a tripartite *trī'pär,tit* division of Eastern, North West and South Semitic languages is presented by Semiticists....”

According to Shah: “Eastern Semitic comprises the extinct language of Akkadian, which is divided into Old Akkadian, Babylonian, and Assyrian dialects. North West Semitic (or Western Semitic) principally comprises Canaanite, a general label covering the Phoenician, Punic, Edomite, Moabite, Ammonite, and Hebrew languages. It also includes Aramaic, which was used in Syria from around 900 bce. Aramaic became the lingua franca of the Near and Middle East, dominating the linguistic landscape of the region until the Islamic conquests of the seventh century when Arabic assumed that role.

“The South Semitic (or South West Semitic) group brings together the ancient dialects of South Arabia: Sabaean, Minaean, and Qatabanian; the Pre-Islamic Northern Arabian languages of Thamudic, Lihyanite, Safaitic, and Hasaeen (related to al-hassa), which is associated with central eastern parts of the Arabian peninsula; and the Ethiopian languages of Geez, Amharic, Tigrina, and Tigre.” [Slide 4](#)

So, as you can see, when Arabic survived it was able to retain many features of all of these inter-related languages. For example, the Phoenician language, which is now extinct, used the word “yod” for hand, and in Arabic we still say “yad” for hand. That’s just a very small example. Arabic also retained the prototype for semitic language structure.

Professor Ameen Al-Dulaimi goes into great detail about the many features that Semitic languages have in common and that are not found in other languages. Some of these features that Arabic has are: (Slide 5)

1– The root word being a tripartite $tr\bar{i}'p\bar{a}r,t\bar{i}t$ word. So, basically, almost every Arabic word has a root word from which it originates and the root word is usually three letters.

2 – Semitic languages are also unique because they all have a way to dualize a word, to say that there are two of something... two brothers, two sisters and so on and so forth. In Arabic we do this by adding a particular suffix to the end of the word. So, Arabic has single, dual and plural word formations. Some semitic languages used to have a word to denote three of something

3 – In the old writing style the semitics languages vowel letters can be removed, and this is the method found in the Quran, with words such as - Rahman, Isaac and Asmayel.

4 - Semitic languages have guttural $g\bar{a}t\bar{a}r\bar{a}l$ sounds that aren't found in other languages: throaty sounds like - ع، ق، : such as عنب، سعيد

5) And finally, as I indicated earlier, Arabic has retained a wide vocabulary shared by most of the semitic languages, especially terms

related to the human body (head, eye, hand, man), plant and animal terms (wheat, spike, dog, wolf), basic numbers and prepositions (from, to, in) as well as other basic existential *egzi'stenCHəl* terms like born, died, raised, and so on.

Today, Arabic is the most widely spoken Semitic language in the world. Some other native Semitic languages spoken today include: Hebrew, Aramaic, (the liturgical language of local Christians in Greater Syria) Amharic (which is spoken in Ethiopia), Tigre (which is spoken in Eritrea) and Berber (spoken in Morocco and Algeria). Some Semitic languages have either gone extinct or have become greatly limited because of the spread of the Arabic language. The Phoenician and Canaanite languages are the ancient languages of modern day Lebanon, [Syria](#) and Palestine, and these languages are no longer spoken. Coptic, which was the dominant language in Egypt is now only spoken in the Egyptian Coptic Church.

The spread of the Arabic language occurred as a result of various nomadic tribes traveling out of the Arabian Peninsula. The inter-marriage between Arabs and native groups further spread the language as well as giving rise to further Arabic dialects. Rapid growth of the Arabic language happened as a result of the Arab Conquests that took place in the 7th century C.E. Through these conquests, the Arabic

language made its way into Egypt, Northern Africa, the Iberian Peninsula (Southern Spain) and East into modern day China and India.

Arabic and Islam (Slide 6)

the Arabic language is not only a symbol of Arab national identity; it is also the holy language of Islam. A religion widely practiced in non-Arab countries like Indonesia *ində'nēZHə*, Chechnya, Malaysia, Iran, Pakistan and India, among others. For this reason, Arabic has a special place in the religious psyche of Muslims. The Quran, was revealed in the Arabic language and everyday ritual observances, like the call to prayer are observed in Arabic. Muslims number around one-fifth of the world's population.

The Qur'an has served as the basis of the Arabic language to this day. In recent years, the term ["Modern Standard Arabic" \(MSA\)](#) has come about. MSA is almost identical to the classical, formal Arabic of Al-Qur'an, with the exception of the addition of modern words and some differences in grammar constructions.

In the course of the Islamic Conquests, Islam was carried out of the Arabian Peninsula shortly after the Quran was revealed in the 7th century. The Arabs carried their writing system with them, and it was adopted to write many languages, some of them related to Arabic and some not. Thus today Arabic is used to write Persian and Urdu, both Indo-European languages; up until 1928 it was used to write Turkish, an

Altaic language. There are sporadic *spə'radik* cases of it being used for Spanish, Afrikaans, Polish, Hungarian, Hebrew, even Latin.

In addition to the eminently practical uses to which the Arabic writing has been put, it is also used for aesthetic *es'Hetik* purposes. Calligraphy, a Greek word meaning "beautiful writing," is one of the most highly developed art forms in Islam. This was true for classical Islamic civilization, and it is true today, with contemporary calligraphers using all modern tools, including the computer and 3-d modelling, to produce stunningly beautiful works of art.

This doesn't mean that all Arabs are Muslims. the Arab world is in fact home to people from many different religious faiths Christians, Jews and others. Actually, the cradle *krādī* of Christianity is in historical Palestine which was till 1948 a part of the Arabic world. It is also believed that the majority of the population in historic Syria (the fertile crescent) were Christians. This demography changed after the crusades invasion to the Arabic-Islamic states. Some Christians were offended by this attack and reacted by converting to Islam. For much of history, Jews have lived throughout the Arab world alongside Muslims and Christians. The demographic changed drastically after the establishment of the Israeli state over historic Palestine and the razing of Palestinian villages in 1948. Some countries still have small Jewish populations. Additionally, there are many branches of Christianity practised across the Arab world.

Christians of the Middle East also use Arabic for religious ceremonies and services. And more recent waves of migration of Arabs and Muslims into the Western world, has bolstered interest in and the widespread use of Arabic in Europe, North America and Australia. For all these reasons, you find that Arabic is taught in religious schools, mosques and seminaries. And Arabic has been a language of interest among Western Orientalists for centuries. Chairs for the study of Arabic were established in reputable centres of learning such as the Collège de France in 1539 and the University of Leiden لايدن in the Netherlands in 1613. Oxford and Cambridge both had Chairs of Arabic created in the 1630s; and academic interest in the language and Islam continues to thrive.

So what is the Arab world? (slide 7)

The Arab world of today is an interesting, diverse geographical region, comprising of 23 countries, extending from south-west Asia to north-west Africa. It has immensely rich cultures and histories and one of the world's great languages that is spoken by more than 400 million people. Arabic is also one of the official languages of the United Nations and has been identified as one of the 4 most spoken languages in the world. (2009)

Arabic is both a formal language and a spoken language that varies widely in dialects and vernacular. *vərˈnakyələɾ* Modern standard Arabic is able to be written and understood by all literate Arabic speakers in the world. This formal Arabic is officially adopted as the primary language of administration, education, and discourse in countries as diverse as Oman, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the Palestinian territories, Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Somalia. The dialects, however, that is the spoken Arabic on the street varies widely. (Same slide 7)

There are 4 main dialects in Arabic The Levantine dialect is spoken in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine

The Egyptian dialect is spoken in Egypt and Sudan

The Gulf dialect is spoken in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Yamen and Iraq

The North African dialect includes: Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Libya

These dialects are often referred to as colloquial Arabic. They differ from country to another so that someone from Lebanon may have a hard time understanding someone from Tunisia speaking in his or her dialect. But with the wide reach of television, Facebook, and other

modern media, exposure to all forms of colloquial Arabic is increasing across the Arab world, creating new forms of communication for Arabic speakers – and offering non-native speakers more resources

Over the centuries of its existence, the Arabic language has adopted words from other languages including, Persian, Greek, English and French. It has also influenced other languages as well including English, Spanish, Turkish, Bengali, Hindi, Indonesian and Tagalog (Philippine)

There are many English words in use today which originally come from Arabic. These include: algebra, coffee, cotton, saffron, sherbet, sofa, sugar, syrup, and zero; to name just a few. Of course, many English words such as computer, Facebook, mobile (phone), and sandwich have also now entered the Arabic

The Pronunciation of Arabic:

Arabic differs from English and other European languages in that it includes a number of distinctive guttural 'gətərəl sounds that I mentioned earlier, such as ق ع . It also includes a series of consonants that need you to constrict your throat and raise the back of the tongue, such letters include: ظ، ط، ض This makes some people think that Arabic is a difficult language. Actually, all languages are difficult for a non-native

speaker. Mastering a language, any language, needs commitment and dedication.

Mastering the sound system of the Arabic alphabet is the first challenge for learners from an English or European background.

According to the Book *Alif Baa*, which teaches beginners how to speak, read and write the Arabic alphabet, “sounds in Arabic use a wider range of mouth and throat positions than do sounds in English. To properly produce these sounds, learners should be aware of the mouth and throat they must use while they are able to focus the most attention on them. they will learn to make new sounds, and to do so , they must be familiar with the set of muscles that they use to make gargling or coughing but not to speak English. Your muscles are capable of making all these sounds, become conscious of what they are doing and practice constantly in the beginning

Like sports, learning takes physical along with mental focus. Just as you train your arm to hit a tennis ball. And this takes constant repetition. just like you keep your eye on the ball in tennis, you must keep your mind on the sounds you are making all the times. An investment of time and effort into developing your pronunciation habits during the first months of learning will pay off later in that you will be able to learn, pronounce and spell more easily. You will understand people better and people will

understand you, in which in turn will encourage them to speak with you in Arabic rather than in English.”

Arabic writing and Calligraphy

The Arabic script originates from Phoenicia, where the Phoenicians were the first people in the world to create an alphabet. The Phoenicians inhabit the coastal plains of the Lebanon, Palestine and Syria region. And because the Phoenicians were business traders sailing the Mediterranean, their alphabet came to influence the entire Mediterranean.

The Phoenician script evolved in several directions, with one branch developing into Greek and later the modern Latin alphabet. The other evolved into Aramaic, which branched out again from there into Modern Hebrew and Nabataean.

In the case of Arabic, Arabs living in the Arabian Peninsula borrowed their writing system from the Nabateans. The Nabateans lived around the time of Christ in the city of Petra, in today's Jordan. The Nabateans themselves had adopted the writing system of an ancient people called the Aramaeans, who had borrowed it from the Phoenicians. In this long process, the shapes of the letters changed so much that Arabic bears hardly any surface resemblance at all to ancient Phoenician writing.

The Arabic language has an alphabet of 28 letters [slide 8](#) including consonants and long vowels. Arabic also has 14 diacritics, [slide 9](#) these are symbols that help the reader know how to pronounce specific letters in a word. We can describe such diacritics as “short vowels,” and they play an important role in how a word is read and even what it means. .

Alphabets are divided into connectors and non-connector The shape of a letter is determined by whether it is connected to other letters in a word, or whether it is standing on its own. [Slide 10](#)

Arabic is written from right to left [Slide 11](#) which is the opposite direction from English. When we hold an Arabic book and open it, we hold the spine in our right hand

On average, it takes beginning students approximately 25 hours of face to face instruction and another 25-40 hours of homework, to be able to write any word correctly.

Arabic is a phonetic language. This means that the words are spelled exactly as they sound. We don't have silent letters in Arabic as we would in English. We don't have words like daughter, or confused sounds like ball or bad. In Arabic an 'S' is an 'S' and the diacritics I mentioned earlier will change whether we pronounce it as a Su or a Si or a Sa in a word.

Arabic has an enormous vocabulary because it is an amalgamation of so many ancient languages. This challenge can also be overcome with determination. The good thing is that even vocabulary is governed by rules. When we learn these grammatical rules, we are then able to master the language. Learning grammatical rules also helps with vocabulary, because most Arabic words come from a three-letter root word. If we don't know the meaning of a word, and we know how to find the root (This is a simple technique we can easily adopt) then we can figure out the meaning that way. For example: the word for school is Madrassa, it comes from the root word D-R-S which means to study (verb) or lesson (noun). If we knew the root word D-R-S we might be able to figure out that Madrassa has something to do with learning. We might also be able to figure out the meaning of other related words like Mudarris (teacher) and tadrees (teaching), and Deerasa (a research project) and so on and so forth. Like I said, how a word branches out from the root word is mostly governed by grammatical rules, so if you learn those rules, expanding your vocabulary becomes easier.

I've spoken a lot about the history of the Arabic language, as well as the grammatical rules it follows. I've spoken about the geographies that the language is used in throughout the world and I've spoken about its importance to Muslims, even those who come from non-Arabic speaking

countries like Indonesia. Arabic Calligraphy is the last aspect of the language that I would like to touch on. [slide 12- 13](#)

Arabic calligraphy makes art out of words and you can see it in the interior of mosques, on the surface of major buildings, on rugs and as decoration on pottery and sometimes you see it hanging in people's homes, citing verses of the Quran. Arabic calligraphy requires tremendous artistic skill to be mastered it is a highly valued art form in the Arab world that goes back to the earliest Islamic empires.

Calligraphers pay attention to the shape the writing makes, not its legibility. This means that they can change the size and shaped of Arabic letters, and write them in disjointed ways that make reading the words and sentences actually quite difficult. Arabic Calligraphers almost always follow complex geometrical patterns that have quite an awe-inducing effect on people, especially when we find them etched inside mosques or above luxurious doorways.

A Glimpse of Culture. [Slide 14](#)

Culture is the spirit of a nation. It is one of the cornerstones in building and developing a national identity. Each society has its own culture, and each culture has its own characteristics. Human history has known many influential cultures such as the Greek, Roman, Indian, Ancient Egyptian, Persian and the Arab-Islamic cultures. Arab- Islamic culture reached a pinnacle pinakal between the 7th and 15th centuries when Arab civilization

led the world in intellectual and scientific discoveries. When The Islamic empire in Baghdad and also in Southern Spain began to weaken, Arabs and Muslims retreated from being at the forefront of global cultural leadership. Their breakthroughs in the fields of human thought, science and knowledge all but ceased and their cultures experienced a decline. Arab civilization and history experienced a period of regression after the Mongolian context in the 13th century and we are now at a time where tradition dominates the Arab world.

Arab-Islamic culture played a vital role in paving the way for the European renaissance and 17th century Enlightenment. Arab scientists, philosophers, astronomers and mathematicians undertook massive translations of Greek knowledge in the 9th century and they built on that knowledge and made great discoveries in Math, Astronomy, Medicine, Geology, Chemistry and Philosophy. Both Baghdad and Cordoba of the Middle Ages were centers of knowledge and scholars came from all over the world to study there. Arabic was the primary language for all these thinkers who hailed from all around the world, including Persia, India and China. Arab scholars are credited with inventing Algebra and Trigonometry and our modern day numbering system. They discovered the number Zero and established the decimal system. Building on Greek philosophy, they had early versions of the theory of evolution, long before Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*. They discovered the body's

circulatory system four centuries before William Harvey. They had theories for gravity and the relationship between speed and distance centuries before Newton, and speculated about ways to measure the speed of light, and how to estimate the angles of reflection and refraction, and were able to accurately measure the circumference of the earth, obviously this mean they also knew the earth was round.

Arab-Islamic thought and culture exists on a continuum (kən'tinyooəm)... It is influenced by ancient civilizations, such as those of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, the Chinese and the Greeks.

The impressive impact of the Arab-Islamic culture on Renaissance made the great historian Philip Hitti write: “During all of the first part of the Middle Ages, no other people made as important a contribution to human progress as did the Arabs, if we take this term to mean all those whose mother-tongue was Arabic, and not merely those living in the Arabian peninsula. For centuries, Arabic was the language of learning, culture and intellectual progress, for the whole civilized world with the exception of the far East. From the ninth to the twelfth century there were more philosophical, medical, historical, religious, astronomical and geographical works written in Arabic than in any other human tongue.” (From the book *Short History of the Arabs*)

Meanwhile, the Philosopher Bertrand Russel wrote: “Our use of the phrase “dark ages” to cover the period from 699 to 1000, marks our undue concentration on Western Europe. In China, this period includes the time of the Tang Dynasty, the greatest age of Chinese poetry. From India to Spain, the brilliant civilization of Islam flourished. What was lost to Christendom at this time was not lost to civilization, but quite the contrary. To us it seems that Western-European civilization is civilization, but this is a narrow view.” (from his book *History of Western Philosophy*).

As you can see, the Arab-Islamic civilization has contributed greatly to the advancement of science, medicine and philosophy. in his book *Age of Faith*, Will Durant writes that “The Muslims have made an effective contribution in all fields of knowledge, Ibn Sina was one of the greatest scientists in medicine, al-Razi, the greatest physician, and Al-byruni the greatest geographer, Ibn al-Haitham, the greatest optometrist, and Ibn Jubeir, the most famous chemist. " The Arabs were also Pioneers in Education”. Bacon Reger reasons that the appearance of the great European scientists of the Renaissance could not have happened without them standing on the shoulders of giants of the Islamic world.

Islamic rule was also characterized by accommodating diverse **Slide 15** ethnocultural groups. In Al-Andalus, for example, Christians and Jews were given the same opportunities as Muslims, and often rose to the highest ranks as politicians, advisers and traders. A similar spirit of

multiculturalism and respect for other monotheistic religions was seen in Baghdad as well. The Islamic empire flourished because of stable trade routes with India and China and because Islamic rule did not interfere with local cultures and religions. A healthy mix of local cultures and Muslim settlers allowed Islamic Spain to flourish until the take over by the Conquistadors and the sacking of Muslims and Jews from Spain. Similarly, the Islamic empire centered in Baghdad flourished until the Mongolian conquests in the 13th century put an end to centuries of prosperity and political stability.

In short, the Arab-Islamic civilization, also known as the Islamic Golden Age, was characterized by an openness to other cultures and religions. Arab rulers from the period gave opportunity to all talents, regardless of background, ethnicity or religion. It incorporated Romans, Persians, Greeks and others, regardless of whether they were Muslim, Christian or Jewish. This is only a brief reflection on the contribution of the Arabs to world civilization during their golden age.

Slide 16 After centuries of cultural, social and political depression, the Arab world, experienced a renaissance, partly influenced by the Western and colonial presence which brought about modernization and industrialization. This new era known began in Egypt at the end of the 19th century. The Arab Nahda, known as renaissance spread from Egypt to other parts of the Arab world which were under Ottoman rule at the time, such as Lebanon and Syria. Unfortunately, traditions, ignorance

and political circumstances such as the establishment of the state of Israel over historical Palestine, the domination of autocratic dictatorships in much of the Arab world. oppressed this renaissance

Unfortunately, Arab nations nowadays have become mostly consumers of culture rather than innovators. On a governmental levels, leaders invoke the most idealistic values, such as justice, equality democracy, and freedom of speech while in practice they do the opposite. They oppress, discriminate and silence their opposition. A good example of this is in what we saw in the aftermath of the Arab spring. Peaceful demonstrations in places like Egypt, Syria, Libya and Yemen were met with brutal force and excessive violence. The intellectuals and writers of these nations were put in prisons all over the Arab world, and most were and are being tortured and dehumanized in an effort to silence them. Thousands of high achievers, scientists and intellectuals from throughout the Arab world have fled their homelands to avoid prison or assassination, among them are such famous people as Nizar Qabbani, Nawal Sa'dawi, Abdelruhman Munif, Adonis and others.

Modern Arabic literature has undergone part of its development outside its national and geographical boundaries. [Slide 16](#) The first to remember is the establishment of Mahjar, or Diaspora, Literature. This is a literary form produced by a group of men originating in Syria and Lebanon who emigrated to North and South America in the first few decades of the twentieth century. They wrote not only in Arabic but also in English,

French, Russian, Spanish, and Portuguese. They include Jubrân Khalîl Jubrân, Ilyâ Abû Mâdî, and Mîkhâ'îl Nu'yamah, to name just a few. They wrote a kind of poetry that innovated on traditional Arabic verse. They created a new form of Arabic verse that was no longer tied to the formal and classical structures of the past, but a kind of writing that was able to express a modern vision of the human being and the world. Diasporic Arabic literature did have a strong influence on the shaping of modern Arabic literature but it wasn't the only driving force behind modernization of the language. Debates about the fate and the future direction of Arabic expression were being had in the Arab world as well, giving rise to a rich and powerful literature which soon found an enthusiastic readership throughout the Arab world.

Now, at the end of the twentieth century, we are at a new modality of that first wave of immigration, or exodus 'eksədəs. Although there is no survey study of this Arab intellectual diaspora, it is clear that the best literary writers are concentrated mostly in Europe. Many great writers from North Africa have settled in France and use French in their writing as well as Arabic. The U.S. and Canada tend to attract scholars, researchers and scientists. These writers are not always venerated in their home countries, it depends on the context. For example, Tahar Ben Jelloun who writes in French is widely respected in his home country, Morocco. At the same time, Albert Cossery, who also writes in French, is an obscure figure in his home country, Egypt. Edward Said is another

example of a great Arab scholar and intellectual who lived in diaspora and wrote mainly in Language other than Arabic

Unlike much of the modern West, Arab cultures tend to be collectivist and family-oriented. Even in diaspora, Arab societies maintain a strong connection to values and customs they bring from the homelands. The family is the most important aspect of Arab society. For this reason, what people say and a person's reputation are very important. Arab culture emphasizes that the group's needs are more important than what a person desires. As Halim Barakat explains: "A common failure of a member of the family is a failure of the other individuals. This explains how membership is created at the expense of the individual. Hence, the person in this family is a member rather than an independent individual and an identity rather than a self-contained personality." What this means is that in every Arab family there are designated roles and responsibilities. A father, mother, husband, wife, son, brother, and so on, has to fulfil the expectations of others of her or him.

In tribal Arab societies and in rural communities for example, you will see that there is a responsibility that the males of the family have to the females. They are considered to be the breadwinners and they have to provide for the females. In the meantime, the females are expected to guard their family honor against shame or scandal. This is the sad logic behind honor killings in tribal societies in rural Egypt or desert tribes in

places like Saudi Arabia or rural Jordan. On the positive side, family relations are cooperative, If we look at the role of the carer (father/mother) he/she lives for her/his children and sacrifices a lot for them. Parents usually live for their children and in return the children are expected to fulfil an obligation to their parents. If they don't, the parent can usually use guilt as a tool to get the children to conform to their wishes. This family dynamic demonstrates the importance of economic unity in the family, where the child, especially in the lower classes, is seen as a future investment for the parents in their old age. The family unit in Arab societies has evolved after the second world war, with the advent of the modern state and other welfare and social institutions replacing the work once expected by the family. This does not mean that the Arab family is no longer a socio-economic unit. On the contrary, it is more cohesive ,kō'hēsiv as such and has also been integrated with other social and welfare institutions. The family unit continues to be integral 'intigrəl to society and nation-building in the Arab world

And now, just before we wrap up for the day, I thought I would introduce you to some of the common greetings that we use in Arabic. Maybe this will get you interested in learning the language if you haven't yet, or reinforce some of what you already know if you are beginning to take classes.

Greetings Slide 17, 18, 19

The most common greeting across the Arab world is: As-salaamu alykum

(peace be upon you) and the response

is : wa'alaykum as-salaam!

(and peace be upon you)

Another common greeting in the Arab world is

Marhaba (hello)

and the response is: Ahlan wa sahlam

Sabah elkheir (good morning)

And the response is sabah en-nur

Masa' elkheir (good evening)

And the answer is (Masa' en-nur)

Ilal-liqa' (bye, see you)

Ma' es-salama (bye)

Asking some ones name . Normally, among peers and people of similar age

We ask a male: min ayna anta? Formal (inta min wein) colloquial

a female Min ayna anti? Inti min wein?

with older person, high ranking people: bosses, professors, lawyers
doctor etc.. we say

Hadirtak min wein? a polite way for asking from where are you
(masculine)

Hadirtik min wein?

And the response is: Ana min.....

tsharafna (nice meeting you)

Bhadirtak (mas) Bhadertik (fem) nice meeting you too

Thank you so much for joining me for this introductory lecture to the Arabic language, its history and its peoples. Arabic is a language which has its roots in a group of ancient semitic languages. It has managed to subsume the vocabulary from diverse languages such as Aramaic, Hebrew and Phoenician. It is a language that relies on a tripartite word system, whereby most of its words can be reduced to a three letter root word. There are currently 23 Arabic-speaking countries in what is known as the Arab world. And the Arab world is not confined to one ethnicity or race, rather, what makes a person an Arab is perceiving oneself as an Arab and as relating to being Arab. It relies on a common culture, a traditional lineage, the common land in history and the language. Arabic is spoken in Africa, South West Asia, Iraq, The Arabian Gulf and the Levant. There are many different dialects of spoken Arabic. These are so different from each other, that someone in

the Gulf will have a hard time understanding someone speaking Arabic from Morocco. But, all Arabic speakers are united by a single formalized, literary Arabic. This is the written Arabic of academic writing and newspaper articles, and most novels. This is the Arabic that was formalized by the study of the Quran and the Hadith and the creation of Fiqh and Quranic Sciences that established rules for the Arabic language. The Arab world has enjoyed golden years as an advanced civilization in Abbasid Baghdad and Fatimid Egypt and also in the Iberian Peninsula. Without Arabic scholarship between the 9th and 15th centuries, Europe would not have had its renaissance and the world would not have known the enlightenment. There was a time when Arabic was the language used by most scholars in the world, even if they were Persians or Byzantines, or Spaniards.

Thank you so much for coming today. [Slide 20](#)