



ARABS IN AMERICAN EYES

The Arab world has fascinated Americans ever since eighteenth-century Barbary pirates preyed on ill-fated ships in the Mediterranean Sea. Mark Twain, Edith Wharton and Malcolm X are among the many Americans who set their works in the Middle East and North Africa. How do these authors describe the Arab world? What comparisons do they make between life abroad and life at home? And what effect do these representations, often false, have on US policy? These central questions have taken on a new urgency in the present day, an era fraught with mounting international tensions.