Quiz

Chapter 9, Ramadan

- A holy month
  - Dates are approximate
  - For many, they depend on actual lunar sightings, which can be affected by local conditions
  - Last year, September 23- October 20
  - This year (1428 in the Islamic calendar), September 12-October 11
- Fast all day, not even water
  - So eat before sunup and after sundown
- Krayas for men, others for women
- Women’s krayas led by female mullahs
  - Highly esteemed and profitable
  - How does this fit with the rest of women’s roles here?
- Fadhila, Sherifa, other girls don’t wear face veils on “tribal” side of the canal, but do for crossing the bridge and walking on the other side
  - What does this suggest about their concept of veiling, etc.?
- A woman arrives in makeup and a green and white over yellow hashmiya
  - Clearly being rebellious, looking for responses
  - Most of the older women ignore her completely
  - What does this say about the rigid rules of female behavior in this culture?
  - Why do most women follow them?
- Kraya is the retelling of the betrayal and death of Hussein
  - We will look at this story next time
  - Everyone gets very emotional
  - What is the purpose or effect of the krayas?
  - When did they originate?
    - 1500’s, when Ottoman (Turkish) Empire oppressed Iraqis
    - Ottomans were Sunni
    - Krayas were assertion of religious difference, and protest
    - Might Sunni/Shiite relations be different in former provinces of the Ottoman Empire than they are elsewhere?
    - What sort(s) of explanation(s) does this suggest?
    - Urban Baghdad Shiite says krayas aggravate splits within Islam
      - Make Arab unity impossible
    - Why go?
      - Social contact
      - Childhood memories
      - Enjoys the ceremony
    - Does this remind you of anything in your own culture?
Chapter 10, The Feast (Iid el-Fitr)
- Feast at end of Ramadan
- Sheik’s household feeds 200-800 men at the mudhif
  - The women do all the work
- Urthman, Sheik Hamid’s uncle, wanted to be sheik but lost to Hamid
- Even some of the children’s dances are about Hussein’s betrayal and death

Chapter 11, Moussa’s House
- Laila has chosen BJ as her friend
- Qanda the beautician/tattooist
  - Tattoos will help you keep your husband
  - What assumptions are implied by that?
  - Why is BJ so adamantly against what they think is a fine idea?
- Why was she accepted?
  - Her Arabic got better
  - Instead of smiling and nodded, she could talk back to sarcastic remarks
  - They had thought she was deaf or stupid, but she became better company…

Chapter 12, Weddings
- Ali has arranged to swap daughter and son with a brother in marriage
  - An efficient, first-cousin marriage
- Ali’s daughter Sahura, no beauty
  - BJ hopes her husband is not hard on her when he sees her for the first time…
  - Mother and other women wail as she leaves
- Different reactions by different brides
- The Sheik’s guards are looking the other way so the women can go out and see the dancing p.143
- Man dances the “bride’s” part
  -Apparently reluctant at first
- Men ritually wash in canal, with mullah
- Then groom and bride sign agreement
- Groom goes in to the bride’s home to consummate the marriage
- Tension as it takes a while
- Bride’s mother as a witness
- Show the bloody sheet to all, proving her virginity
- Congratulations all around
- Bride can be killed or ruined for life if she does not appear to be a virgin
  - Why?
  - Is this a good system?

Chapter 13, Salima
- Tribe endogamy preferred
- First cousin marriage preferred
- But Moussa’s daughters don’t have enough male cousins
- They love their expected husbands; grew up with them as children
− Laila does not expect to marry
  − Has to care for her mother
− The higher-status men all go off to study, want to marry more modern women they meet there
− Fernea says they will have meaningless lives “for reasons which they would never be able to understand” p 160
  − Is that fair?
− Best option: become a teacher
− Closed to older girls – school for girls became acceptable too late for them

− Chapter 14, One Wife or Four
− Hussna thought to be a poor wife; husband Abad considers taking as a second wife a recent widow with two small boys
− Even women who oppose multiple marriages approve
− Hussna goes to a wise woman in Samawa
− Widow’s son gets sick, Abad gives up the marriage
− People say they don’t believe, but they do notice…
− Un Khalil and women mullahs visited about illness, barrenness, to make cruel husbands kind, but especially to prevent him from taking another wife
− Only 9 of 104 households had ever been polygamous
− 4 divorces in just the last 18 months!
− Second wife is expensive
− “Isn’t our way better?”
  − Bob can divorce you and leave you penniless
  − But if he takes a second wife, he still supports the first
− Mothers have final say in sons’ marriages while alive
− Second wife is often the man’s choice
− Mohammed’s rules of polygamy were intended to stop female infanticide
− Often the only option for women
  − no place for them outside a family
  − her children will have relatives to support them and to marry
− Fernea says the practice is rare in cities
− Multiple wives needed to cook and care for children
− Abdulla treats Khariya and Bassoul equally, and they get along well