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Cobb

World Cultures

1 Dec 2006

### A Peaceful Vacation

As I stepped off the plane in the Abu Dubai airport (AUH) I [REDACTED] amazed. The place [REDACTED] brand new and clean. I hardly even realized I [REDACTED] in the Middle East, the most troubled spot in the world. Why, then, had the State Department warned me not to come here! I didn't see any trouble, where's the conflict? Iraq, I guess, but I planning to steer clear of Iraq! I know I read about it every day in the newspapers, but I don't see any problems here. I [REDACTED] only planning on staying in Israel. The pictures I saw of Israel seemed pretty nice. It seemed pretty calm there. But then again, I also wanted to see other parts of the Middle East, so I chose to fly to Abu Dubai and drive to Israel. This will give me a flavor of the United Arab Emriates, Saudi Arabia and the occupied Palestinian territories.

I left the airport and started my drive through the Middle East. Abu Dubai [REDACTED] a busy, modern city. It seemed very western to me with all of the luxury hotels and skyscrapers. The place seemed like New York except much cleaner and newer. How could they possibly tolerate terrorism here? Commerce and oil are king in this town, it seemed very stable.

I soon moved along into Saudi Arabia. However, I had a little problem at the border. They confiscated my bottle of liquor I [REDACTED] planning to bring home as a gift! They claimed t hat the entire country [REDACTED] dry! I remember hearing about the probation in the US and the problems that caused. I wounder how Saudi Arabia could cope. I would soon find out, as I rolled across the border.

Saudi Arabia [REDACTED] dry in fact. However it [REDACTED] in more than the way I just mentioned. A desert covers most of this country. It seemed to go on forever like the ocean back home. What would happen if you got lost in it? Big expanses of sand dunes stretch for as far as the eye can see in either direction. It sort of felt scary!

Another thing I [REDACTED] warned to avoid in Saudi Arabia [REDACTED] sharia law. It's this strict religious code enforced by the government, which [REDACTED] a monarchy. If you're caught stealing, they will cut your hand off. No thank you! No wonder they warned me about stay away from trouble with the police. Overall, however, Saudi Arabia [REDACTED] pretty nice. They used oil to finance their future, like the UAE.

The last country I drove through before entering Israel [REDACTED] the occupied Palestinian territories. This place would seem like a empty wasteland, people lived here. In addition, Israeli tanks rolled down the street and Israeli planes thundered overhead. It seemed as if every 3rd building [REDACTED] bombed out. How could these people put up with living in this environment?

I [REDACTED] getting hungry by this time, so I wanted to stop somewhere for lunch. I didn't see a single decent place to stop. There wasn't a McDonald's or western restaurant for miles around. The only half-decent looking place [REDACTED] boarded up and closed. All of the other places seemed too dirty. I would not even go near them, let alone eat there. Think of all of the diseases those place must harbor!

So, as I entered Israel, I [REDACTED] famished. But I momentarily lost my hunger as I noticed a big difference in the landscape between here and Palestine. In Israel the streets [REDACTED] full of life. The farms [REDACTED] full of food and [REDACTED] very colorful. Water seemed to [REDACTED] everywhere. I heard this [REDACTED] a desert, but I don't see any evidence of one. There [REDACTED] even a few McDonald's in the city. This country seemed like Dubai or America. In fact, I'm starting to like this place. They even

have malls with my favorite designer stores like Gucci in the capital, Tel Aviv. I could definitely live here! "Why can't Palestine [redacted] like this place," I thought as I entered the McDonald's.

**Boom!** All of a sudden, a suicide bomber detonated right in front of me! I [redacted] scared for my life. I had never know this sort of horror! Against my better judgment, I ran to the scene of the explosion. Blood and glass [redacted] everywhere! The [redacted] a small crater in the road with a twisted pile of metal of what [redacted] once a car. Smoke [redacted] smoldering up from the wreckage. The police [redacted] all ready running to the scene of the crime. They ordered everyone back, afraid another suicide bomber would take advantage of the crowd. I quickly decided to leave in fear of my life.

The next day, most of the people in the city acted as if nothing much had happened. This response [redacted] nothing like what I remembered after 9/11! How could this not affect the spirit of the Israeli's??? The mood in Tel Aviv seemed so normal! How could these people not let this tragic affect them? What's more, how could these people live with the constant fear of death day after day?

I guess I would so on find out! I decided to do what the Israelis did, and not let the bombing scare me. So I decided to continue my vacation. The next day I went parasailing! It [redacted] great to [redacted] out on the ocean feeling the wind in my hair. I totally forgot about what had happened yesterday! I guess this [redacted] how the Israelis feel!

The day after that, I want to the Khamat Gader water park. The next day I stopped at several of the 133 museums in Israel. They [redacted] just like the ones at home. I [redacted] having a blast touring the country. Jerusalem [redacted] also a lot of fun. The city [redacted] a mixture of old and new. The Temple Mound, I learned, [redacted] a very volatile spot. The Muslim Dome of the Rock now stands where the old Jerusalem Temple use to be. The Jews believe that that [redacted] where the third temple



needs to [REDACTED] built for the Messiah to come. The Muslims seem quite happy with their place of worship the way it [REDACTED] currently. In fact, the destruction of the Dome of the Rock [REDACTED] what some historians believe to [REDACTED] the most likely possible cause of World War 3.

Sadly, my vacation [REDACTED] soon over. It went so fast, the way all vacation do. In fact, it [REDACTED] a quite normal trip except for that incident. But now, it [REDACTED] time to go back home. Overall, I [REDACTED] happy with my trip. I had lots of fun in Israel. But I [REDACTED] thinking about what it would [REDACTED] like to live with such volatility! What would it [REDACTED] like to know that suicide bombers might explode in front of you everyday! These poor people live with this fear for their entire lives. I would not want to live with this instability in Philadelphia! I would die everyday from the fear of [REDACTED] killed! No thank you!

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# Middle East Essay: A Peaceful Vacation

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 **Only a DRAFT!**

May change/be updated - still in progress - may still contain inaccuracies

This is a work of fiction with a narrator other than myself!

As I stepped off the plane in the Abu Dubai airport (AUH) I was amazed. The place was brand new and clean. I hardly even realized I was in the Middle East, the most troubled spot in the world. Why, then, had the State Department warned me not to come here! I didn't see any trouble, where's the conflict? Iraq, I guess, but I planning to steer clear of Iraq! I know I read about it every day in the newspapers, but I don't see any problems here. I only planning to stay in Israel. The pictures I saw of Israel seemed pretty nice. It seemed pretty calm there. But then again, I also wanted to see other parts of the Middle East, so I chose to fly to Abu Dubai and drive to Israel. This will give me a flavor of the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and the occupied Palestinian territories. *really.*

I left the airport and started my drive through the Middle East. Abu Dubai was a busy, modern city. It seemed very western to me with all of the luxury hotels and skyscrapers. The place seemed like New York except much cleaner and newer. How could they possibly tolerate terrorism here? Commerce and oil are king in this town, it seemed very stable. *look!*

I soon moved along into Saudi Arabia. However, I had a little problem at the border. They confiscated my bottle of liquor I was planning to bring home as a gift! They claimed that the entire country was dry! I remember hearing about the probation in the US and the problems that caused. I wonder how Saudi Arabia could cope. I would soon find out, as I rolled across the border.

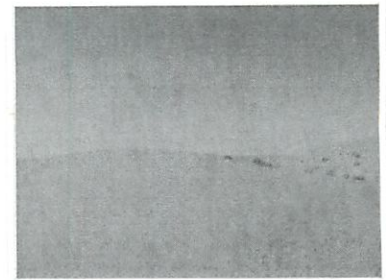


Highway in Dubai



A desert covers most of this country. It seemed to go on forever like the ocean back home. What would happen if you got lost in it? Big expanses of sand dunes stretch for as far as the eye can see in either direction. It sort of felt scary!

Sharia law runs Saudi Arabia. It's this strict religious code enforced by the government, a monarchy. If you're caught stealing, they will cut your hand off. No thank you! No wonder they warned me about stay away from trouble with the police. Overall, however, I liked Saudi Arabia. They used oil to finance their future, like the UAE.



Saudi Arabian Desert

Lastly on my tour, I crossed through the the occupied Palestinian territories. This place would seem like a empty wasteland, people lived here. In addition, Israeli tanks rolled down the street and Israeli plans thundered overhead. Every 3rd building had some kind of hole in it, most caused by bombs and guns. How could these people put up with living in this environment?



Palestinian Bombed Building

By this time, I wanted to stop somewhere for lunch. I didn't see a single decent place to stop. There wasn't a McDonald's or western restaurant for miles around. The only half-decent looking place looked boarded up and closed. All of the other places seemed too dirty. I would not even go near them, let alone eat there. Think of all of the diseases those place must harbor!

My stomach growled as I entered Israel. But I momentarily lost my hunger as I noticed a big different in the landscape between here and Palestine. The streets crawled with full of life. The farms overflowed with full of food and colors. Water existed everywhere. I heard that once a desert existed here, but I don't see any evidence of one. I counted a few McDonald's in the city. This country seemed like Dubai or America. In fact, I'm starting to like this place. They even have malls with my favorite designer stores like Gucci in the capital, Tel Aviv. I could definitely live here! "Why can't Palestine look like this place," I thought as I entered the McDonald's.

**Boom!** All of a sudden, a suicide bomber detonated right in front of me! Thoughts flashed through my mind! I had never know this sort of horror! Against my better judgment, I ran to the scene of the explosion. Blood and glass flew everywhere! A small crater stood in the road with a twisted pile of metal of where once a car had existed. Smoke smoldered up from the wreckage. Some police arrived quickly. They ordered everyone back, afraid another suicide bomber would take advantage of the crowd. I quickly decided to leave in fear of my life.



A West Bank Bombed Bus

The next day, most of the people in the city acted as if nothing much had happened. In America after 9/11, the response differed greatly! How could this not affect the spirit of the Israeli's??? The mood in Tel Aviv seemed so normal! How could these people not let this tragic affect them? What's more, how could these people live with the constant fear of death day after day?

I guess I would so on find out! I decided to do what the Israelis did, and not let the bombing scare me. So I decided to continue my vacation. The next day I went parasailing! It felt great feeling the wind in my hair. I totally forgot about what had happened yesterday! I guess that the Israelis feel like this after every suicide attack!

The day after that, I want to the Khamat Gader water park. The next day I stopped at several of the 133 museums in Israel. [1]

([http://www.goisrael.com/Ness.Tourism.CMS/Templates\\_I/USA/Content/MapaSearch.aspx?NRMODE=Published&](http://www.goisrael.com/Ness.Tourism.CMS/Templates_I/USA/Content/MapaSearch.aspx?NRMODE=Published&)) They looked just like the ones at home. Jerusalem, a mixture of old and new, I went to next. The Temple Mound, I

learned, has lots of volatility. The Muslim Dome of the Rock now stands where the old Jerusalem Temple use to be. The Jews believe that that the third temple needs to exist here for the Messiah to come. The Muslims seem quite happy with their place of worship currently. In fact, some historians put the destruction of the Dome of the Rock as the most likely cause of World War 3.

*I just hope I'm not around when that happens*

Sadly, my vacation ended too soon. It went so fast, the way all vacation do. In fact, I had a quite normal trip, except for that incident. But now, it's time to leave. Overall, I'm leaving happy; I had lots of fun in Israel. But I think about what it would feel like to live with such volatility! How would it feel to know that suicide bombers might explode in front of you ~~everyday~~! These poor people live with this fear for their entire lives. I would not want to live with this instability in Philadelphia! I would die everyday from the fear of death! No thank you!

*w/out notice*

*day in day out*

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