Are Arabs a Race?

For the past two months we have explored different understandings of what race is. We have explored naturalist/essentialist, neo-naturalist, social constructionist, and eliminativist accounts. We have also explored some ways that race is related to ethnicity and concepts that attempt to capture a useful way of conceiving the relationship between the two: ethnorace (Alcoff) and panethnicity (Espiritu), in particular.

Today’s reading provided a sketch of the history of how Arabs have been viewed and treated in relation to racial and ethnic discourses. In preparation for our discussion, complete the following questions:

1. Are Arabs a race?
   List three criteria that have been used or could be used for claiming that Arabs are a race:

   1) 
   2) 
   3) 

2. List three reasons for thinking Arabs, in particular, are not a race:

   1) 
   2) 
   3) 

3. Are Arabs an ethnicity? Why or why not?

4. What term(s) would you recommend be used to characterize Arabs as a group (race, ethnicity, ethnorace, panethnicity, none of the above, other, etc.) Why?