



“Towards a Poetics of Arab Diasporic Literary and Cultural Studies”

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**Tracing the Representation of Involuntary Migration and Recalling Home in Shahla Ujayli's
*Summer with the Enemy***

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ABSTRACT: Several Arab Diasporic authors explore the representation of Arab uprisings and revolts and their effects on Arab individuals. In this context, Shahla Ujayli depicts the detrimental impact of Syrian revolution on Syrian citizens, especially women. This research paper investigates the portrayal of involuntary migration and its impact on female characters in Ujayli's *Summer with the Enemy* (2019). It examines how Lamees, the female protagonist, navigates displacement and identity crisis in Cologne, Germany, as a newly displaced character. Therefore, she recalls her experiences in Raqqa, Syria, emphasizing her families' house and the surrounding landscape. This study relies on Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* and space theory. After analysis, we have reached the following findings. First, Lamees grapples with involuntary migration, as women are particularly targeted during the civil war. She experiences an identity crisis during her first days in Germany because she considers herself as a stranger following the complete destruction of Raqqa. Second, through focusing on the history of her parents' and grandmother's house in Raqqa, Lamees feels connected to her origins. This feeling helps her resist alienation, loss and dislocation. Consequently, houses are symbols of a home that the protagonist carries in her memories as she navigates diasporic spaces.

FIRST AUTHOR BIO: Dr. Sarah Chabane Chaouch is an associate professor at Mouloud MAMMERI University of Tizi-Ouzou. She worked on ecocriticism in modern and contemporary Western fiction in her PhD thesis, which she completed in 2021 at the University of Jordan. Her areas of interest are literary theory, contemporary Western fiction, and Arab Diaspora. She has articles on contemporary fiction, including "The Various Representations of the Intellectual in Shahla Ujayli's *A Sky So Close to Us*", "The Representation of Women in Eric Barnes's *Above the Ether* (2019)," "The Representation of African Illegal Migrants in British Media: The Telegraph, Channel 4, and BBC as a Case Study", and "Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Influence on Samuel Beckett's Selected Works."

SECOND AUTHOR BIO: Yousef Abu Amrieh is a professor of contemporary Arab diasporic literature at the University of Jordan. His first monograph, *The Arab Atlantic: Resistance, Diaspora, and Trans-cultural Dialogue in the Works of Arab British and Arab American Women Writers*, is based on his PhD thesis which he completed in 2011 at the University of Manchester. Since then, Prof. Abu Amrieh published several articles on the works of Arab writers in diaspora. Prof. Abu Amrieh is the founder of Contemporary Arab Diasporic Literary Studies (CADLS), an international research group based at the University of Jordan. Prof. Abu Amrieh has been included in the Stanford/Elsevier Top 2% Scientists List 2024.

A Terrestrial Iraqi Maryam: Our Lady of Strength? A Feminist Mariological Study of Antoon's *Ya Maryam/The Baghdad Eucharist*

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ABSTRACT: The proposed presentation analyses the diasporic writer Sinan Antoon's *Ya Maryam* (2012) (trans. *The Baghdad Eucharist* 2017) through feminist theological lens with particular attention to Marian piety. Set against the backdrop of sectarian violence surging post-2003 Iraq, *The Baghdad Eucharist* represents this horrific visceral reality over the course of one day as experienced by a Chaldean Catholic Iraqi family. Through the narrative's engagement with sectarian violence, mainly directed against its female protagonist, I argue that the literary depiction of Catholic devotion, particularly Marian piety, is rendered futile facing Christian Iraqis' persecution, expulsion and killing. Drawing on feminist theology as its theoretical framework of analysis, this presentation investigates the text's religious iconoclasm amidst political unrest questioning Catholic Christian convictions pertaining to two Marian dogmas: Theotokos and the Perpetual Virginity of Mary and gender essentialism, inter alia. My premise is through the text's resurrection of an Iraqi Maryam, a polyvalent terrestrial figure is created- a woman who transcends the constructed religious boundaries and is ultimately represented as the Saviour of her people *vis-à-vis* the docile, submissive celestial Mary and meek, mild Jesus.

BIO: Dr. El-Mansi is Lecturer of English and Comparative Literature at The British University in Egypt. Her research interests focus on contemporary Arabic Literature, decolonial and anti-colonial thoughts, and Palestine Studies. She has presented and published her works in various academic conferences and prestigious journals. Her current research project is engaged with the intersectionality of Islamic traditions and anti-colonial praxis.

Beyond Borders: Space, Migration, and Identity in Arab Diasporic Literature

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ABSTRACT: In Arab diasporic literature, space plays a pivotal role in the construction of identity and the exploration of belonging. Arab writers in diaspora engage with both psychological and physical spaces to mirror their experiences of migration, displacement, and cultural adaptation. Arguably, this paper scrutinizes how space serves as a major theme in literary works, where it is not only a geographical setting but a dynamic, thematic force that shapes the diasporic experience. Diasporic writers investigate themes of resistance, selfhood, and cultural continuity by examining urban areas in host countries along with memories of home. It also investigates how space is used to portray home, exile, and belonging in the diaspora. The paper argues that space in Arab diasporic literature is not simply a backdrop but an active site for identity formation and cultural resistance. By focusing on themes such as forced exile, assimilation, and the evolving nature of transnational identities, the study highlights how diasporic authors challenge conventional notions of home and belonging, offering a reimagined understanding of space in the context of modern global migration.

BIO: Dr. Missoum Fatma Zohra is an associate professor at the Department of English Literature at Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef (UHBC) in Algeria. She obtained her PhD in English literature from the University of Jordan in September 2022. Her research interests include English literature, contemporary literature, literary analysis and criticism. Dr. Missoum has been teaching since 2022 and taught courses like Contemporary British novel, American science fiction, British and American literature.

An Expanded Mexican Identity: The Arab Experience in Mexico as a Paradigmatic Case of Cultural Integration

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the historical and sociocultural trajectory of Arab communities settled in Mexico since the second half of the nineteenth century, focusing on the migratory processes that shaped their arrival and the complex dynamics of assimilation they faced. The first section reviews the historical context of this movement, emphasizing how discriminatory migration policies, national instability, and limited economic appeal made Mexico an uncommon destination compared to other Latin American countries. The second section explores the process of identity reconfiguration within these communities, highlighting their economic integration through commerce and the consolidation of a socioeconomic base that later enabled the emergence of a cultural elite linked to the arts, literature, and academia. Finally, the study analyzes the works and trajectories of a group of Mexican intellectuals of Arab origin as an expression of this evolving identity and of their contribution to contemporary Mexican thought. The study argues that the Arab experience in Mexico not only reveals a successful process of assimilation but also represents a paradigmatic case of how diasporas can transform the cultural and academic life of the host country, expanding the boundaries of what we currently understand as “Mexicanness.”

BIO: Gerardo Mateos Zapata holds a Master’s degree in Asian and African Studies with a focus on the Middle East from El Colegio de México, and a Bachelor’s degree in International Relations from UNAM. He has participated in academic forums, presenting on the challenges of identity in sectarian systems in Lebanon and Iraq. His specialized training includes research stays in Middle Eastern countries, including Lebanon and Jordan. He served as an assistant professor for Middle East–related courses at UNAM’s Faculty of Political and Social Sciences and contributed to the research project on social justice and sectarianism in the region. He also contributed to the podcast “International Relations in the Middle East,” produced by the Workshop on Middle Eastern Studies at UNAM with the episode “Lebanon: From Civil War to the Empowerment of Hezbollah” (2025). He currently lives in Amman, working in the field of bilateral cooperation between Mexico and Jordan.

ONLINE***Adab al-manfā* vs *adab al-luġū* ?
“Refugeedom” in Contemporary Arabic Fiction(s) of Displacement****Prof. Annamaria Bianco****Aix Marseille Université, France****E-mail: annamariabianco91@gmail.com**

ABSTRACT: Migration has been at the heart of Arabic fiction since the 19th century and is of even greater importance today due to the involvement of the MENA region within the global “refugee crisis” (2015). The current Arab diaspora has its origin in the unbroken chain of geopolitical events that have been affecting the region since the establishment of the State of Israel in Palestine and the rise of authoritarian regimes in the other countries. The consequent outbreak of wars and social conflicts has been forcing people to leave their homeland through new modes of displacement, which deviate from the post-colonial pattern featured by the canon of exile literature (*adab al-manfā*). The purpose of this paper is to show that these evolutions which have been affecting the Arab mobility are matched by as many evolutions in their literary representation, through a review of recent research produced in the field of Arab and comparative studies, combined with original analysis of the humanitarian intervention in fiction. The relevance of “refugeedom” as an interpretive category will be framed within the critical debates on new poetics, aesthetics and definitions running through the Arab intellectual *milieu* since 2016, year in which the expression “asylum literature” (*adab al-luġū*) was forged.

BIO: Annamaria Bianco is a research associate at Ifpo (Institut français du Proche Orient) and IREMAM (Institut de recherches et d'études sur les mondes arabes et musulmans) in Aix-Marseille, where she received a PhD in co-tutorship with the University of Naples L'Orientale in 2022 and currently teaches Modern Arabic Language and Literature as Senior Professor. Her thesis, entitled '*Adab al-maljā*': *représenter le refuge dans le roman arabe du XXI^e siècle*' received a special mention in the IMOMM prize and the first prize of the University of Aix-Marseille in 2023 and is currently being published by Brill. Her research interests revolve around the Arabic cultural production of migration, exile and diaspora, with a particular focus on the circulation of literature and the notion of literary hospitality. A board member of EURAMAL (European Association for Modern Arabic Literature), Annamaria Bianco is also a translator from Arabic for publishing, film and theatre. Her first edited book *Exil et traduction. Regards sur un croisement fécond* has been published by Classiques Garnier in 2025.

Jazz, Jinn, and Juxtaposition: Navigating Arab-American Identity in Diana Abu-Jaber's *Arabian Jazz*

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the complexities of Arab-American identity through Diana Abu-Jaber's debut novel, *Arabian Jazz*, a seminal work in Arab diasporic literature. Set in upstate New York, the novel centers on a Jordanian-American family grappling with cultural dissonance, traditional gender expectations, and the longing for a sense of belonging. Through a blend of humor, magical realism, and musical motifs, Abu-Jaber crafts a narrative that interrogates the intersections of heritage and assimilation, particularly as experienced by women in the diaspora. The analysis focuses on how Abu-Jaber employs jazz—a symbol of improvisation and hybridity—as a metaphor for the fluidity of identity. It also examines the role of storytelling and myth, especially the invocation of jinn, in articulating diasporic memory and resistance. By situating *Arabian Jazz* within the broader framework of Arab diasporic literary studies, this paper argues that the novel challenges monolithic representations of Arabness and offers a nuanced portrayal of cultural negotiation in the American context. Ultimately, this study contributes to ongoing conversations about transnational identity, gendered diaspora, and the literary strategies that Arab-American authors use to navigate and narrate their in-between spaces.

BIO: Dr. Mona Alshamsi currently works as an assistant professor at the United Arab Emirates University. She is a passionate educator, empowering women through literature. Her life revolves around fostering a love for learning and promoting women's empowerment through her multifaceted career as an Assistant Professor of English Literature. Dr. Mona's expertise lies in American literature, women writers, minority and diaspora, and diverse narratives. Her passion extends to postcolonial theory and literature, weaving feminism, especially in the Middle East and Asia, into the tapestry of her research. Dr. Mona Alshamsi is a dedicated teacher with nearly a decade of experience in both government schools and university level. Dr. Mona brings a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to her undergraduate courses, male and female students. From guiding students through college reading and writing to equipping them with research skills, her diverse portfolio spans Greek drama and American literature surveys.

ONLINE**Between the Wall and the World:
Theatre, space, bodies, and community in Isabella Hammad's *Enter Ghost* (2023)**

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ABSTRACT: This paper will consider Isabella Hammad's second English-language novel, *Enter Ghost* (2023), at once a tableau of deteriorating conditions across different parts of occupied Palestine prior to the Gaza genocide and a spanning of cultural topographies and representational genres in an attempt to project future-oriented modes of being Palestinian. The novel reflexively mediates between presence and absence, representation and material reality, and performative reiterations of familiar stories. Hammad purposefully hybridizes genre and formally extends an interest in the relationship between oral culture and textuality, as a corollary of themes of (self-)translation in a settler colonial context, that were hallmarks of *The Parisian* (2019). *Enter Ghost* thematically foregrounds and strives structurally to replicate theatre's capacity to (re-) produce community as a means of resisting – and reshaping – an occupation context that encourages social breakdown. It reflexively exposes the theatricality of colonial power, refigures Palestinian space(s), and realigns Palestinian bodies towards a 'community to come'. As such, Hammad's novel imagines ways of (re-)producing community in an occupation context that encourages physical separation, social stagnation, and distrust. The paper will consider how *Enter Ghost* engages with a wider cultural repertoire of resistance to settler colonial power, including writing on walls, collective protest, hunger striking and, potentially – as Hamlet considers – 'tak[ing] arms against a sea of troubles. / And by opposing end them' (III.i, 67).

BIO: Dr. Lindsey Moore is Reader in Postcolonial Literatures at Lancaster University. She is the author of several books and numerous articles on Arab and wider Middle Eastern creativity and the lead researcher on a British Academy-funded project that is using literature and oral testimony to re-map urban Palestine.

ONLINE**‘Like a Pane of Glass’: Translating *The Translator*****Prof. Claire Chambers****The University of York, UK****E-mail: claire.chambers@york.ac.uk**

ABSTRACT: Leila Aboulela’s debut novel *The Translator* (1999) is about a love affair between a Sudanese translator, Sammar, and her employer, the Scottish lecturer Rae Isles. It is set in Aberdeen and Khartoum, and Aboulela has described the book as a ‘Muslim *Jane Eyre*’ (in Chambers ‘Interview’: 97). In this talk, I will explore Aboulela’s intertextual translations, not only of Charlotte Brontë, but also of Tayeb Salih’s *Season of Migration to the North* and ‘The Wedding of Zein’. Additionally, in the paper I will discuss themes including religious faith, romance, and (as suggested by the title) language and translation through the lens of theories by such thinkers as Walter Benjamin, Lawrence Venuti, and Khavita Bhanot & Jeremy Tiang. Finally, in what I term ‘British Muslim fictions’ (Chambers, 2011) there is often a repeated trope of the new migrant observing a British object or phenomenon and being carried back imaginatively to their home country. In *The Translator* we see this spatial dissonance when Scottish central heating pipe noises call to Sammar’s mind the *azan* or call to prayer. Sammar also attempts to recapture the tropical weather she is accustomed to by spending time in Aberdeen’s heated Winter Gardens. To theorize the translocal connections that make migrant writers and their characters translate the UK into Sudan, India, or elsewhere, I reach for Jahan Ramazani’s *A Transnational Poetics*, Derek Gregory’s analysis of imagined geographies as ‘doubled spaces of articulation’ in *The Colonial Present*, and Derek Attridge’s work on Aboulela’s fellow postcolonial Scottish writer Zoë Wicomb.

BIO: Claire Chambers is Professor of Global Literature at the University of York, where she teaches twentieth- and twenty-first century writing in English from South Asia, the Perso-Arab world, and their diasporas. She is the author of *British Muslim Fictions* (2011), *Britain Through Muslim Eyes* (2015), *Rivers of Ink: Selected Essays* (2017), and *Making Sense of Contemporary British Muslim Novels* (2019). She has co-edited and co-authored several other books including, most recently, *Translation and Decolonisation: Interdisciplinary Approaches* (2023). She was Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* for over a decade, and now co-edits three book series, *Multicultural Textualities* (Manchester University Press), *Global Literature: Twenty-First Century Perspectives* (Routledge), and *A Cultural History of South Asian Literature* (Bloomsbury). She has been awarded funding by the AHRC, ESRC, Leverhulme, and British Academy, *inter alia*. Claire is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

“Poetry Starts Where Meaning Ceases”: Etel Adnan’s Poetry of Resistance
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It’s the future that concerns us most of all. There is still a lot of beauty in the world, but there’s no place, even the most beautiful place, that doesn’t remind us of the danger there.
 Etel Adnan with Laure Adler, *The Beauty of Light: Interviews with Etel Adnan*

ABSTRACT: Born in Beirut in 1925, the poet, playwright and artist Etel Adnan wrote her first two poems in English against the Vietnam War, while living in the United States. Her most known works from the late 1970s and 1980s—the novel *Sitt Marie Rose* (1978) and the epic poem *The Arab Apocalypse* (1980)—emerged out of her journalistic involvement with the Lebanese Civil War; her later poetry from the collections *The Spring Flowers Own & The Manifestations of a Voyage* (1990) to *Time* (2020) and *Shifting the Silence* (2020) likewise reflects the condition of exile, environmental cataclysm and warfare ancient as well as recent, such as the 2003 war in Iraq. “There is the presence of war in almost everything I write,” Adnan noted in a 2009 *Bidoun* interview with Lynne Tillman, and there is, indeed, much rightful anger and denunciation of destruction in her work. Yet Adnan’s real and surreal poetic landscapes of injustice, sorrow and constant proximity of death include also images that evoke love and beauty. There are recurrent passages in her poems that speak of angels, resurrection and paradise. There are memories of childhood, friendships, global cities and mundane events. My presentation will focus on these “counter-realities” (to use Adnan’s own expression) in her work, considering them necessary forms of nonviolent resistance to the uprootedness of exile and the meaninglessness of ongoing wars.

BIO: Dr. Pavla Veselá is senior lecturer in American studies and literature at Charles University, Czech Republic. She holds a PhD in comparative literature from Duke University, an MA in gender studies from CEU Budapest, and an MA in English and American Studies from Masaryk University Brno. The focus of her research has been modern Anglophone and Slavic (Russian, Czech) literature, particularly utopias, science fiction as well as minority and migrant writing. She has presented her work at international conferences and other cultural events in the Czech Republic, Portugal, Ireland, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States, among others.

**Beyond Stereotypes:
Cosmopolitanism and the Arab Woman in Fadia Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep*
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ABSTRACT: This study investigates Fadia Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep*, focusing on the processes shaping the cultural identity of the female Arab protagonist, Najwa, as a displaced immigrant. Drawing on the concept of cosmopolitanism and its relevance to marginalized groups in the diaspora, the paper examines how Najwa negotiates her sense of self amid multiple intersecting forms of prejudice—including gendered, cultural, social, ideological, religious, and political biases—experienced across diverse geographical and social spaces. These constraints create a persistent sense of rootlessness, alienation, and unbelonging, highlighting the challenges faced by Arab women navigating diasporic contexts. In response, Najwa develops a fluid, adaptable identity and a cosmopolitan subjectivity, which allow her to assert agency and resist disempowering forces that seek to constrain her mobility and self-expression. This analysis demonstrates how Faqir's work challenges stereotypes and offers a nuanced portrayal of Arab women negotiating identity, belonging, and empowerment in transnational spaces.

BIO: Ayham Abu Orooq holds a PhD in English Literary and Cultural Studies from the University of Debrecen, Hungary, with a specialization in modern Arab Anglophone literature, postcolonial theory, gender construction in the Arab world, and cosmopolitanism. He has published scholarly articles and presented at numerous international conferences, contributing to critical discussions on Arab Anglophone literature and cultural narratives.

**Across and Beyond Borders:
Magical Realism and Occupation in Mazen Maarouf's *Jokes for the Gunmen*
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ABSTRACT: This chapter examines selected stories from Mazen Maarouf's *Jokes for the Gunmen* (2019) through the lens of magical realism. Maarouf's collection employs uncanny elements, such as dreams, surreal resolutions, cyclical deaths and resurrections, and bodily transformations, to create liminal spaces where the boundaries between the real and the supernatural blur. These spaces mirror the chronic suffering and absurdity of Palestinian life under occupation. Although the collection does not name Palestine explicitly, the unsettling juxtaposition between the ordinary and the extraordinary invites readers to interpret the text through the lived realities of oppression and displacement. Themes of claustrophobia, confinement, and absurd violence further evoke an atmosphere of siege, trauma, and forced alienation experienced by Palestinians. The recurring figure of the gunman, for instance, introduces horror and dark humour, pointing to the constant threat of militarised violence. Close readings of stories such as "Matador" and "Other-People's Dreams Syndrome" will explore how magical realism opens psychological and spiritual terrains beyond national geography. For example, the cyclical deaths in "Matador" symbolise resilience amidst repeated erasure, while "Other-People's Dreams Syndrome" suggests dreaming as a third space of survival and meaning-making. Ultimately, *Jokes for the Gunmen* presents surreal landscapes that resonate with the experiences of Palestinians: a reality suspended between profound suffering and absurdity. By merging the magical with the real, Maarouf's work portrays the complexities of displacement and trauma while simultaneously highlighting the perpetual desire of a people striving to reclaim a sense of belonging beyond imposed borders.

FIRST AUTHOR BIO: Sumaya Haj is an associate Professor of English and postcolonial Literature. She is currently the chairperson of the Department of English Language and Literature at Birzeit University/ Palestine. She received her PhD degree from the University of Jordan in 2016. Her dissertation is titled: "The Caribbean Self: Traumatic Memory and Diaspora in the Works of V. S. Naipaul and Caryl Phillips." She published several scholarly articles in Arabic and English. Her current research interests are Trauma Studies, Postcolonial Literature, Magical Realism, and Palestinian Literature.

FIRST AUTHOR BIO: Bayan Haddad is a lecturer in the English Language and Literature Department at Birzeit University. Her research explores the manifestations of communal pain in Palestinian and Irish literature. To that end, she was awarded the George Antonius Visiting Fellowship at the Middle East Centre, Oxford, where she undertook a comparative study examining literary responses to collective trauma in Palestine and Northern Ireland. Her broader interests include decolonial pedagogy, translation studies, and the affective dimensions of storytelling in contexts of political struggle.

ONLINE**The Neglected History of Arab Intelligentsia in Brazil:
*Al Jaliah Magazine, Al Nahda and the present*****Gustavo Racy****The Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), Brazil****E-mail: gustavo.racy@ufpr.br**

ABSTRACT: This presentation investigates the neglected intellectual history of the Arab *mahjar* in Brazil, arguing its ideals directly reflected the *Nahda* of the early twentieth century. Despite growing academic interest, the diaspora remains popularly symbolized by the figure of the peddler, a narrative of economic ascent that obscures a complex and vibrant intellectual milieu. This study seeks to recover that lost cultural history, which was often articulated in globalized print networks, specifically through migrant magazines. To unravel how the *mahjar* itself overlooked this history, the presentation is structured in three parts. First, it offers a close reading of the São Paulo periodical *Al Jaliah* (1922-1927), using it as a case study to highlight the pervasive *Nahda* precepts within Brazil's Arab intellectual circles. Second, it analyzes the philosophical and political underpinnings of these ideals and explores their resonance within current scholarly reappraisals. Finally, it assesses what understanding of the historical Levant and its contemporary issues this modern revival of interest has fostered, ultimately promoting a more nuanced view of the Arab-Brazilian diaspora's cultural legacy.

BIO: Gustavo Racy is a professor at the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR - Brazil), a post-doc candidate at the Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP), and director of *Al Jaliah Magazine*. He is a researcher of the Centre for the Analysis of International Conjunction (Catholic University of São Paulo), and of the research group on Image, Subjectivity and Social Theory (UNIFESP). Together with Yara Osman, in 2025 he launched the first issue of the new version of *Al Jaliah*, in Portuguese, Arabic and English, as an independent initiative focused on bringing together diasporic and non-diasporic Arabs, publishing on the most varied range of topics.

**Toward an Arab Spatial Literary Studies:
Re-imagining Trajectories and Political Possibilities
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ABSTRACT: With forced travel, movement, and displacement, with exile, wars, and a genocide, the Arab world today faces the challenge of re-imagining not only its narrative(s), but the very language (conceptual and otherwise) through which we tell our stories. Out of this concern and on account of this conviction, I seek through this intervention to highlight the significance of Arab spatialities that are currently imposing themselves. It is Derrida who once said that spacing (as in spatialising), here taken to refer to the spatialisation of narratives that I am currently interested in, implies by necessity a textualization. This interplay between narrative and space, textuality and spatiality, calls into attention a re-imagination not only of issues pertaining to space, but those pertaining to time/history/narrative as well. I do not claim to offer solutions or provide answers, but I hope to be able to open up a space through which such imaginings are possible. This paper will therefore focus on the specificity of the Arab experience of lived time and space, and the necessity to re-imagine the textualities and narrativisations of such experiences from within our context and out. This is an attempt to open up trajectories for both narrativisations and imaginings of space-time onto their political potential that recognises an Arab Spatial Literary Studies.

BIO: Farah Z. Aridi is Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Qatar. She holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from Goldsmiths, University of London. Her research interests include contemporary Arabic literature, spatial literary studies, city literature, the quotidian, the practice of everyday life, spatial justice, and the right to the city. She is currently working on issues and theories in textuality, specifically textuality of space and the spatiality of the text, and the reconceptualization of narrative through the walking narrative in specific. She is interested in transgeneric, alternative, and transgressive readings of city experiences in cultural and literary production, with emphasis on positionality and subjectivity in acts of reading and theorising.

ONLINE**“exilic and nonnational”: Zeina Hashem Beck’s Ghazals****Dr. Doris Hambuch****UAEU, UAE****E-mail: hambuchd@uaeu.ac.ae**

ABSTRACT: The ghazal is a form of poetry with roots in classical Arabic traditions. In his study of anglophone ghazals by the Kashmiri-American poet Shahid in *Forget English!* Aamir Mufti traces a crucial shift between pre-colonial, pre-national ghazal practice to postcolonial, nonnational iterations. Mufti emphasizes that an adequate reading of the latter requires an “exilic” social imaginary (Mufti 2016: 194). My presentation argues that Zeina Hashem Beck’s ghazals not only require a similar reading but that they were also written from an exilic point of departure. Through the lens of historical poetics, I demonstrate that Hashem Beck draws on various stages in the ghazal’s legacy for her own unique translingual texts. Schooling in Lebanon and co-hosting of the podcast *Maqsooda* account for her indebtedness to Arabic poetry, yet she pays tribute to Shahid’s anthology *Ravishing DisUnities* (2000) and writes anglophone ghazals that follow the rules upheld by the Kashmiri-American poet. Analysis of translingual elements, as well as the of the ways in which motifs, such as love and exile lead to explicit localizations, demonstrate how Hashem Beck’s ghazals combine influences from different phases in the form’s development.

BIO: Doris Hambuch is Associate Professor and Coordinator of the MA in English in the Department of Languages and Literature at United Arab Emirates University. She is the guest-editor of several special journal issues, including issue 6.2 of *Imaginations: Journal of Cross-Cultural Image Studies*, on Caribbean cinema and, most recently, issue 49.3 of the *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, on polyglot art practices. She is Past President of the Canadian Comparative Literature Association, and her current research focuses on eco-poetics and literary multilingualism. She is the author of three chapbooks, *All That Depends* (2019), *Monsters - الوحوش* (2021), and *Office Monsters – وحوش المكتب* (2023).

Literary Trauma and Gothic Monstrosity in *Frankenstein in Baghdad*

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ABSTRACT:

Gothic conventions have long explored fear, the uncanny, and the limits of human experience, From Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* in the eighteenth century to modern day contemporary Gothic like the book series like *Twilight*, Netflix's *Wednesday*, video games like *Castlevania*, and, on an aesthetic level, dark academia, our understanding of the Gothic continues to evolve as Gothic tropes get recontextualised and intersect with contemporary narratives, engaging with social and political fears

Set in post-2003 Iraq, Ahmed Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* is a retelling of Mary Shelley's Gothic classic, portraying the Gothic Monster as an allegory of national trauma. Drawing on literary trauma theory, particularly the works of Cathy Caruth and Dominick LaCapra, this study examines how Saadawi, through fragmented narration, repetition, and silence, represents the aftermath of war. The novel's non-linear structure, multiple focalizations, and framing narrative reflect the fractured memory and the temporality of trauma, positioning the reader as a witness. Through the Whatsitsname, a creature composed of victims' body parts, Saadawi fuses Gothic conventions with psychoanalytic notions of 'acting out' and 'working through' to reveal trauma as both personal and collective, rendering the unsayable wounds of history visible. Ultimately, *Frankenstein in Baghdad* preserves and redefines Gothic conventions to confront questions of identity and violence in a postcolonial context.

BIO: Maab Hafiz Biography Maab Hafiz is an MA student in English and a research assistant at the United Arab Emirates University. She holds a BA in English Language and Literature (Highest Honours) from the University of Sharjah, where she was the president of the Department of Foreign Languages Scientific Society. At the 2025 Graduate Student Research Conference, she presented her poster titled "Western vs. Non-Western Intertexts in Season of Migration to the North." As a PhD aspirant, her research interest includes Gothic literature, identity, intersectional studies, and the digital humanities. Alongside her academic and research work, she is the founder of *The Marginalia Quarterly*, an independent digital literary magazine, and actively participates in Model United Nations conferences as both a Chair and Delegate.

Rewriting narrative identity of a new home/homeland in Rīmā Bālī's novels

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ABSTRACT: This paper aims to examine the concepts of narrative identity of a new home or homeland in the novels of Rīmā Bālī *Suleima's Ring* (2022), *The flute in the Western orchestra* (2023). Rīmā Bālī is a Syrian writer from Aleppo who now lives in Spain. The real and fictional connections between her original homeland (Syria and Aleppo) and the new home/homeland (Spain) are core themes in her novels. Rīmā Bālī revisits her homeland and hometown, which dominate her thoughts, evoking nostalgia and providing a fundamental source of literary inspiration. Through the memories of literary characters, Aleppo is presented in various forms and contexts through the reminiscences of literary characters in settings that evoke the glorious history of Andalusia. Set in Aleppo and Toledo, the novel *Suleima's Ring* tells the intertwined stories of Lucas, a photographer who is half Spanish and half Jewish, and Suleima, a Syrian protagonist. Despite their different personalities and contrasting backgrounds, Suleima, Lucas and Shams al-Dīn, an Italian musician living in Aleppo, have one thing in common: their love for Aleppo, a charming yet tormented city buried under the rubble of dreams and lost opportunities. The main character in the novel *The Flute in the Western Orchestra* inherits a library in Aleppo from her uncle, Iskandar. The library has deep symbolic meaning: originally a barbershop, it survived all the hardships of war in Aleppo. Initially a profitable business for Iskandar, the library became an outdated and seemingly useless institution before reverting to its former use in 2021. This transformation reflects the changes that have occurred in the city and throughout the country with regard to culture, literature, art, and all aspects of intellectual life. The research into the chosen topic is based on an examination of narrative identity within the context of poetics and place, as well as an (re)interpretation of the rich symbolic meanings of the characters' thoughts and behaviour.

BIO: Dr. František Ondráš has been teaching since 1995 in the field of Arabic Studies. In the years 1990-1995 he taught Czech language, Czech literature and culture at the Faculty of Languages of Ain Shams University in Cairo. At the UBVA he leads courses in literary and colloquial Arabic, lectures on classical and modern Arabic literature and Arabic culture. He is the author of several monographs on modern Arabic prose – *Modern Egyptian Prose in the Eighties and Nineties of the Twentieth Century* (2003), *Autobiographical Narrative Document in the Work of the Egyptian Author Sun'allah Ibrahim* (2008) and *The Image of Ancient Egypt in Modern Egyptian Prose* (2008).

“No borders, too many maps”: Lisa Majaj’s *Geographies of Light*
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ABSTRACT: In *Geographies of Light*, Lisa Majaj, the American Palestinian poet based in Cyprus, explores what it means to be Arab in the West. However, if Arabness is a mark of their difference in a western environment, American Arabs also have to define their Arabness in an Arab context and in an Arab-American context. The concepts of diversity, alterity, hybridity, hyphenation... crisscross a geography of immigration, of testimony but most of all, deeply rooted in the soil. Soil and land play an important part in her works. Lisa Suhair Majaj explores these geographies, starting with an exploration of the two names that map her identity and examines how the birth of her first child revives and reshapes these questions of identity, belonging, heritage, transmission, and gives them/her a new perspective.

BIO: Jacqueline JONDOT is a retired Professor of English literature (Toulouse 2 University (France), doctor in English literature. Prof. JONDOT wrote a 3rd cycle thesis on *Orlando* by Virginia Woolf and a PhD thesis on Middle Eastern Arab anglophone authors; she wrote articles on Ahdaf Soueif, Edward Atiyah, Carl Gibeily, Yasmin Zahran, Jamal Mahjoub, Fadia Faqir, Susan Abulhawa... as well as on British women writers (Virginia Woolf, Penelope Lively, Mary Shelley). She currently works on the Arabic Peninsula Anglophone writers. She has also translated *Outremer* by Nabil Saleh. She has coordinated an issue of *Horizons Maghrébins* on the 2011 Revolution in Egypt, including her photos of those street graffiti on which she has written a number of articles. She is the author of *Dalida en Egypte*.

The diasporic and foreign structure of desire in the poems of Nizar Qabbani

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ABSTRACT: This paper will explore the connections between erotic desire, Orientalism and Modernism within the poems of Nizar Qabbani. The eroticized Other (especially the stereotype of the Eastern woman) is a body of a certain significance in the poems of the poet, diasporic and cosmopolitan in nature: signifying a zone of potential rebellion, the idylls of the past culture, or a foreign element against cultural morality. Based on a part of my PhD research, I wish to demonstrate how these scenes of fantasy function with the use of the exotic, correlating with Lacanian ideas about the structure of desire and the bait that catches itself in the work of the Imaginary. The bait is more often than not the exotic, which is always inevitably represented as erotic (or, vice-versa). The paper also wishes to challenge the Saidian concept of Orientalism being a Western construct: to some extent, Arabic-speaking culture also has its own Orientalism (in language and various cultural products it exists with respect to people of dark skin, Kurds, Nubians, etc.), and these stereotypes are within the language itself. In the context of particular poems by Nizar Qabbani, the representation of the feminine in relation to erotic desire, is often orientalist in a self-orientalising and problematic manner, to the extent that in some cases, it may lead to a loss within the location of culture.

BIO: Angelina Saule has published articles on art and literature for various journals and newspapers over the years. She is currently undertaking her PhD in Global Modernism at the University of Sydney, while also teaching at TU Dresden.

**“Moving at the same time”: Spatial Debilities and Diaspora Responsibility in
Isabella Hammad’s *Enter Ghost* (2023)**

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ABSTRACT: In grappling with mobility as an unequally distributed resource, literary texts can act as spaces for scrutinising the working mechanisms of hierarchical mobilities. The proposed paper interrogates the links between differentiated Palestinian mobilities in British-Palestinian writer Isabella Hammad’s novel *Enter Ghost* (2023) and its narration of the relation between temporalities, mobilities, and gendered corporealities. Consulting Jasbir Puar’s analysis of spatial debilities (2021) and Michael Rothberg’s notion of implication (2019), this paper discusses the differential distribution of the capacity to move and the resulting production of carceral power dynamics, and how memory that relates past and present mobility politics potentially mobilises endeavours to counteract such order in the Palestinian/Israeli context. A close reading of Hammad’s text against this background offers an inquiry into contemporary diasporic Palestinian literary production and how it contributes to a deeper understanding of im/mobilities amid historical displacements and continuous occupation as well as to feminist, solidaristic visions of collective movement.

BIO: Danyel Büyükaşık is a researcher and teacher based in Frankfurt, Germany. He is a PhD candidate at Goethe University Frankfurt, teaching at a secondary school and currently, as an adjunct lecturer, at Goethe University. He has studied English and American Studies, Fine Arts, Political and Social Studies, and Anglophone Literatures, Culture, and Media in Würzburg, Stuttgart, and Frankfurt. Büyükaşık’s work is informed by decolonial theory, and his interests lie in memories of displacement, anti- and decolonial resistance, prison narratives, and liminal communities in the Levant.

Hybridity and Third Space in Ahdaf Soueif's *The Map of Love*
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ABSTRACT: Arab diasporic literature often navigates the tensions between homeland and hostland, self and other, tradition and modernity. Ahdaf Soueif, an Egyptian-British novelist, situates her work at the crossroads of cultures, identities, and languages. Her novel *The Map of Love* (1999) provides a fertile ground for exploring Homi Bhabha's concepts of hybridity and "Third Space," as it stages encounters between the Arab world and the West across both colonial and contemporary periods. This paper argues that Soueif decenters hegemonic Western narratives by foregrounding transnational connections and cross-cultural encounters that resist binary divisions of East versus West. Through diasporic characters who traverse multiple identities, Soueif highlights displacement, exile, and the longing for belonging, while also envisioning hybridity as a productive mode of cultural negotiation. In doing so, she contributes to a reimagining of Arab diasporic identity as dynamic, fluid, and cosmopolitan, rather than fixed or marginal. By reading *The Map of Love* through postcolonial theory, this study emphasizes how Soueif engages with center-periphery dichotomies to advocate for a dialogic space that privileges multiplicity and inclusivity. Ultimately, Soueif's narrative demonstrates how Arab diasporic literature reshapes the global literary canon by celebrating heterogeneity, transnational solidarity, and cultural transformation.

BIO: Riham Yassin is a leading researcher in the field of English literature and an Assistant Lecturer at the faculty of Linguistics and Translation at Badr university in Cairo. She has been published extensively as author and co-author of papers in highly regarded, peer-reviewed journals. Born in Egypt, she graduated in the faculty of Arts and Humanities, English Department, Suez Canal University, in 2015. She has got a Master's degree in English Literature in 2020 entitled "Iconoclasm in Selected Short Stories of Alice Munro," Excellent with Honors degree. She is now a Ph.D candidate and the dissertation is about African Literature and Diaspora: "Resistance and Decolonization in Selected Novels by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o."

ONLINE**Migration, Displacement, and Assimilation: Identity Formation in Fadia Faqir's Bildungsroman *My Name is Salma* (2007) as a Transcultural Novel****Prof. Nadia Butt****Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany****E-mail: N.Butt@em.uni-frankfurt.de****Ms. Mansouria Djellakh****Prospective PhD Candidate****Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany****E-mail: DjellakhM@outlook.de**

ABSTRACT: This paper sets out to investigate the phenomena of migration, displacement, and assimilation in contemporary Arab Anglophone Diasporic Literature, in which identity of the migrant figure is central to the narrative. My contention is that British Jordanian author Fadia Faqir's bildungsroman *My Name is Salman* (2007) brings out the complex pattern of displacement and assimilation as the teenage protagonist Salma Ibrahim El Musa is forced to migrate from her unnamed village, somewhere in the Levant, to England to escape honour killing. From Salma, she becomes Sal and Sally and then Salma again after her marriage to John and the birth of their mutual son. Since the idea of home, however imaginary, is indispensable to diasporic fiction, Salma's identity is deeply shaped by the values she has grown up with and the new ones she adopts in England. Despite her complete assimilation in English culture and society, especially after learning English and getting a degree in English literature, she has been waiting to be united with her daughter Layla whom she was forced to abandon to save her life, so she bravely returns to her village, when return only results in her 'honour's killing at the hands of her brother. In the development of my main premise, I argue that Faqir's Bildungsroman is a transcultural novel that unfolds not only the challenges female Arab migrants (especially underage and underprivileged) face in the West, but also the arduous process of identity formation, which urges reinventing the self in a new cultural setup.

FIRST AUTHOR BIO: Nadia Butt is Professor of Global Anglophone Literatures and Cultures at the University of Frankfurt, Germany. She is the author of *Transcultural Memory and Globalised Modernity in Contemporary Indo-English Novels* (2015). She has taught postcolonial literatures at the Universities of Giessen, Muenster, Milwaukee-Wisconsin. In 2019, she was awarded the Dr. Herbert-Stolzenberg Prize by the University of Giessen, where she worked as a senior lecturer from 2009 to 2023, for her outstanding achievements in teaching. Her main areas of research are transcultural theory and literature, mobility and migration studies, memory studies, Global Anglophone literatures and travel literatures. Her research has appeared in journals like *Prose Studies*, *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture*, *Postcolonial Interventions*, *Studies in Travel Writing*, and *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*. Recently, she has published a handbook on *The Anglophone Novel in the 21st Century: Cultural Contexts – Literary Developments* (2023). Currently, she is finalising her second monograph *The Travelling Imagination in Cross-Cultural Literature*.

SECOND AUTHOR BIO: Mansouria Djellakh received her MA in Moving Cultures, Transcultural Encounters from the University of Frankfurt in August 2025. Her thesis focuses on "Children's Narratives of Transgenerational Displacement in Contemporary Refugee Literature". Currently, she is working on her PhD synopsis with the following working title "Diasporic (Un)Belonging: The Arab Literature of Migration in a Global Context". Djellakh's main research areas are Arab Anglophone Literature, Arab feminism, Islam in the age of globalisation and transcultural identities. Besides German and English, she speaks Arabic and French.

ONLINE**Hisham Matar's Literary Construction of Libya****Dr. Tasnim Qutait****Mälardalen University, Sweden****E-mail: tasnim.qutait@mdu.se**

ABSTRACT: This paper explores the literary construction of Libya in the works of Hisham Matar, examining his novels *In the Country of Men* (2006) and *My Friends* (2023), alongside his memoir *The Return* (2016). As arguably the most globally recognized Libyan writer, Matar offers a unique case for examining how Anglophone Arab literature mediates between national specificity and global legibility. While scholarship has primarily focused on Anglophone writers from Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine, Libya remains critically underrepresented. This paper addresses that gap by analyzing Matar's portrayal of Libya's colonial and postcolonial histories. I argue that Matar's texts foregrounds place-making and historical recovery, reframing the traumas of Libya's national story within an international literary ecology. In doing so, they offer a vital intervention into how Arab Anglophone literature can participate in world literature while remaining rooted in the particularities of place, memory, and history.

BIO: Dr. Tasnim Qutait is a lecturer in Comparative Literature at Mälardalen University. Her research interests are in memory studies, world literature, migration and diaspora studies, and translation theory. Her first book, *Nostalgia in Anglophone Arab Literature: Nationalism, Identity and Diaspora* (2021), which was based on her dissertation, offers an in-depth engagement with the growing body of Anglophone Arab fiction in the context of theoretical debates around memory and identity. Her current project is at the intersections of security, decolonial thought and pedagogy. She is currently completing a second monograph based on her postdoctoral research, with the title "Decolonising Security: Writing from the Arab Diaspora." This project is supported by the International Postdoctoral Grant from the Swedish Research Council.

**Book Covers, Windows and Doorways as Thresholds into Culture in Katouh's and Joukhada's
Debut Novels**

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study is to examine the book covers of Zoulfa Katouh's *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* (2022) and Zeyn Joukhada's *The Map of Salt and Stars* (2018), highlighting how the Islamic architecture of windows and doorways is employed to market diasporic Syrian contemporary novel. By relying on Roman Jakobson's theory of intersemiotic translation as well as Gérard Genett's thoughts on paratexts, this paper argues that although these writers/ novels depict socio-political themes like civil war, immigration, and displacement due to the armed conflict in Syria in 2011, the publishers, Bloomsbury and Atria Books market these novels through covers reinforcing the postcolonial gaze through charting Islamic architectural windows and doorways that serve as "thresholds" for transnational readers into the Orient's culture. This is specifically because these publishers resonate with the book cover of Richard Burton's translation of *The Arabian Nights* (1888). Hence, this research reverberates with the findings of a recent study by Kailani and Abu Amrieh (2023) on how Western publishers rely on Orientalist stereotypical images to market novels by writers of Arabic descent.

BIO: Nour Kailani earned a PhD in English Literature with distinction from the University of Jordan in 2023 and is currently a faculty member in the Department of English at LTUC. Her research focuses on the marketing of contemporary Arab diasporic literature, and her first article, "*Unveiling the Cover: Marketing Arab Anglophone Female Literature*", is based on her doctoral thesis.

Ecofeminism, Diaspora, and Gendered Ecologies of Displacement in *Farha*
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ABSTRACT: This paper analyzes the film *Farha* (2021) through thematic coding of moments where gender, ecology, and displacement meet, employing ecofeminism, diaspora studies, and postcolonial film analysis as analytic frameworks. Filmed during the time period of the 1948 Nakba, the film's limited perspective, centered in an immovable room, frames the land and home space as interconnected ecologies maintained by women's labor and care. Scenes of grain sacks, water jugs, and the subdued atmosphere of the village around them create a "gendered ecology" where environmental materials serve as cultural memory referents. Critique of ecofeminism reveals how the destruction of crops, houses, and water sources reflects the erasure of women's sustenance-keeping roles, but diasporic analysis reveals the manner in which disruptions spread geographically to create transgenerational identity. By preserving, rationing scarce supplies, and tending the home, the main character, Farha, resists erasure from the past, compressing ecological iconography into transportable metaphors accompanying dispossessed peoples. For Palestinian and Arab diasporas, the film functions at once as testimony and legacy, preserving cultural memory across transnational sites. This analysis asserts that *Farha* depicts but also offers a cinematic vocabulary for understanding how women's relations to land preserve identity across time and space.

BIO: Bassmah B. AlTaher is an Associate Professor and Vice Dean of the School of Applied Humanities and Social Sciences at the German Jordanian University. With a Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Jordan, she has built an interdisciplinary academic profile that bridges the humanities, cultural studies, and digital discourse. She is a dedicated English and Humanities lecturer, a published researcher, and an accredited peer-reviewer. Certified as an in-company trainer (TOT) by the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce, she has also held multiple leadership roles in academia, including Head of Department, Interim Dean, and Assistant Director. She is an active member of the Women and Leadership in Higher Education Network (WLHE) at Middle East University, where she supports initiatives that foster mentorship and dialogue among women in academia. Her research spans literature and film, electronic literature, feminism, culture and identity, and TEFL, with an emphasis on bridging the gap between critical theory and accessible, impactful communication. Alongside her academic work, she is deeply committed to creative writing as both an expressive practice and a pedagogical tool. She designs and facilitates writing workshops that center on cultural heritage and narrative experimentation, empowering students and emerging writers to explore healing and identity through storytelling.

Traumatic Memories in Rawi Hage's *Carnival*
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ABSTRACT: This paper explores the interplay between memory, trauma, and diasporic identity in Rawi Hage's *Carnival*, focusing on the fragmented and surreal recollections of the novel's narrator. Framed within a diasporic theoretical lens, this study examines how memory operates not as a coherent narrative of the past, but as a haunting force that disrupts and resists linear storytelling by drawing on Cathy Caruth's trauma theory, particularly her notion of the belated and unclaimed nature of traumatic experience, which builds on Freud's theory of trauma. The paper investigates how the narrator's memories emerge as disjointed visions influenced by displacement and trauma. In this regard, diaspora is presented as a source of trauma, with Fly's childhood displacement leaving deep psychological scars. The narrative technique reflects how the protagonist turns to fantasy as a coping mechanism, with Hage employing magical realism as a mode of representation. Femke Stock's framework on "home and memory" anchors the analysis by emphasizing the diasporic subject's need to construct belonging through imagined or distorted recollections. The paper also draws on Avtar Brah's concept of diaspora space to frame the city in *Carnival* as a site of overlapping histories, cultural tensions, and fractured memories. Ultimately, the study argues that memories in *Carnival* present memory not as a stable archive but as a fragmented and fluid process shaped by trauma, magical realism, and the continual negotiation of identity in a diasporic context.

FIRST AUTHOR BIO: Dareen Hayajneh is a PhD student in English Literature at the University of Jordan and is currently working at the Language Center. She has a keen interest in literary research and is driven to explore various questions within the field. Her areas of interest include drama, concrete poetry, and dystopian fiction. She is always eager to broaden my knowledge and expand my research interests.

SECOND AUTHOR BIO: Yousef Abu Amrieh is a professor of contemporary Arab diasporic literature at the University of Jordan. His first monograph, *The Arab Atlantic: Resistance, Diaspora, and Trans-cultural Dialogue in the Works of Arab British and Arab American Women Writers*, is based on his PhD thesis which he completed in 2011 at the University of Manchester. Since then, Prof. Abu Amrieh published several articles on the works of Arab writers in diaspora. Prof. Abu Amrieh is the founder of Contemporary Arab Diasporic Literary Studies (CADLS), an international research group based at the University of Jordan. Prof. Abu Amrieh has been included in the Stanford/Elsevier Top 2% Scientists List 2024.

Olive Trees That Speak: Magical Realism and Ecological Memory in Arab Diasporic Writing

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ABSTRACT: This paper explores how Arab diasporic writers employ magical realism to reanimate ecological symbols, most prominently the olive tree, as carriers of cultural memory, identity, and resistance. In Palestinian narratives such as Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin* and Mahmoud Darwish's poetry, olive trees are not passive elements of landscape but speaking, remembering, and enduring presences that bridge past and present, homeland and exile. Through magical realist strategies, these ecological figures transcend realism: trees bleed when uprooted, whisper ancestral voices, and stand as living archives of dispossession and continuity. Such representations transform the natural world into a site of both trauma and survival, where environmental imagery reflects the violence of occupation and the resilience of cultural identity. By situating these texts within the frameworks of ecocriticism and diaspora studies, the paper argues that magical realism provides a unique aesthetic for articulating ecological memory in exile. The "olive trees that speak" embody more than nostalgia; they function as political and symbolic agents that preserve belonging across borders. This study highlights how Arab diasporic literature integrates magical realism and ecocritical thought to envision new modes of survival, resistance, and cultural endurance rooted in the natural world.

BIO: Dr. Ayah Ahmad is a university instructor and researcher with a PhD in English Literature. She currently teaches at the University of Jordan, where she specializes in English language communication skills. Over the years, she has developed a teaching philosophy that emphasizes student-centered learning, creativity, and the integration of digital and interactive resources. She enjoys helping students not only improve their language proficiency but also engage with literature as a way of understanding culture, identity, and human experience. Her research spans several interconnected fields. She is particularly interested in comparative literary studies, magical realism and the blending of reality and fantasy, gender and mental health in literature, satire and political critique, feminist postcolonialism, and war literature. She has published on topics such as postcolonial identity in J. M. Coetzee's *In the Heart of the Country* and feminist and magical realist approaches in Isabel Allende's *The House of the Spirits*. Her ongoing projects examine Mahmoud Darwish's poetry, comparative studies of spirituality and love in Donne and Darwish, and the intersections of gender, morality, and resistance in early modern and contemporary literature.

The Dream as a Para-technological Allegory in Laila Lalami's *The Dream Hotel*

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines Laila Lalami's *The Dream Hotel* (2025) as a technological dystopia that exposes the neoliberal project's attempt at commodifying the human psyche. Neoliberalism attempts to extend the figure of the *homo economicus* into a seamless *homo technologicus* seeking to capture even the most intimate terrains of subjectivity—dreams, emotions, and aspirations. Lalami's novel dramatizes neoliberal ambitions to render the subconscious a site of surveillance and control through the Dreamsaver implant and its risk-assessment algorithm. Dreams, nonetheless, mark the limits of the neoliberal rationality through resisting complete datafication—they emerge as para-technological allegories that are ungovernable. Lalami's novel foregrounds the diasporic figure as an epitome of human experiences attesting to the irreducibility of human subjectivity. The novel represents diasporic dreams as counter-spaces of neocolonial projects that appropriate digital micro-technologies to govern and regulate societies. Dreams become sites where “emotions are recollected in tranquility,” where introspection becomes the last frontier of our humanity, reminding us that the extinction of experience is an extinction of what makes us human.

BIO: Bayan AlAmmouri is Lecturer in English Literature at The University of Jordan. She holds degrees from North Dakota State University and Lancaster University. Her research to date focuses on the intersection of technology and literature in the context of neoliberalism and refugee studies, and her wider interests include postcolonial studies, diaspora, and Palestinian literature.

‘She Unropes to Conquer’: Resistance and Rootedness in Hawari’s *The Stone House*

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines Palestinian-British novelist Yara Hawari's representation of the long-term consequences of her protagonist's persistence on, and eventual success at, returning to her house near Akka in the aftermath of the 1948 Nakba in her debut novel, *The Stone House*. Hamda's determination not to lose her house to Israeli settlers serves as a focal point through which the narrative conveys Palestinian people's enduring attempts to resist displacement, exile and uprootedness. Though seemingly marginal at first, this episode emerges as a pivotal moment with lasting implications: it preserves continuity and anchors future generations in a threatened landscape. By analysing this episode, the study demonstrates how Hawari builds her narrative around material and symbolic spaces that resist erasure, positioning the novel as a counter-discourse to Israeli claims that Palestine lacked urban and cultural sophistication. More specifically, Hamda's choice to stay in the stone house functions as an alternative narrative to Said and Safiyeh's act of abandoning their house in 1948 in Ghassan Kanafani's *Returning to Haifa*. Resourceful and far-sighted, Hamda loses a battle but wins the war by deceiving the Zionists through artfully destroying the tent she was forced to live in, taking shelter in the stone house and leaving Israeli authorities with no option but to let her return to what rightfully belongs to her. By doing so, Hamda refuses displacement and ensures that her descendants will remain rooted to their land, reversing Kanafani's protagonists' unwilful act of leaving Haifa, and consequently, becoming refugees.

FIRST AUTHOR BIO: Wiam Najjar is a PhD candidate in English literature with a strong academic and teaching background. She holds an MA in English Literature and has taught courses in literature, cultural studies, and academic writing at a university level. Her research interests include diasporic literature, comparative literature and psychoanalysis.

SECOND AUTHOR BIO: Yousef Abu Amrieh is a professor of contemporary Arab diasporic literature at the University of Jordan. His first monograph, *The Arab Atlantic: Resistance, Diaspora, and Trans-cultural Dialogue in the Works of Arab British and Arab American Women Writers*, is based on his PhD thesis, which he completed in 2011 at the University of Manchester. Since then, Prof. Abu Amrieh has published several articles on the works of Arab writers in diaspora. Prof. Abu Amrieh is the founder of Contemporary Arab Diasporic Literary Studies (CADLS), an international research group based at the University of Jordan. Prof. Abu Amrieh has been included in the Stanford/Elsevier Top 2% Scientists List 2024.

The Taste of Un/ Belonging: Food, Nostalgia, and Integration in Amara Lakhous' Novels
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ABSTRACT: Amara Lakhous, an Algerian-Italian novelist, is one of the few who provide a voice to migration and cultural negotiation in Italy. In *Clash of Civilizations Over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio* (2006) and *Divorce Islamic Style* (2010), Lakhous depicts food as a way of resistance and adaptation. Echoing Roland Barthes' argument that cuisine is a semiotic language highlighting how we position ourselves in relation to others, this paper focuses on two characters who work as chefs in Italy and display two different attitudes toward pizza. Parviz, an Iranian refugee, embraces Iranian cuisine while rejecting Italian pizza, which mirrors his refusal of Italian society and his longing to return to Shiraz. By contrast, Said, the Egyptian architect/chef, embraces Italian cuisine by creating his own "Egyptian-style pizza," modeling a hybrid approach to adaptation. By comparing these two characters, this paper argues that Lakhous uses food to illustrate how migrants swing between resistance and adaptation while questioning fixed notions of Italian identity. Building on Awad's (2015) examination of how Arab diasporic authors deploy culinary imagery for both aesthetic and thematic purposes, this paper situates Lakhous within the broader tradition of Arab diasporic literature, which employs food not merely as a symbol of nostalgia but as a medium for negotiating belonging. The paper highlights Lakhous' diasporic vision of belonging as continually negotiated, sometimes through rejection, sometimes through adaptation, and often through something as simple as food.

BIO: Ghaida Khawaldeh is a graduate student in English Language and Literature at the University of Jordan. My research focuses on diaspora studies, migration literature, and Arab diasporic narratives. I am especially interested in how literature explores questions of belonging, resistance, and adaptation through everyday practices, such as food and memory.

The Representation of the Self in Arab Diasporic Films

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ABSTRACT: Diaspora is defined by Susan Freidman as "migration plus loss, desire, and widely scattered communities held together by memory and a sense of history over a long period of time." (269) This physical and psychic unrest have urged filmmakers to film- back and to screen their own state because, as a mass medium, films have the potential to reach many people worldwide and expose a mainstream audience. Women, in particular, have played a vital role in the buildup of the public universal vision not only as consumers but also as producers of that vision. Undoubtedly films are one of the various forms of representation, alongside other forms of popular culture and written literature, However, these representations are "constructed images" and in need to be interrogated and investigated further for their authenticity especially with the interference of the western media which has the leading initiative, in constructing images. Subsequently, this paper aims to investigate these misrepresentations whilst projecting visual counter-narratives to resist categorization, silencing and negligence. The paper discusses the role played by mainly Arab American film directors to restore their contributions in the public sphere and in the formation of national identities. It discusses *Salt of This Sea* (2008), which is directed by the Palestinian- American Annemarie Jacir and the short animation "I am from Palestine" (2025) which is directed by the Palestinian American Iman Zawahry.

BIO: Andaleen Hasan al-Khateeb obtained her PhD in English Literature from Jordan University in 2023. She is a high-school teacher at Omareyah Schools- Jordan and a former lecture at Najran University – Saudi Arabia. She has published a paper entitled "A Critique of Etaf Rum's A Woman is No Man" in *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* – London - Scopus Indexed

Spaces of Resistance: Diaspora and Regional Feminist Writings in Arab and Muslim Contexts

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ABSTRACT: This paper investigates the contrasting approaches of Arab and Muslim feminist writers in the diaspora and those rooted in the Arab and Muslim region, emphasizing how geographical space shapes feminist thought and expression. Diaspora-based scholars, including figures such as Lila Abu-Lughod, occupy a unique position that affords them greater intellectual freedom and critical distance from local constraints. Their writings are characteristically bolder, more confrontational, and unapologetically radical, challenging patriarchal structures within Arab and Muslim societies while simultaneously resisting orientalist and reductive representations in Western discourse. By engaging across transnational platforms, they advance critiques that are at once locally grounded and globally resonant, expanding feminist theory and reimagining the terrain of feminist struggle. In contrast, feminist scholars writing from within the region navigate more constrained political, cultural, and religious contexts, often balancing critique with strategies of survival in environments where dissent carries serious risks. Their work, while no less significant, tends to be more cautious, framed by the immediacy of authoritarian restrictions and social conservatism. This study argues that the diaspora provides Arab and Muslim feminists with a distinctive vantage point, enabling sharper, more audacious interventions that push the boundaries of feminist praxis and influence debates both regionally and internationally.

BIO: Dr. Amani Al-Serhan is an Associate Professor of Women's Studies at the University of Jordan, where she has also served as Assistant Director of the University Requirements Coordination Office and Head of the Department of Training and Communication. She earned her PhD in Women's Studies from the University of York, U.K., with a dissertation on Arab feminism in contemporary Jordanian novels, following an MA in American Studies and a BA in Spanish and English Literature from the University of Jordan. Her research focuses on gender and culture in Arab and Muslim societies, Arab and Islamic feminism, literary and cultural studies, feminist pedagogy, and gender in international development and forced migration. Dr. Al-Serhan has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in feminist theory, women in culture and media, social theory, and contemporary women's issues, and she has supervised numerous master's theses on women's empowerment, political participation, and gendered experiences in Jordan and the region. She is an active contributor to regional and international feminist research, serving on advisory boards, steering committees, and peer-review panels, and has led and participated in multiple projects and policy initiatives addressing gender equality, women's leadership, and sustainable development in Jordan.

Appropriating *Hamlet*: Narratives of Exile, Return and Resistance in Isabella Hammad's *Enter Ghost*

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ABSTRACT: This article examines Isabella Hammad's appropriation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603) in her novel *Enter Ghost* (2023). It highlights how *Hamlet* is reframed and employed to demonstrate the ongoing tragedy of Palestinian forced exile and their resistance to the Israeli occupation. The Shakespearean tragedy has become a spatial theater, a metaphor, a platform and a lens through which Hammad theatricalizes a vivid and powerful political allegory and meditation on the dilemmas, atrocities and catastrophes facing Palestinians, as well as their resistance to Israeli hegemony and the colonization of their homeland. Isabella Hammad, a diasporic Palestinian- British novelist, and an Anglophone Arab female writer, portrays *Hamlet* in *Enter Ghost* as a seeker of justice, reclamer of looted rights, and a political hero violently martyred by an oppressive and suppressive regime. In addition to this, *Hamlet*'s father, the old king and ruler, has been poisoned and murdered, and his throne usurped by his brother Claudius, who bears a resemblance to the Israelis. Furthermore, the transmutation of *Hamlet*, Gertrude, Ophelia, Polonius and Laertes into a Palestinian context allows the tragedy of murder, dispossession, exile to be heard, seen and emerge. Gertrude is the image of treachery and betrayal in Palestine, representing those who have sold their lands in Haifa to Israelis. Mariam who is the director of the play says, "It's not just that we have been oppressed, it's also we have betrayed ourselves, our brothers." Hammad has chosen to narrativize the drama of *Hamlet* inside Palestine to produce a synthetic fusion-both dramatic and narrative-amalgamating and juxtaposing the two narratives parallelly. The protagonists struggle for justice, national liberation, seeking to awaken the conscience of the world for the crimes committed against King *Hamlet* and the innocent people of Palestine. Thus, Hammad by appropriating *Hamlet*, intends to produce a work of art in her occupied homeland that peacefully asserts the right of the independence of Palestine and the return of its exiled people.

BIO: Majed Aladylah is a professor of contemporary Arab diasporic literature at Mutah University, Jordan. His teaching and research focus on 20th- and 21st-century literature and culture across the Anglophone and postcolonial worlds, with particular emphasis on the intersections of multiculturalism, literature, identity, and diaspora in the works of Arab diasporic writers.

Floral Memory and Palestinian Identity: Ecocritical Readings of Resistance, Family, and Exile in Contemporary Literature

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ABSTRACT: This study explores how Palestinian writers employ floral imagery as a nexus of ecology, identity, and resistance in contexts of displacement and diaspora. Focusing on Susan Muaddi Darraj's *A Curious Land* (2015), Selma Dabbagh's *Out of It* (2011), and Susan Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* (2020), it argues that plants and flowers—such as olive trees, chamomile, za'atar, cucumbers, and wild anemones—function as active agents of cultural survival rather than passive motifs. Through an ecocritical lens, the study highlights how flora operate as repositories of intergenerational memory, anchors of belonging, and subtle forms of resistance to colonial erasure and ecological dispossession. Darraj situates agriculture and herbal traditions as emblems of cultural continuity; Dabbagh juxtaposes generational ties to cultivation with the fragmentation of exile; and Abulhawa frames flora as witnesses to trauma and resources for women's resilience. By integrating ecocriticism with diaspora studies, the study demonstrates how Palestinian literature transforms nature into a poetics of resistance—one that negotiates identity, memory, and belonging across shifting geographies of homeland, exile, and transnational space.

BIO: Dr. Shaima Namroti is an educator, researcher, and writer with over thirteen years of experience in English language teaching, supervision, and curriculum coordination in both national and international programs. Her academic work focuses on English and comparative literature, with research interests in ecocriticism, postcolonial studies, and cultural memory. She has published and presented on themes of floral symbolism, animality, resistance, and identity in contemporary Palestinian and Arab literature. Dr. Namroti is currently pursuing advanced research in Comparative Literature, where she continues to explore the intersections of literature, environment, and cultural identity.

Displacement and Identity: The Palestinian Diaspora in Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin*

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ABSTRACT: Susan Abulhawa's (Palestinian American novelist) *Mornings in Jenin* (2010) offers a critical analysis of the Palestinian experience of identity loss and forced displacement. Through a deeply personal and multi-generational narrative, the novel highlights both the suffering and resilience of the Palestinian people. Susan Abulhawa depicts the human cost of the Palestinian- Israeli conflict by tracing the Abulheja family's history (including four generations of the family) from Al-Nakba in 1948 to the early 2000s, with a focus on the emotional and physical implications of forced displacement, dispossession, and generational trauma. This paper aims to examine how *Mornings in Jenin* portrays the effect of diaspora on Palestinian identity, memory, and belonging, and further investigates how the novel articulates resilience and survival within the context of displacement.

BIO: Dr. Wafa Yousef Alkhatib is assistant professor of English Literature at Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan, and currently serves as the Head of the English Department. Dr. Alkhatib holds a Ph.D. in English Literature, with research interests centered on Postcolonial Studies and Arab American Literature. Dr. Alkhatib's work explores themes of identity, displacement, and cultural hybridity.

The Intertextual Appropriation of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* in Omar El Akkad's *What Strange Paradise*

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ABSTRACT: This paper analyzes the intertextual appropriation of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* in the Egyptian-Canadian writer Omar El Akkad's novel *What Strange Paradise* (2021) to show how El Akkad "inverts" a fairy tale to shed light on the refugee crisis. El Akkad draws parallels between Peter Pan, Wendy, Captain Hook, and Neverland, and the figures of Amir, Vanna, Colonel Kethros, and the island. Through these parallels, El Akkad dismantles a celebrated fairy tale that is inscribed in Western imagination to shed light on the harsh circumstances of forced displacement and the quest for survival. El Akkad portrays Amir who evokes the image of Alan Kurdi -the Syrian child whose body washed ashore in Greece- as a ghostly figure suspended on the island, which is a representation that aligns with critical readings of Peter Pan as a ghost trapped in Neverland. In this article, I argue that El Akkad's appropriation of *Peter Pan* transforms the countless refugees who drowned in the Mediterranean into an apparition that haunts the Western imagination to demand recognition and resist erasure. In doing so, this paper contributes to ongoing discussions of intertextuality, appropriation of Western narratives, and Arab diasporic literature.

BIO: Tala Qbelat is currently pursuing her PhD in English Literature at the University of Jordan. Her research interests include postcolonialism, and diaspora studies, especially contemporary Arabic Anglophone literature. She holds a BA and MA in English Literature from the University of Jordan and has six years of experience teaching English.

From Nostalgia to Postmigration: The Evolving Worlds of Leila Aboulela's Short Stories
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ABSTRACT: This paper reconsiders Leila Aboulela's literary trajectory by comparing her first short story collection *Coloured Lights* (2001) with her more recent *Elsewhere, Home* (2018). It argues that Aboulela's treatment of Muslim migrant experience, cultural alienation, and identity formation has shifted from an early reliance on nostalgia and faith as strategies of survival to a more expansive postmigrant vision. In *Coloured Lights*, Aboulela's protagonists often deploy restorative nostalgia, reconstructing images of home and embracing Islam as an anchor against dislocation. These stories highlight how memory, ritual, and Africanness counter the estrangement of diasporic life while also challenging Western historiography and its imperial representations of Africa, particularly through institutional symbols such as the museum. By contrast, *Elsewhere, Home* reflects a new stage in Aboulela's writing: one where migration is not solely an individual trauma but part of an ongoing societal transformation. Approaching the stories through a postmigrant lens reveals characters negotiating in-between spaces, neither wholly bound to a lost homeland nor fully assimilated, but instead inhabiting fluid, transcultural identities. Ultimately, the paper shows how Aboulela's evolving narrative strategies position her protagonists less as displaced outsiders and more as global subjects whose identities are continuously redefined through movement and encounter.

BIO: Dr. Aida Omet is a Lecturer in the Department of English Language and Literature at the School of Foreign Languages, University of Jordan. She earned her Ph.D. in English Literature and Creative Writing from Lancaster University, United Kingdom, in 2022. With over thirteen years of experience teaching English language and literature at the university level, Dr. Omet brings both depth and breadth to her academic career. Her research interests lie primarily in Postcolonial Studies, Feminist and Gender Studies, Middle Eastern Literature in English, and Diasporic Literature.

Postmodern Exilic Identity in Mourid Barghouti's Memoir *I Saw Ramallah*
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ABSTRACT: *I Saw Ramallah* by Mourid Barghouti is examined as a postmodern memoir that displays a fragmented exilic hybrid identity. It stresses the impossibility of the exile's return and the inevitability of his exile; there is no cure for his chronic estrangement or his contrapuntal consciousness. As a primary liminal symbol, the opening bridge theme distinguishes between "the world" and "my world," between idealized pasts and the present day. The study emphasizes Barghouti's preference for a common, sensory-based ethics of resistance over heroic clichés and traditional nationalist images. Reality is not only derived from political events, contends Barghouti, but also from the texture of everyday life, such as devotion to one's family, community, and land. Palestinian identity is stretched by the cosmopolitan imagination of the memoir beyond the borders of nationalist belonging to encompass universal issues of desire, belonging, and the ethics of perceiving "the other" as human. Finally, exile turns out to be an empowering environment that fosters a plural, humanist politics in which the quotidian practices of resistance, memory, and perception form a politics lived beyond nationalistic confines.

BIO: Dr. Areen Khalifeh is an Associate Professor of English Literature who got her PhD in 2011 from Brunel University, London. She was the head of the English Department (2020-2023) and a member of the Language Center and English Language Development Committees at Philadelphia University, Jordan. She has taught BA and MA courses and supervised many MA theses at Philadelphia University for fourteen years now. She also worked at Jordan University of Science and Technology from 2000 to 2007.

America as the New Periphery: Necropolitics, Displacement, and the Reversed Gaze in Omar El Akkad's *American War*

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines Omar El Akkad's *American War* as a foundational text in Arab diasporic literature that radically reimagines the Global North through a reversed colonial gaze. Set in a future United States devastated by climate change, civil war, and foreign intervention, *American War* positions the West as the new periphery: displaced, fractured, and morally compromised. By employing the theoretical frameworks of Achille Mbembe's necropolitics, Edward Said's contrapuntal reading, and Homi Bhabha's concept of the "unhomely," the paper explores how El Akkad deconstructs the fantasy of American exceptionalism. The novel's protagonist, Sarat Chestnut, experiences the slow transformation from innocent child to radicalized figure as she endures life in refugee camps, drone surveillance, and political manipulation; conditions typically imposed on populations in the Global South. In El Akkad's speculative landscape, Arab and Muslim coalitions serve as peacekeepers to a broken America, reversing the logic of empire and forcing readers to confront the consequences of systemic violence when it turns inward. *American War* embodies a diasporic poetics of *inversion*, where trauma and statelessness are not foreign afflictions but American realities. The novel highlights the necropolitical apparatus that makes and considers certain lives disposable, particularly refugees, racialized bodies, and children of war. Through Sarat's journey, El Akkad unravels and exposes narratives of humanitarianism, war-on-terror ideology, and the Western civilizational myth. This paper argues that *American War* is not just a dystopian speculation, but a diasporic intervention that connects the lingering effects of colonial violence to the heart of the empire. It invites readers to rethink the ideas of home and exile, safety and destruction, and ultimately positions the West as a subject of postcolonial critique, not its author.

BIO: Mais Alshweike is a PhD candidate in English Literature at The University of Jordan. Her research interests include diaspora and transnational studies, and surveillance studies.

**Biopolitical Control and Organic Alternatives in Susan Abulhawa's
*The Blue Between Sky and Water***

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines Susan Abulhawa's *The Blue Between Sky and Water* (2015) in terms of its depiction of the deteriorating healthcare system in Gaza under the Israeli control and the siege imposed since 2007. Through the lens of the Critical Medical Humanities, the paper explores the novel's indictment of systemic medical deprivation as a means of political domination. On the one hand, we aim to highlight limitations in medical treatment and scarcity in medical supplies as manifested in the novel. On the other hand, we investigate the novel's portrayal of characters resisting deliberate medical neglect through surviving on minimal supplies, relying on alternative remedies, and resorting to an underground tunnel system to sustain their health and well-being. To achieve this purpose, the paper delves into narrative medicine's depiction of besieged doctors operating under hard conditions, traditional healers providing healthcare through herbal remedies, and patients suffering as a result of denied access to proper treatment. By so doing, the paper reflects on how the political conflict and restricted access to healthcare in Gaza shape the lived experience of illness and healing, enriching literary scholarship on diaspora literatures as well as the field of the Critical Medical Humanities.

FIRST AUTHOR BIO: Dr. Sabrine Saleh is a full-time lecturer at the University of Jordan's Language Center. Her research interests include African American literature, postcolonial literature, Anglophone Arab literature, and world literature.

SECOND AUTHOR BIO: Prof. Yousef Abu Amrieh is a professor of contemporary Arab diasporic literature at the University of Jordan. His first monograph, *The Arab Atlantic: Resistance, Diaspora, and Trans-cultural Dialogue in the Works of Arab British and Arab American Women Writers*, is based on his PhD thesis which he completed in 2011 at the University of Manchester. Since then, Prof. Abu Amrieh published several articles on the works of Arab writers in diaspora. Prof. Abu Amrieh is the founder of Contemporary Arab Diasporic Literary Studies (CADLS), an international research group based at the University of Jordan. Prof. Abu Amrieh has been included in the Stanford/Elsevier Top 2% Scientists List 2024.

Surveilled Futures: Technology and Control in Arab Diasporic Dystopian Fiction
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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the role of surveillance and technology in contemporary Arab diasporic literature, highlighting how writers envision the intrusive power of digital tools in shaping identity, belonging, and exclusion. While global dystopias have long dramatized the dangers of state surveillance, Arab diasporic authors situate these anxieties within the lived realities of migration, racialization, and Islamophobia in Western contexts. Their works interrogate how emerging technologies like biometrics, predictive policing, social media platforms, and artificial intelligence extend surveillance into the most intimate spaces of life. In Omar Sayfo's *Allah's Spacious Earth* (2023), set in a Pan-European Federation, Muslim minorities are subject to constant monitoring, digital profiling, and discriminatory ICT policies that restrict their freedoms while reinforcing a digital divide. Similarly, Laila Lalami's *The Dream Hotel* (2025) imagines a near-future America where dreams themselves are harvested as data, with AI risk assessments used to justify indefinite detention. By situating these texts within broader debates on surveillance capitalism and algorithmic governance, this paper argues that Arab diasporic literature provides a critical lens for understanding how technology both connects and constrains, revealing the intimate costs of life lived under digital scrutiny.

BIO: Dr. Asma AlTalafeeh is a lecturer in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Jordan. Her research interests lie at the intersection of literature and technology, with a particular focus on ICT and literature, diaspora studies, and translation studies. She has participated in academic conferences and collaborative projects that explore how digital and cultural transformations shape literary production and identity.

‘Whenever Nonexistence is Violated’: Challenging Narrative Powers in Omar El-Akkad’s *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This*

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ABSTRACT: In *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (2025), Egyptian-Canadian novelist and journalist Omar El-Akkad offers a direct response to the violence inflicted upon Palestinians in the aftermath of October 7 attacks from the viewpoint of an Arab living in America. Instead of delving into the complex political context of the Israeli Palestinian tension and its historical origin, he offers a witness to the crisis within a broader humanitarian context that reflects the failure of the liberal system. The article has two goals: First, it attempts to show how Al-Ekkad employs the graphic representation of children in his account to challenge the narrative dynamics of the campaign against Palestinians. The article appropriates Guattari and Deleuze’s conception of the “body without organs” to show how children physically and metaphorically are depicted as such. By resisting the hierarchal systemized borders imposed on them, children emphasize their humanity. Second, by reviewing a chain of several moments of violence in the history of America that El-Akkad refers to as “the late unpleasantness”, including the Indigenous Erasure and the overthrown of the Hawaiian monarchy, the study aims to show how Al-Ekkad employs these incidents to warn the Western world against another failure. So, instead of waiting for another moment when “everyone will have been against” both the deliberate cultural and physical erasure of Palestinians, he urges the West to prioritize children’s lives and safety over the pursuit of power. This study, in particular, compares Dee Brown’s historical narrative of the Wounded Knee massacre of the Indigenous people in 1890. It proposes that the suffering of the Palestinians in Gaza echoes the violence set against the Indigenous people during the massacre of Wounded Knee Creek, a chapter that the Western mainstream belatedly remembers with regret. It argues how colonial narratives use one single act of resistance to justify a chain of atrocities in both massacres. While the U.S. Congress announced a letter expressing their “deep regret” about Wounded Knee Creek in 1990, EL-Akkad attempts to draw attention to this genocide before it is too late. This historical parallel is presented in the context of Judith Butler’s “grievability” and Gayatri Spivak’s “epistemic violence” to emphasize the Western indifference and the deliberate silencing of the Palestinians suffering.

BIO: Hala T. Maani is a full-time lecturer at the Language Center at the University of Jordan. She is also PhD student of English Literature at the University of Jordan. Her research interests lie in literary theory and Shakespearean drama.

Gothicism in Diasporic Literature: A Freudian Study of some Selected works by Khalil Gibran
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ABSTRACT: This study will primarily probe the gothic elements in Diasporic literature with a major focus on some selected works by Khalil Gibran, particularly *Broken Wings* (1912), "Satan" (1912), and *The Madman* (1918). The Study will highlight the major elements of Gothicism used by Khalil Gibran in his poetic narratives, short stories, and poems. In order to investigate the philosophical realm of nostalgia and exile which Khalil Gibran represents through gothic aspects, such as the sublime, mystery, and the supernatural, the study will specifically use the Freudian psychoanalytic approach as a critical lens, especially the Freudian concepts of the Unheimlich (The Uncanny), Dream work, the Unconscious Fantasy and Trauma. The psychoanalytic approach functions as a tool to understand the complicated and intricate philosophical Gothicism used by Gibran in several works, especially through his vivid portrayal of supernatural imagery and exotic spatial elements. In an attempt to scrutinize the depth of the exile experience and the diasporic representations of alienation, the study revisits Khalil Gibran's use of Gothicism seeking to examine his works in a modern context that combines elements of place, modern spaces, and Gothic elements in his diasporic writings.

BIO: Baker Bani-Khair is a professor of English literature, and head of the Department of English Language and Literature at the Hashemite University, Jordan. He has published several articles and scholarly papers on different aspects of English and American literature that mainly deal with literary Gothic, poetry, 18th and 19th century British Literature, cultural studies, Medieval literature, and Film. His Film research interests are varied and multifarious, but he especially focuses on the 1960s and 1950s American and British films and history. He has translated a novel (2018), titled, *The Boat Rocker* by the American Chinese Novelist, Ha Jin. He also has two published books in Arabic, titled:

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“Otherness” Destabilized and Belonging Redefined in Lalami’s *The Other Americans*
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ABSTRACT: The paper aims to explore the lives of individuals who feel at home because of their shared lived experience. In Laila Lalami’s *The Other Americans*, Arabs in the diaspora along with members of their host country draw their sense of belonging from their relationships and shared experiences with others. However, when they go through various hardships, their lives are unsettled by feeling “othered” and losing their sense of belonging. This comes as a reminder of life’s unpredictability and the need for the reevaluation of one’s values and perceptions of others. These hardships help reshape characters’ views of the world allowing other perspectives to emerge including the “Arab other’s.” The multiple perspectives presented in the novel contribute to the formation of a counter- narrative that undermines the power of a single story created by hegemonic forces. Utilizing a postcolonial perspective, this paper demonstrates the way “the other” is a label and condition socially and culturally constructed by orientalists to reinforce the divide between “us” and “them,” yet Lalami’s narrative proves that it can be overcome as opportunities for dialogue appear between characters and their perspectives continually evolve.

BIO: Dr. Mais ALQutami is an associate professor in 20th century American Literature from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and currently teaching in AL- Zaytoonah University of Jordan. She has presented at many academic conferences in the USA, Canada, UK, Italy, Turkey, and Dubai. She published several articles such as: “Challenging A Contentious Discourse and Dismantling the False Divide through Multicultural Literature,” 2025, “Lalami’s Anomic World: (Dis)Engagement with Normlessness and Attempts at Recovery,” 2024, “Covid- 19 and gender inequality: A critique of the working woman’s struggle,” 2023, and “The Veil (De)contextualized and Nations “Democratized”: Unsettling War, Visibilities, and U.S. Hegemony.” *Works & Days*, 2011 among others. She has done a lot of guest- speaking in the USA about various issues such as Islamophobia, Arab Islamic Feminism, hegemonic discourses, and women in the Middle East. She taught in the USA, Oman, Qatar, and Jordan. Her research interests include identity and race theories, postcolonial theory and literature, and 20th century American and Multiethnic literature.

Rain and Other Weather Elements as Narrative Agents in *Silence is a Sense*
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ABSTRACT: In many novels, rain appears as a natural phenomenon or a neutral backdrop. This paper argues, however, that in Layla AlAmmar's *Silence is a Sense*, rain transcends its conventional role to become an active narrative force that shapes plot trajectories and reveals the hidden dimensions of characters. Drawing on psychological and narratological approaches, while engaging with insights from ecocriticism, the paper contends that rain functions less as a decorative symbol and more as a powerful figure within the novel. The discussion begins with rain as a symbol of purification and renewal, countering reductive readings that treat it as a one-dimensional metaphor. It then turns to the connection between rain, melancholy, and repression, showing how it creates psychological atmospheres that allow readers to access the narrator's inner life. The paper also explores rain as a force of fate, one that introduces unpredictability and directs the unfolding of events, thereby affirming weather's dynamic role in narrative construction. Finally, the analysis situates rain within the broader system of weather imagery (such as snow, storms, and sunshine) highlighting how contrastive patterns enrich the novel's texture. By reframing rain as a narrative agent in *Silence is a Sense*, this study seeks to expand critical understandings of how weather shapes literary meaning and the affective experiences of characters and readers alike.

BIO: Sarah Ahmed Smadi is a PhD. Candidate in English Literature and Criticism at the University of Jordan. Her research interests include affect theory, postcolonial, and diasporic literature, with a special focus on Arab American poetry. She is currently developing a post-trauma theory that explores cycles of sadness and resilience in contemporary literature. In addition to her academic work, she writes poetry in Arabic and creative prose in English, bridging critical inquiry with creative expression.

Ecophobia and Exile in Rabih Alameddine's *I, the Divine*: An Ecocritical Reading
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ABSTRACT: Over recent decades, ecocriticism has drawn on environmental sociology, philosophy, psychology, and history to examine how cultural production portrays the human–environment relationship, leading ecocritics to coin terms such as “ecophobia” to study human ties with nature in a variety of environmental changes. This paper examines the term “ecophobia” in Rabih Alameddine’s *I, the Divine: A Novel in First Chapters*, focusing on the protagonist Sarah’s ecophobic tendencies, rooted in fear shaped by the Lebanese wars. Through textual analysis, Sarah’s experience toward self-reconciliation during exile in the United States is explored, where she de-traumatizes herself through an ecocritical lens. In exile, she attains inner peace, and adapts to new surroundings with dignity by writing a memoir which signifies as both a therapeutic and ecological act, encouraging her to confront irrational fear. The paper concludes that reading ecophobia in the novel, by shedding light on Sarah’s contrasting depictions of her homeland and exile and representing nature as a space of both trauma and healing, broadens the critical scope of Arab diasporic literature from an ecocritical perspective, and highlights the psychological and cultural dimensions of human–nature engagement. It also offers a model for raising moral awareness, fostering ecological consciousness, and strengthening ecobonds.

BIO: Dr. Enas Hassouneh (b. 1984) is a Jordanian scholar and educator with 19 years of teaching experience in Jordan and Saudi Arabia. I earned my Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Jordan. I began my teaching career in 2006 at esteemed schools. Over the past 12 years, I have developed instructional methodologies by supervising bilingual and international programs, constructing strategic academic plans, training teachers, organizing competitions, and extracurricular activities. In addition, I have been teaching university students for three years. I have published research papers on platforms such as Academia and the Directory of Open Access Journals, covering disciplines and theories including Marxism, Romanticism, Modernism, Postcolonialism, Gothicism, Ecocriticism (Ecophobia), and Diasporic Studies.

“Memories are Painful Things”: Navigating Trauma of War and Displacement in *Silence is a Sense*

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines Layla AlAmmar’s *Silence Is a Sense* through the lens of trauma, memory, and displacement, exploring how the novel represents memory as fractured, embodied, and politically charged. The study investigates how trauma reshapes the whole narrative structure, how memories are imprinted on the body, and how silence serves both as a strategy and symptom through focusing on the narration of a silent Syrian refugee residing in the United Kingdom. Drawing on close reading alongside theoretical frameworks from trauma studies, postcolonial criticism, phenomenology, and narrative ethics, the study analyses the disjointed and physical aspects of memory, the moral dimensions of silence, and the critique of the commercialization of refugee distress in cultural narratives. The novel reveals how the violent past continues in the present, affecting identity and social life, while highlighting the protagonist’s resilience and as a figure of suffering. This paper contributes to diasporic studies by investigating how memory functions as the backdrop of AlAmmar’s narrative, offering an intricate understanding of narratives of dislocation that defy predominant frameworks and assert the moral, embodied, and resistant aspects of remembrance.

BIO: Nawras Zghoul is a second-year PhD student in English Literature at the University of Jordan. He currently serves as Head of the English Language Testing Department at the Jordan Armed Forces Language Institute. His research interests focus on diasporic studies and how literature engages with social and political forces.

**‘Are these the people who I wanted to embrace!?’: hybridity reconsidered in the diasporic
Palestinian cultural struggle for liberation**

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ABSTRACT: This study anticipates a critical collapse of the accommodationist ethos of hybridity as a framework for liberation within diasporic Palestinian thought. Hybridity, which Homi K. Bhabha pioneered as a theoretical paradigm, was championed by Edward Said and Ghada Karmi, among others. They advocated its underlying premise of a transformative “third space” in which to envision a democratic, secular binational state where Palestinians and Israelis can live together. This intellectual current believed that cultural and theoretical work could pave the way for such a political reality. However, the culpability of Israeli society and its citizen army in the ongoing Gaza genocide made Karmi herself question this theoretical optimism: ‘Are these the people who I wanted to embrace? This paper argues that the profound disillusionment captured in Karmi’s question must mark a critical turning point for those who still use cultural analysis to maintain the “empowering” discourse of hybridity. Therefore, literary works that were once analyzed for their moments of connection and reconciliation must now be re-contextualized within the overarching discourse of resistance and the unyielding demand for justice. This study maintains that Spivak’s advocacy of ‘strategic essentialism’ is the way to combat the intransigence and the long-standing consensus on militarism and apartheid. Cultural analysis must therefore reorient its discourse towards an unequivocal paradigm of liberation and decolonization.

BIO: Ahmad Ali is Assistant Professor of English at Arab Open University / Jordan Branch. He joined AOU in September 2023, following the completion of his PhD at the University of Sussex. He teaches Cultural Studies, Culture as well as Children’s Literature. His research interests include cultural studies, trauma theory and postcolonial literature, with particular interest in Palestinian fiction of the Nakba. His article on Adania Shibli’s *Minor Detail* is under review with *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*.

Investigating Counter-Affective Politics of Migration in Arab Diasporic Short Fiction: Networks of Solidarity and Resistance in Selected Short Stories by Mohja Kahf

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ABSTRACT: Migration is an emotional encounter. Given the mobile nature of emotions, whether those oriented towards migrants in the host society or vice versa, the process of migration gets politicised, supporting anti-migration policies which seek to “regulate, rather than integrate, othered bodies” (Ahmad). To this end, this study explores the politics of migration from an affective approach, giving special attention to the representation of the Arab female migrant as manifested in a selection of short stories written by the Arab-American author Mohja Kahf. Building on Ahmad’s affective approach to migration studies, the researchers argue that the feature of mobility which characterises human emotions can be employed by migrants to produce counter-affective politics of migration, subverting sentimentalised nationalist discourses which depict migrants as ‘strangers of the nation’. The female protagonists in the selected short stories are aware of how biased and restricting ‘affective economies’ can be as they orient negative emotions of fear, rejection and distrust towards Arab women. Rather than internalize those anti-Arab sentiments, they seek to create ‘affective networks’ through which they can reclaim previously circulated emotions and reorient them as more positive emotions. As feelings of solidarity, connection and trust are circulated within the migrant networks those women belong to, a counter discourse of resistance is created, challenging anti-migration nationalist discourses through which migrants are usually pressured into blind assimilation in the host society.

FIRST AUTHOR BIO: Dr. Eman K. Mukattash is an associate professor of English literature at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, University of Jordan, Amman-Jordan. She obtained her PhD degree in English literature from the University of Jordan in 2013. Her research focuses on literary theory and criticism, psychoanalysis, postcolonial literature and contemporary Arabic literature. She has published a number of articles in several internationally accredited academic journals. Among these are: “The Democratic Vistas of the Body: Rereading the Body in Herman Melville’s Typee,” “Journeying In and Out: Revisiting the Concept of the 'Journey' in the Works of Naomi Shihab Nye,” and “The Politics of Identity in Mahmoud Darwish’s Absent Presence: A Textual Act of Resistance.”

SECOND AUTHOR BIO: Dr. Amal Al-Khayyat obtained her PhD degree in English Literature from the University of Jordan in 2023. Currently, she is an instructor in the English Language Section at the Language Center/The University of Jordan. She is also a researcher who is mainly interested in the field of diasporic studies, specifically the works of Arab writers in diaspora. She has published a number of research papers that can be found on the following link: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=en&user=Y348p80AAAAJ>

Fragments of Exile: Hedonistic Egoism and Hedonistic Utilitarianism in Donna Tartt's *The Secret History* and Isabella Hammad's *The Parisian*

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ABSTRACT: This research argues that the postmodern condition, defined by fragmentation, hyperreality, and the performative construction of identity, provides a critically ethical framework for examining the diasporic self in Donna Tartt's *The Secret History* (1992) and Isabella Hammad's *The Parisian* (2019). Although Tartt's novel is not explicitly about diaspora, its depiction of an insular academic elite who construct a rarefied mythology apart from reality serves as a metaphor for the diasporic subject's negotiation between a constructed homeland identity and an adopted culture. Hammad's narrative follows Midhat Kamal, a Palestinian student in France, navigating tensions between Orient and Occident, tradition and modernity. Both protagonists occupy outsider positions, performing curated identities to access closed intellectual and social spheres. Richard's path reflects a hedonistic egoism, where aesthetic pleasure and personal belonging override collective responsibility, while Midhat enacts a hedonistic utilitarianism, attempting to reconcile individual desire with broader communal and national obligations. This research will, thus, analyze how both novels, when read through these ethical frameworks unfold under postmodern conditions, revealing identity as contingent and fractured. Thereby, the findings of this research demonstrate that by combining postmodern and ethical theories with diaspora studies, Tartt universalizes anxieties of identity construction, while Hammad situates them in the historical trauma of the Arab experience, advancing a comparative poetics of exile and assimilation.

FIRST AUTHOR BIO: Ms. Haneen Amireh is an English Language and Literature instructor at the University of Jordan, deeply passionate about exploring the intersections of language, identity, and the human experience through literature. Holding an MA in English Literature, she brings extensive teaching experience from leading institutions including the University of Jordan and Middle East University. Her academic focus includes literary theory, postcolonial literature, existentialist philosophy, and intercultural communication. Her scholarly work spans complex philosophical and literary frameworks, with publications on topics ranging from Sartrean existentialism and poststructuralist theory to diasporic and exilic studies, as well as postmodern drama.

SECOND AUTHOR BIO: Ms. Dina Al-Khatib is a graduate student in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Jordan. Her research centers on postmodern literature, with particular interest in how identity, femininity, and power are constructed and deconstructed through narrative form. Drawing on feminist theory and postmodernism, her work explores the complexities of voice, agency, and representation across Western and Arab literary contexts. She has published on topics such as linguistic representations of power and the heroine's journey in contemporary fiction. Her current research examines how diasporic literature engages with themes of displacement, hybridity, cultural memory, and belonging across transnational spaces.

Polyphonic Voices of Second Generation: A Bakhtinian Reading of Inaam Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter*

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ABSTRACT: This paper applies Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of polyphony to analyze the protagonist Zeina's narrative in *The American Granddaughter* by Inaam Kachachi. In this novel, Zeina's parents emigrated from Iraq to the United States to escape political persecution. Zeina came to America with them when she was a child. As a second-generation immigrant, Zeina experiences various conflicts, which this paper addresses. Through Bakhtin's theoretical lens, Zeina's voice embodies the coexistence of multiple, often conflicting discourses that construct diasporic subjectivity. Her utterances are not mere expressions of personal lamentation but sites of dialogic tension among inherited national memory, familial obligation, and the Western discourses of freedom and exile. The novel's narrative structure foregrounds the interplay of heterogeneous ideological voices—those of the homeland, the diaspora, and the occupying power—thereby rendering Zeina's narration profoundly heteroglossic. By engaging with this polyphonic dynamic, the study examines how such multilayered voices dismantle established centers of power and meaning, subvert authoritative discourses, and generate a carnivalesque space that destabilizes hierarchies. Finally, this study analyzes how this process shapes Zeina's identity and diasporic subject negotiating between conflicting cultural, linguistic, and political spheres.

BIO: Dr. Park Byoung Ju holds a Ph.D. in Korean Literature from Inha University, Korea (2015), and is currently a Lecturer in Korean Literature at the Department of Asian Languages, University of Jordan in Amman, Jordan. She has also served as a Visiting Professor with the support of a Korea Foundation Grant. Dr. Park earned both her B.A. and M.A. in English Literature at Inha University before pursuing further studies in Korean classics at the Korean Classical Translation Institute. She specialized in Korean literature and completed her doctorate at Inha University. Her research and publications focus on teaching Korean literature as a foreign language. Her current research interests include diaspora literature and comparative literature.

From Ruin to Renewal: Reading Jamal Mahjoub's *The Fugitives* in the Wake of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines Jamal Mahjoub's *The Fugitives* (2021) as a contemporary literary response to Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958). It situates the two novels within the broader trajectory of African literature's resistance to colonial erasure and cultural loss. While Achebe reconstructs precolonial Igbo society to counter Western misrepresentations and assert the integrity of African identity, Mahjoub reimagines this mission from the diasporic and globalized context of the twenty-first century. Through music, performance, and storytelling, Mahjoub's narrative foregrounds the enduring urgency of preserving African cultural memory amid displacement and media distortion. The comparative analysis highlights the symbolic connection between Achebe's Okonkwo and Mahjoub's Rushdy: both figures embody a commitment to cultural continuity, though in different historical and social circumstances. Okonkwo resists colonial domination through strength and tradition, while Rushdy seeks to revive Sudanese heritage through art and self-narration. The paper argues that *The Fugitives* echoes Achebe's warning against the colonial manipulation of history, illustrating how such distortions persist in modern media representations of Africa. By invoking intertextual frameworks, the study situates Mahjoub's work as both an homage to and an extension of Achebe's cultural mission. Ultimately, this paper underscores how African writers across generations engage in a dynamic dialogue that reimagines cultural preservation, which demonstrates the continuing relevance of *Things Fall Apart* in shaping postcolonial and diasporic identities today.

BIO: Ahmed Shalabi is an Assistant Professor of English Literature and currently serves as the Head of the Department of English at Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Jordan. He obtained his PhD in English Literature from the University of Jordan in 2023. His academic and research interests lie primarily in contemporary Anglophone Arab diasporic literature with a particular focus on the emerging discourse of Occidentalism which examines the ways in which Arab writers respond to, critique, and reimagine Western cultural representations.

Resistance Through Drama: William Shakespeare's Hamlet as A Way of Resistance in Isabella Hammad's *Enter Ghost*

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ABSTRACT: The study explores the theme of resistance in relation to loss, grief, mourning and isolation in Isabella Hammad's *Enter Ghost* (2023). The study also examines how Hammad presents the idea of resistance through drama, through the performance of William Shakespeare's play, *Hamlet*, in Palestine. The researcher argues that Hammad tries to relate William Shakespeare's play, *Hamlet*, to the situation of Palestine. The novel is analyzed through using the theory of postcolonialism and intertextuality. The views of postcolonial theorists such as Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak, and theorists of intertextuality, such as Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes, and Mikhail Bakhtin are used to analyze the novel. There are a few studies that have been conducted on the novel; nevertheless, these studies have not discussed the performance of William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* in Palestine and its significance.

FIRST AUTHOR BIO: Nasaybah W. Awajan is an associate professor at the English Language and Translation Department at Middle East University. She earned her PhD from The University of Jordan in English Literature. Awajan has been the Head of English Language and Translation department for two years. She taught as a part time lecturer at The Arab Open University and The University of Jordan. She also worked as an Academic Advisor for English Language teacher students and as the Academic Reading and Writing Lead at Queen Rania Teacher Academy. Her academic work is deeply rooted in the exploration of postcolonialism, Islamophobia, and political theatre, reflecting her commitment to addressing critical social and cultural issues through literary analysis. Awajan's research delves into the intersections of power, identity, and representation, particularly in the context of marginalized voices and the impact of colonial legacies. Awajan has supervised more than 20 MA theses that tackle topics on postcolonial literature, Shakespeare, contemporary literature and feminist issues.

SECOND AUTHOR BIO: Dr. Nisreen T. Yousef is Associate Professor of Contemporary British and American Literature. She was awarded her PhD from the University of Leicester, United Kingdom in 2017. She is currently working for Middle East University, Amman, Jordan. Her research interest revolves around contemporary literature, Postcolonial literature, and historical fiction.