

Arabic 3702: Place, Space, and Migration in Modern Arabic Literature and Film

Spring 2022

This course on modern Arabic literature and film focuses on space, place, and migration in Arabic literature and film. It examines how Arabic literature and film have imagined belonging and migration from the early postcolonial period to the present. We will analyze literary texts and films from different regions of the Arabic-speaking region and its diasporas and consider a variety of types of mobility and connectivity, including colonial & postcolonial migration, return migration, forced or irregular migration, and new diasporas. Through a sustained analysis of literature and film, and engagement with different frameworks for understanding belonging in relation to mobility we will develop a deeper and nuanced understanding of modern Arabic literature and film as well as the myriad ways that mobility and migration shape individuals, communities, and their lived environments.

Course Information:

Course times and location: TBA

Credit hours: 3

Mode of delivery: in person

Course Prerequisites:

English 1110

Instructor:

Dr. Johanna Sellman

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Office: 325 Hagerty Hall

Office hours: TBA

Preferred means of communication: email

Course Goals and Objectives:

- 1) Students will examine how place, space, and belonging are constructed in literary texts and films from the Arabic-speaking region and its diasporas

2) Students will become attentive to how the aesthetic and discursive aspects of migration literature and film change across place, time, and other contextual markers

3) Students will develop basic skills for researching and writing about Arabic migration literature and film. They will also consider the ethical dimensions of how they write about migration

4) Students will develop an understanding of how literature and film has engaged with social and political issues in modern and contemporary Arab societies

5) Students will examine their own implicit and explicit beliefs about place, space, and belonging in a variety of contexts

6) Students will engage with our classroom community in a manner that supports each individual's learning process and dignity

GE: Lived Environments (Theme)

General Expectations of all Themes:

GOAL 1: Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than the foundations.

- **ELO 1.1** Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme.
- **ELO 1.2** Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme.

GOAL 2: Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.

- **ELO 2.1** Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.
- **ELO 2.2** Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.

Specific Expectations of Courses in Lived Environments:

GOAL 1: Successful students will explore a range of perspectives on the interactions and impacts between humans and one or more types of environment (e.g. agricultural, built, cultural, economic, intellectual, natural) in which humans live.

- **ELO 1.1** Engage with the complexity and uncertainty of human-environment interactions
- **ELO 1.2** Describe examples of human interaction with and impact on environmental change and transformation over time and across space.

GOAL 2: Successful students will analyze a variety of perceptions, representations and/or discourses about environments and humans within them.

- **ELO 2.1** Analyze how humans' interactions with their environments shape or have shaped attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors.
- **ELO 2.2** Describe how humans perceive and represent the environments with which they interact.
- **ELO 2.3** Analyze and critique conventions, theories, and ideologies that influence discourses around environments.

How This Course Meets Lived Environments ELOs:

Arabic 3702 "Place, Space, and Migration in Arabic Literature and Film" explores how Arabic literature and film imagine individual and collective relationships with lived environments in contexts of migration. We engage with Arabic literature and film from the 1960s to the present and consider a variety of theoretical and disciplinary frameworks from literary criticism and human rights documents to social science writing that aim to theorize and make sense of individual and collective experiences of migration.

Migration entails movement between environments. Literary, cinematic, or scholarly perspectives on migration foreground the relationship between humans and their environment since in contexts of migration, the environment (built, cultural, natural, intellectual, etc.) is shifting, novel, or unfamiliar (and experienced through a wide range of emotions such as longing, nostalgia, trepidation, or serenity). In the class, we draw on geographer Yi-Fu Tuan's notions of place and space to help theorize how human environments are perceived and experienced.

Required Books:

- *Season of Migration to the North* by Tayeb Salih (ISBN-13 : 978-1590173022)

- *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits* by Laila Lalami (ISBN-13 : 978-0156030878)
- *Invasion!* by Jonas Hassen Khemiri (ISBN-13 : 978-0573700675)

Books are available for purchase on online platforms (to support a local book vendor that can order any book that you like, I recommend <https://bookspacecolumbus.com/>)

You can also check OSU Libraries or OhioLink for available copies!

All other materials will be provided on Canvas through links, PDFs, or OSU Library Platforms.

Grading:

Assignment category	Percentage
Class participation	15
Weekly Assignments	20
Scaffolded Research and Writing Assignments (4x10%)	40
Final project (Short Research Paper or Creative Project) 30%	25
Total	100

See course schedule below for due dates.

Description of Major Course Assignments:

Class Participation (15%)

Description:

Participation is an important component of the learning process. It helps you activate your knowledge and process course materials. We recognize that participation may mean different things to different learners. In this course, participation can include a variety of practices, such as

contributing to group and class discussion, listening to and responding to your peers, and reflecting on ideas through in-class writing and reflection assignments. In some classes, you will be asked to turn in written reflections on texts or discussions.

Regular attendance is essential for success in this course. After three absences, your final grade will be lowered by 3%. Please talk to the instructor if you have an extended situation that is preventing your from being in class. Excellent attendance can only improve your participation grade!

Academic integrity and collaboration: You are encouraged to collaborate with your peers during our in-class activities and discussions.

Weekly Assignments (20%)

Description: Each week, students will complete one or two assignments that engages course materials in different ways. We will use a variety of formats, for example, participation in discussion board, short written reflections on readings, formulating questions, quizzes, and creative work. In some cases, students will complete weekly assignments in designated small groups.

Academic integrity and collaboration: For the group assignments, students are required to collaborate. In some cases (such as quizzes) students will only submit their own work.

Scaffolded Research and Writing Assignment (40%)

Description:

Students will complete four short written assignments (2 pages each) focusing on different skills for writing about literature and film:

Textual evidence (10 %) In this assignment, students will use textual evidence (cite, paraphrase) from *Season of Migration to the North* to support an argument or a point.

Scholarship as Conversation (10%) In this assignment, students will put their own ideas in dialogue with secondary source (I will recommend specific academic articles but you may choose your own as well) on or on a topic related to “Return to Haifa” or *When I Saw You*.

Ethics of Representation Assignment (10 %). In this assignment students, will consider how forced or irregular migration is represented and imagined in the novel *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits* and / or the film *The Dupes*. How do artistic representations contribute to or shift our understanding irregular migration?

Creative Writing Assignment (10%) Students will complete a short creative writing assignment inspired by the themes, content, or aesthetic choices of course materials. They may choose to

write a short story, poem, scene from a play, an adaptation, letter, or other way of creatively engaging course materials.

Academic integrity and collaboration: Students may consult with the instructor, writing assistant, or Middle East Studies Librarian.

Final Project (25%)

Description:

The final project is a short research paper (around 5-6 double-spaced pages) where students support and argument using textual evidence from semester readings. Students will also engage with context and secondary academic sources. This is a chance to put together the skills we have been practicing!

There is also a creative option. Students may write a short story, create a film or podcast, write poetry, etc. or do something else related to the topics of the class. A creative project will include a short written reflection (about 2 double- spaced pages).

Academic integrity and collaboration:

Students may consult with the instructor, TA, or Middle East Studies Librarian.

Late assignments

Please contact your instructor if you believe you will have trouble meeting a deadline.

Grading Scale:

93–100: A
90–92.9: A-
87–89.9: B+
83–86.9: B
80–82.9: B-
77–79.9: C+
73–76.9: C
70–72.9: C-
67–69.9: D+
60–66.9: D
Below 60: E

Instructor Feedback and Response Time:

- Grading and feedback: For large weekly assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **7 days**.
- Email: I will reply to emails within **24 hours on days when class is in session at the university**.
- Discussion board: I will check and reply to messages in the discussion boards every **24 hours on school days**.

Attendance policy:

Regular attendance is essential to your success in this course. You are allotted 3 excused absences for illness or other reasons. **After 3 absences, each additional absence will reduce your overall grade by 3%.** Please contact instructor to make arrangements if circumstances (illness or emergency travel, for example) prevent you from coming to class. Attendance policy may shift under pandemic conditions to accommodate quarantines and additional vigilance toward symptoms of illness.

Academic Misconduct:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct http://studentlife.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf.

Disability Services:

The university strives to maintain a healthy and accessible environment to support student learning in and out of the classroom. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements

with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

If you are isolating while waiting for a COVID-19 test result, please let me know immediately. Those testing positive for COVID-19 should refer to the [Safe and Healthy Buckeyes site](#) for resources. Beyond five days of the required COVID-19 isolation period, I may rely on Student Life Disability Services to establish further reasonable accommodations. You can connect with them at slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; or slds.osu.edu.

Religious Accommodations

Ohio State has had a longstanding practice of making reasonable academic accommodations for students' religious beliefs and practices in accordance with applicable law. In 2023, Ohio State updated its practice to align with new state legislation. Under this new provision, students must be in early communication with their instructors regarding any known accommodation requests for religious beliefs and practices, providing notice of specific dates for which they request alternative accommodations within 14 days after the first instructional day of the course. Instructors in turn shall not question the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system in reviewing such requests and shall keep requests for accommodations confidential.

With sufficient notice, instructors will provide students with reasonable alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements with respect to students' sincerely held religious beliefs and practices by allowing up to three absences each semester for the student to attend or participate in religious activities. Examples of religious accommodations can include, but are not limited to, rescheduling an exam, altering the time of a student's presentation, allowing make-up assignments to substitute for missed class work, or flexibility in due dates or research responsibilities. If concerns arise about a requested accommodation, instructors are to consult their tenure initiating unit head for assistance.

A student's request for time off shall be provided if the student's sincerely held religious belief or practice severely affects the student's ability to take an exam or meet an academic requirement and the student has notified their instructor, in writing during the first 14 days after the course begins, of the date of each absence. Although students are required to provide notice within the first 14 days after a course begins, instructors are strongly encouraged to work with the student to provide a reasonable

accommodation if a request is made outside the notice period. A student may not be penalized for an absence approved under this policy.

If students have questions or disputes related to academic accommodations, they should contact their course instructor, and then their department or college office. For questions or to report discrimination or harassment based on religion, individuals should contact the **Office of Institutional Equity**. (Policy: **Religious Holidays, Holy Days and Observances**)

Course Schedule

Refer to the CarmenCanvas page for due dates and any changes to the schedule.

Week	Dates	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Module 1: Place, Space, Migration, and Belonging	<p>Class 1: Read: "Migration and Diaspora" by Christina Civantos in <i>The Cambridge Companion to Modern Arab Culture</i> (on Canvas) Assignment: take quiz on reading (Canvas) Assignment: Introduce yourself in the welcome survey (on Canvas)</p> <p>In class: Introductions</p> <p>Class 2:</p> <p>Assignment: watch short lecture on place and space (on Canvas)</p> <p>In class: Drama pedagogy workshop on place, space, and belonging</p>
2		<p>Class 1: Read excerpt from <i>The Prophet</i> by Khalil Gibran + watch Omar Offendum performing "Lost in Translation" and "Los Angeles" (28:00-32:40) (links on Canvas) Assignment: Participate on discussion board</p> <p>In class: Lecture on the <i>mahjar</i> + discussion of assigned reading and viewing</p> <p>Class 2: Read "Introduction" and pp. 3-17 in <i>Season of Migration to the North</i></p> <p>In class: Lecture on postcolonial migration literature + in-class close reading of excerpts from the first section of <i>Season of Migration</i></p>
3	Module 2:	<p>Class 1: Read pp. in 18-58 <i>Season of Migration to the North</i></p> <p>Assignment: Create a visual representation of the narrator's experience of return and post it on Canvas</p>

Week	Dates	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
	Colonial and Postcolonial Migration	<p>In class: present visual representations and ask questions about the narrative</p> <p>Class 2: Read pp. 59-86 in <i>Season of Migration to the North</i></p> <p>In class: Jigsaw classroom discussion (student groups will be asked to pay particular attention to different passages in the book)</p>
4		<p>Class 1: Read pp. 87-139 in <i>Season of Migration to the North</i></p> <p>Assignment: Write at least a paragraph where you use textual evidence to support a thesis / (trial run) + post to Canvas</p> <p>In class: workshop thesis statements and textual evidence assignments</p> <p>Class 2: In-class: Discuss the ending of <i>Season of Migration to the North</i></p> <p>+ Textual Evidence Assignment due</p>
5		<p>Class 1: Read pp. 9-15 “Introduction” and first half of “Return to Haifa” by Ghassan Kanafani</p> <p>In class: Discussion of place and space in the narration of “Return to Haifa”</p> <p>Class 2: Read second half of “Return to Haifa” by Ghassan Kanafani</p> <p>In class: popcorn discussion + free writing on the social and political implications of “Return to Haifa”</p>
6		<p>Class 1: In-class screening and discussion of the first half of <i>When I Saw You</i> (Jacir 2012)</p> <p>Class 2: In-class screening and discussion of the second half of <i>When I Saw You</i> (Jacir 2012)</p>

Week	Dates	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Assignment: post a close reading of a scene from the film on Canvas
7		<p>Class 1: Read: "Representations of Exile and Return in Palestinian Literature" by Ahmad H. Sa'adi</p> <p>Assignment: Draw on an idea / argument in the article and respond to it on Canvas (trial run for "scholarship as inquiry" assignment)</p> <p>Class 2: Read: Testimony of Malik, Prisoner #287690" and "Accidental Transients" (On Canvas) from <i>Him, Me, Mohamed Ali</i> (2016) by Randa Jarrar</p> <p>In class: Discuss Randa Jarrar Stories</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+ Scholarship as Inquiry Assignment Due</p>
8	Module 3: Irregular Migration in Literature and Film	<p>Class 1: Read The International Organization of Migration's "Key Migration Terms"</p> <p>Read: pp. 1-51 in <i>Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits</i> by Laila Lalami</p> <p>In class: lecture on literature of irregular migration + social annotation of Key Migration Terms activity + discussion of first part of the novel</p> <p>Class 2: Read pp. 52-112 in <i>Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits</i> by Laila Lalami</p> <p>Read "The Art of Powerful Questions" by Eric E. Vogt</p> <p>Assignment: Formulate a powerful question for the Socratic seminar and post it on Canvas</p> <p>In class: Socratic Seminar discussion of <i>Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits</i></p>
9		<p>Class 1: Read: pp. 113-145 in <i>Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits</i> by Laila Lalami</p> <p>Listen to Prof. Elana Fiddian-Qasmiyeh's lecture: "Disrupting Humanitarian Narratives: Reflections from Refugee Hosts"</p>

Week	Dates	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		<p>In class: Apply Prof. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh’s about place and space to our reading of <i>Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits</i></p> <p>Class 2: Read pp. 146-188 in <i>Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits</i> by Laila Lalami</p> <p>In class: Socratic Seminar on <i>Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits</i></p>
10		<p>Class 1: Watch the film <i>The Dupes</i> (Saleh 1973) Assignment: Submit your idea and some initial writing for the “Ethics of Representation” assignment on Canvas</p> <p>Class 2: Assignment: Reflect on <i>The Dupes</i> and <i>Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits</i> together (nothing to submit)</p> <p>In class: Comparative analysis of novel and film</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+ Ethics of Representation Assignment due</p>
11	Module 4: Place, Space, and Belonging in New Diasporas	<p>Class 1: Explore the website of The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas’: https://www.icarda.org In class: Screen <i>Wild Relatives</i> (2018) by Jumana Manna</p> <p>Class 2: Assignment: Post reflection on film on discussion board (Canvas) In class: Discussion of <i>Wild Relatives</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+ Tentative topic, ideas, and sources for final project due</p>
12		<p>Class 1: Assignment: Work on Free Writing assignment In class: Screen and discuss short films from the Syrian diaspora <i>Here You Are</i> (Hezam 2017) and <i>The Boy and the Sea</i> (Ajouri 2017)</p>

Week	Dates	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Class 2: Assignment: work on final project In class: workshop final projects
13		Class 1: Read excerpt of <i>Home is Another Country</i> by Safia Elhillo Assignment: short free writing reflection Class 2: Discuss <i>Invasion!</i> and "Alien Suite" + Creative Writing Assignment due
14		Class 1: Assignment: work on final projects In class: workshop final projects Class 2: Assignment: Post your final project on Carmen for feedback In class: End of course discussion Final Projects are due a week after our last scheduled class meeting