Arab Voices beyond the Middle East: Cultural Encounters in Europe and the Americas

The Basics:
Instructor: Greg Halaby
Email: gregory_halaby@brown.edu
Class location: G12 Smith-Buonanno Hall
Time: 10am-10:50am MWF
Office Hours: B6 Marston Hall — TBD and by appointment

Summary:
This course introduces students to literature by Arabs writing outside of their country of origin and in relation to a new cultural landscape, in the US, Britain, Canada, and Brazil. We will explore, through poems, short stories, novels, films, and music, the themes of exile, assimilation, gender, sexuality and war in transnational and transcultural contexts. Authors include: Rawi Haje, Etel Adnan, Rabih Alameddine, Ahdaf Sueif.

Course Structure:
This course relies heavily on student engagement in the form of presentations, active participation, and discussion. I will provide discussion and pre-reading questions to help guide and enhance our dialogue, in addition to brief lectures to contextualize the readings. On Fridays we have student presentations and student-led discussion.

Course Time Commitment:
Over 13 weeks, students will spend 3 hours per week in class (39 hours total). Required reading and preparation for the discussion is expected to take around 7 hours per week (91 hours total). In addition, writing and researching for papers (see above) account for total of about 45 hours over the course of the term. Finally, in-class student presentation(s) will take an additional 5 hours of preparation.

Accessibility and Accommodations Statement:
Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please let me know early in the term if you have a disability or other conditions that might require accommodations or modification of any of these course procedures. You may speak with me after class or during office hours. For more information, please contact Student and Employee Accessibility Services at 401-863-9588 or SEAS@brown.edu. Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can contact one of the deans in the Dean of the College office.
Assessment and Assignments:
Active participation: 25%
In-class presentations: 20%
Two short response papers (2 pages each): 15%
Short Paper (4-5 pages): 15%
Final Paper (8-10 pages): 25%

Notes: Instructions and due dates for all written assignments will be posted on Canvas. Please let me know if you plan to be absent from class.

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>First Response Paper</td>
<td>February 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Response Paper</td>
<td>March 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Paper</td>
<td>April 14</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>May 15</td>
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Required Books:
Rawi Hage, *De Niro’s Game* (2006)

Schedule (all readings assignments posted on Canvas):

**Week 1: Introduction: Arabic Literature beyond the Middle East**
- First Day: Course goals, structure, and assessment
- Fri, Jan 25: What is “mahjar” literature?

**Week 2: Arab-American Literature**
- Poems from Mohja Kahf’s *E-mails from Scheherazad* (2003)

**Week 3-4: Seeking Refuge in/from War**
- Rawi Hage, *De Niro’s Game* (2006)

**Week 5: Returning to Arab-American Literature**
- Lisa Suheir Majaj, “Arab-American Writing”
- Selection from Etel Adnan, *In the Heart of another Country* (2005)
Week 6: From Lebanon to San Francisco: War, Memory, and Illness

Week 7: Arab Diasporic Hip-Hop: Literary Roots and New Political Valences
• Music by Shadia Mansour, Omar Offendum and The Narcicyst

Week 8: Montreal and Canadian Arab Immigration Literature
• Saad Elkhadem, *Canadian Adventures of the Flying Egyptian* (1990)
• Selection from Elizabeth Dahab, *Voices of Exile in Contemporary Canadian Francophone Literature* (2010)

Week 9-10: Moving North: Displacement and Love in London
• Short stories from Leila Aboulela, *Coloured Lights*
• Selection from Wail Hassan, *Immigrant Narratives: Orientalism and Cultural Translation in Arab American and Arab British Literature* (2012)

Week 11-12: The South American Mahjar
• Armando Vargas, “Heritage and Migrancy in Brazilian mahjari Literature” (2014)
• Selection from Wail Hassan, *Oxford Handbook of Arab Novelist Traditions* (2017)
• Daniela Birman “Orientalism in Milton Hatoum's Fiction” (2014)