



LLE-E-101— Nakba Writes: Palestinian Literature since 1948 in English and English Translation
Cross-listed Undergraduate Elective

Course Information

Course code:

Course Duration: 15 weeks

Credit Hours: 4 Credits

Pre-requisites: None

Equivalent Courses: None

Exclusive Courses: None

Instructor Information

Dr.Nida Arif, Assistant Professor of English, JSLL

Email: nida.arif@jgu.edu.in

Office location: Savitri Jindal FOB Second Floor South-10B

Homepage:

1. Course Description

*"Don't ever be surprised
to see a rose shoulder up
among the ruins of the house:
This is how we survived."*

-Mosab Abu-Toha

Since 1948, displaced Palestinians and their descendents have produced a body of literature that has distinctive features. Following their national dispossession in 1948, Palestinians became refugees in the neighbouring countries and produced literature that resonates their political conditions i.e., nakba. Arabic term *nakba* has been loosely translated as "catastrophe" in English Language. It was/is used to denote the ethnic cleansing of Palestinian people from their homeland in 1948 and since. It is now also used to denote the continuous nature (*nakba mustamera*) of that catastrophe which in turn informs the latest works on settler colonialism (notably that of Patrick Wolfe) where invasion is not seen as an event but an ever-present structure pushing for elimination of the indigenous. Palestinian writing since 1948 is an attempt to rise against such erasure and elimination. In this course we will look at novels, poetry and articles produced under settler colonial complex. Except few notable exceptions, all writers and poets in this course are Palestinians. It would also engage with cinema made by Palestinians to further study the experience of *nakba*.

2. Course Intended Learning Objectives (Aim)

Course Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessments/Activities
Familiarize students with basic concepts of Palestinian Literature.	Discussion of contextual background before each text	In-class presentations by students
Familiarize students with Palestinian poetry	In-class reading of texts; may include assigning parts to students and asking them to critically respond to it	Analytical think-pieces
Acquaint students with Palestinian novel form and literary strategies that it employs to convey historical tragedy under which it has been produced.	Encouraging students to look at other sources (newsletter, newspaper, blogs, pamphlet)	Analytical think-pieces
To incorporate works of Palestinian film-makers to study experience of <i>nakba</i> .	Group Discussion	In-class Presentation

3. Scheme of Evaluation and Grading

Evaluation breakup

Internal breakup: 60% internal assessment

Components: 3 analytical-pieces (60%)

External breakup: Closed-book written examination (40%)

Grade Definition

Letter grade	Percentage of marks
O	80 and above
A+	75–79
A	70–74
A-	65–69

B+	60–64
B	55–59
B-	50–54
P1	45–49
P2	40–44
F	Below 40

4. Academic integrity policies and learning conditions.

Academic Honesty, Cheating, and Plagiarism: All assignments for this course are closed-book. Exceptions may be made, in which case the student will be informed accordingly. Since answers are intended to test subjective analytical skills, no use of third-party software (such as ChatGPT) is allowed. Students may cite secondary material (essays, scholarly books, Internet resources) with due signposting. Students will be alerted to these at the beginning of the course.

Participation/Attendance Policy: A minimum attendance of 75% must be maintained. Absences arising out of medical reasons should be informed to the JSLL Office (jslloffice@jgu.edu.in) with supporting documentation (medical certificates from an established clinic or doctor's chamber) within 2 weeks of the absence. Students are expected to participate in class discussions.

Use of phone/texting/laptop: Students may use their laptop devices to take down notes and to write assignments. Texting and phone use while class is in session are best avoided and may be penalized if distracting to the instructor.

5. Keyword Syllabus

6. Course Material

Unit 1: Settler Colonialism & Historical Palestine

Essential Reading:

Zurayk, Constantin. 1956. *The meaning of the DISASTER*. Translated by R. Bayly Winder, Khayat's College Book Cooperative. Beirut.

Suggested Readings:

Pappé, Ilan. 2006. *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. Oneworld Publications.

Khalidi, Rashid. 2020. *The Hundred Year War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917-2017*. Metropolitan Books.

Khalidi, Rashid. 2010. *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*. Columbia University Press.

Unit 2: Literature, Nakba and Resistance

Essential Readings:

- Kanafani, Ghassan. 1999. "Men in the Sun." *Men in the Sun and Other Palestinian Stories*. Translated by Hilary Kilpatrick, 2nd ed., Lynne-Rienner Publishers.
- Darwish, Mahmoud. 1982. "Blessed be that which has not come!" *Palestinian Wedding: A Bilingual Anthology of Contemporary Palestinian Resistance Poetry*. Collected and Translated by A. M. Elmessiri. Three Continental Press.
- Darwish, Mahmoud. 1982. "A Lover from Palestine." *Palestinian Wedding: A Bilingual Anthology of Contemporary Palestinian Resistance Poetry*. Collected and Translated by A. M. Elmessiri. Three Continental Press.

Suggested Readings:

- Said, Edward. 1989. Foreword. *Little Mountain*. By Elias Khoury, translated by Maia Tabet, pp. ix-xxi.
- Harlow, Barbara. 2023. "The theoretical-historical context." *Resistance Literature*. Routledge.
- Khoury, Elias. 2012. "Rethinking the Nakba." *Critical Inquiry*. Vol. 38, No. 2 (Winter 2012), pp. 250-266.
- Pappé, Ilan. 2018. Foreword. In *The Last Earth: A Palestinian Story*. Pluto Press.

Unit 3: Gender of Nakba

Essential Reading:

- Shibli, Adania. 2020. *Minor Detail*. Translated by Elisabeth Jacquete. Fitzcarraldo Editions.

Suggested Readings:

- Humphries, Isabelle & Laleh Khalili. 2007. "Gender of Nakba Memory." *Nakba, Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory*, edited by Ahmad H. Sa'di, Columbia UP, pp. 207-228.
- Slymovics, Susan. 2007. "The Rape of Qula, a Destroyed Palestinian Village." *Nakba, Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory*, edited by Ahmad H. Sa'di, Columbia UP, pp. 27-53.
- Massad, Joseph. "Conceiving the Masculine: Gender and Palestinian Nationalism." *Middle East Journal* 49, no. 3 (1995): 467-83. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4328835>.
- Elbaz, Ella. 2023. "Documenting the Unarchivable: *Minor Detail* and the Archive of Senses." *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 59 (5): 607-19. doi:10.1080/17449855.2023.2256488.

Unit 4: Refugee Camps and Massacres

Essential Reading:

- Genet, Jean. "Four Hours in Shatila." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 12 (1983): 3-22.

Suggested Reading:

- Ramadan, Adam. "Spatialising the Refugee Camp." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 38, no. 1 (2013): 65-77. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24582441>.
- Abu-Lughod, Lila. "Landscape of Hope and Despair: Palestinian Refugee Camps." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 36, no. 1 (2006): 84-85. <https://doi.org/10.1525/jps.2006.36.1.84>.

Unit 5: Elia Suleiman: Palestine & Satire

Essential Viewings/Reading:

Suleiman, Elia. 1996. *Sajal al-Ikhtifā'i* [Chronicle of a Disappearance].

Suleiman, Elia. 2002. *Yad 'ilāhiyya* [Divine Intervention].

Suleiman, Elia. "A Cinema of Nowhere." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 29, no. 2 (2000): 95–101. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2676539>.

Suleiman, Elia. 2006. "The Hidden Conscience of Estimated Palestine." *Theorizing National Cinema*. Edited by Valentina Vitali and Paul Willemsen, British Film Institute, pp.-202-206.

Suggested Readings:

Vitali, Valentina & Paul Willemsen (eds.). 2006. *Theorizing National Cinema*. British Film Institute.

Dabashi, Hamid. 2006. "In Praise of Frivolity: On the Cinema of Elia Suleiman." In *Dreams of a Nation*. Edited by Hamid Dabashi, Verso.

Abu-Remaileh, Refqa. "Elia Suleiman: NARRATING NEGATIVE SPACE (PALESTINE)." In *Ten Arab Filmmakers: Political Dissent and Social Critique*, edited by Josef Gugler, 76–97. Indiana University Press, 2015.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt16gzbbw.9>.

Unit 6: Gaza

Essential Reading:

Masoud, Ahmed. 2022. *Come What May*. Victorina Press.

Abu-Toha. Mosab. 2022. "Things You May Find Hidden In My Ear." *Things You May Find Hidden in My Ear*. City Light Books.

Abu-Artema, Ahmed. 2025. "I left Gaza with guilt, sorrow and tears for the son Israel took from me." *Middle East Eye*. 3 October.

Suggested Readings:

Pappé, Ilan. 2017. *The Biggest Prison On Earth: A History of Occupied Territories*. Oneworld Publications.

Pappé, Ilan. 2006. "Genocide in Gaza." *Electronic Intifada*. 2 September.

7. Session Plan

Session (with date)	General Topic	Readings	Approach/Pedagogy
Week 1	Settler Colonialism &	Excerpts from Pappé, Ilan. <i>The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine</i> .	Discussion

	Historical Palestine	Oneworld Publications, 2006.	
Week 2	Colonization of Palestine	Rashid Khalidi's <i>The Hundred Year War on Palestine</i>	Reading & Discussion
Week 3	Nakba	Constantin Zurayk's <i>The meaning of the DISASTER</i> . Rashid Khalidi's <i>Palestinian Identity</i>	Reading & Discussion
Week 4	Palestinian Literature	Edward Said's Foreword to <i>Little Mountain</i> . Excerpt from <i>Resistance Literature</i>	Reading Assignment 1: Analytical Think-Piece
Week 5	Ghassan Kanafani	<i>Men in the Sun</i>	Reading & discussion
Week 6	Mahmoud Darwish	"Blessed be that which has not come!" "A Lover from Palestine"	Reading & discussion
Week 7	Gender of Nakba	Adania Shibli's <i>Minor Detail</i>	Reading & discussion
Week 8	Gender of Nakba	Adania Shibli's <i>Minor Detail</i>	Reading & discussion Assignment 2
Week 9	Gender of Nakba	Four Hours in Shatila	Reading & discussion
Week 10	Movie Screening	<i>Sajal al-Ikhtifā'i</i>	Reading & discussion
Week 11	Movie Screening	<i>Yad 'ilāhiyya</i>	Reading & discussion

Week 12	Elia Suleiman	"A Cinema of Nowhere." "The Hidden Conscience of Estimated Palestine"	Reading & Discussion
Week 13	Gaza	<i>Come What May</i>	In-Class Presentation
Week 14	Gaza	"Things you may find hidden in my ear" "I left Gaza with guilt, sorrow and tears..."	Reading & Discussion Assignment 3
Week 15	Revision		Discussion