



Summer 2017

Course: ENG. 255B – Space and Place: Explorations in Social and Textual Spatialities

Instructor: Farah Z. Aridi

Office:

Office Hours: Mondays 10:00-11:00 a.m.

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Time: Monday to Friday 8:45-9:45 a.m.

Description

The concept of space has been of much significance lately. This course will explore the concepts of space and place in light of themes of belonging, identity, and displacement. We will be looking at the socio-political and historical context behind the book's cultural production as a background for our critical analysis of the books under study. All chosen four books, primarily written in their original languages, namely, Italian, Portuguese, and Arabic, will be read in translation. While bearing in mind issues of translation, the books under study will be analysed in respect to space's two dimensions, physical (form and structure of spaces in and of the book) and social (relational). Spatial practices and performances enacted by the characters in the book will be investigated under this light. We will explore the significances of social and textual spatialities and the meanings we can make out of them. This course will introduce spatial theories and analysis as secondary sources to the books studied.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Critically assess, evaluate, and analyze different works of literature
2. Conceptualize the difference between “space” and “place”
3. Develop their own critical points of view with regards to space, place, and displacement in relation to both the text's form (textual structure) and content
4. Develop an understanding of the importance of culture and context with respect to the themes of space and place within the works of literature the course covers
5. Understand the differences of various works, along shared themes, considering each work's circumstances of production, socio-historical, economic, and political, and cultural background.
6. Compare various texts and understand differences across cultural expressions, performativities, and practices of “space”
7. Form logical argumentation and connections between different works of different cultural backgrounds
8. Assess the themes of displacement, alienation, identity and belonging shared in common between the works under study
9. Understand issues and questions of translation and interpretation when dealing with various texts from different countries around the world
10. Understand the differences of reception and production on three main fronts: global, national, and local, with attention to the circumstances of production



11. Find, evaluate, and ethically incorporate Internet and library sources, along with course texts, into documented writing.
12. Actively respond to and discuss assigned themes and texts in class and online discussions and in writing.
13. Use active and critical reading strategies to learn, assess, and apply rhetorical strategies such as structure, diction, tone, audience, and purpose, as demonstrated through the reading selections.

Texts

Italo Calvino (Italy) – *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller*
Clarice Lispector (Brazil) – *A Breath of Life*
Alaa al Aswany (Egypt) – *The Yacoubian Building*
Sinan Antoon (Iraq) – *I'jam*

***All course material is available at the AUB bookstore. Additional sources and material will either be provided in class or shared on Moodle.**

Grading

Attendance and Class Participation (including informal writing, in class discussions, and quizzes) – **10%**
Short Response 1 – **15%**
Short Response 2 – **15%**
Mid-term (Paper) – **25%**

Course Policy

Attendance & Absences

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are required to come to class on time and account for any absences. Participation in and engaging with class discussions and analysis are integral to students' attendance grade. Should any student exceed the number of allowed absences, she/he will be held accountable.

Assignments

All assignments should be submitted on time. Late or incomplete assignments are not accepted. In case of an absence, that is not considered valid as per the university's regulations, and a missed in-class assignment, the student is required to make up the grade in another manner.

Course Schedule

<p>Week One (June 4-9)</p>	<p>Introduction to Course and Course Policy</p> <p>Introduction to Space and the Production of Space – Excerpts from Henri Lefebvre’s <i>The Production of Space</i> and Doreen Massey “A Global Sense of Place.”</p>
<p>Week Two (June 12-16)</p>	<p>Calvino’s <i>If on a Winter’s Night a Traveller</i> (+ secondary reading of reviews)</p>
<p>Week Three (June 19-23)</p>	<p>Foucault’s “Questions on Geography”</p> <p>Calvino continued</p>
<p>Week Four (June 26-30)</p>	<p>The book as space – excerpts from Perec’s <i>Species of Spaces</i></p> <p>Lispector’s <i>A Breath of Life</i> (+ secondary reading of reviews)</p>
<p>Week Five (July 3-7)</p>	<p>Lispector continued</p>
<p>Week Six (July 10-14)</p>	<p>Excerpts from Bachelard’s <i>The Poetics of Space</i></p> <p>Al Aswany’s <i>The Yacoubian Building</i></p>
<p>Week Seven (July 18-21) N.B. Monday, July 17 is off for Eid el Fitr</p>	<p>Setha Low’s “Embodied Spaces”</p> <p>Antoon’s <i>I’jam</i></p>