

English H598: Seminar in Literary Interpretation

“Literatures of Partition: India and Palestine”

MW 1:30-3:18, Denney Hall 245

Spring Quarter 2006

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Office Hours: M 11:30-1, T 10-11:30, & by appointment

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Course Description

This seminar will require students to learn and employ interdisciplinary skills in examining a major theme in postcolonial studies: the cultural impact of the ruthless partitions of India and Palestine by British colonial authorities in the late 1940s. We will study both the historical context and political content of novels, short stories, plays, poems, and film from occupied Palestine and the South Asian subcontinent in order to comprehend how various artists have confronted the violence of partition and its continuing legacies of war, sectarianism, and national upheaval. We will also give due attention to the representations of hope, perseverance, and resistance that pervade these texts.

Required Texts (available at SBX, 1806 N High St)

Barghouti, Mourid. *I Saw Ramallah*. New York: Anchor Books, 2003.

Hamid, Mohsin. *Moth Smoke*. New York: Picador, 2001.

Hammad, Suheir. *ZaatarDiva*. New York: Rattapallax Press, 2005.

Khalifeh, Sahar. *Wild Thorns*. Northampton, MA: Interlink, 2003.

Singh, Sahni, Manto. *Memories of Madness*. New York: Penguin, 2003.

Course Web Page(s) and Email:

Log on at www.carmen.osu.edu for

- Interactive Syllabus
- Articles marked “C” on the syllabus
- Dropbox for turning in papers
- Threads for journal entries

Go to my personal webpage: <http://people.cohums.ohio-state.edu/jani4/> for

- links to the broader literary and political context of class material
- links to world and alternative media
- information about campus news and events

Note: Important and personal messages requiring a response from me should be sent to jani.4@osu.edu. Please keep the discussion on Carmen focused on themes and questions of general interest to the class.

Course Requirements

Class Participation	20%
Carmen (10 entries)	10%
4 Responses (1-2 pages)	40%
Research Project (6-7 pages)	30%

Grading

- **Class Participation:** Engaged, active participation in the class will be crucial to your grade. This includes, but is not limited to: arriving to class on time, bringing in the texts we're reading that day, being alert during lecture and discussion, raising questions and comments in the discussion period. Multiple absences, as described below, can detract from your participation grade.
- **Carmen:** To receive the full 10% of the grade, you must post at least 10, paragraph-length entries to the discussion threads on Carmen. These may be anything from general observations on the reading to close readings of passages to comments about issues raised in the class but not discussed fully. You may either initiate a new thread or respond to others' comments. Balancing original comments and responses, of course, will help develop online interaction.
- **Responses:** Given the heavy reading load in the class, I'm assigning short papers only for the class outside of the final. Suggestions for response papers will be posted on Carmen, though original ideas are encouraged. Students are also considered to use response papers as a way to build ideas for the final research paper.
- **Research Project:** The assignment will be posted on Carmen by the middle of the quarter. You will be asked to bring critical, historical, and/or theoretical texts to your interpretation of one or more novels from the course.

Course Policies

- 1) **Absences:** More than 2 absences from class will harm your participation grade, with a loss of 1/3 of a grade for each day lost. Emergencies should be reported to me as soon as possible, and may require documentation from the University.
- 2) **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own: it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. All cases of suspected plagiarism, in accordance with university rules, will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.
- 3) **Help with Disabilities:** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. We will coordinate something with the Office for Disability Services, located in 150 Pomerene Hall, which offers services for students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS at 2-3307.

Course Outline (check Carmen for updates)

Week 1: Imperialism, Nationalism, Partition

- M March 27 Introduction
W March 29 Benedict Anderson, from *Imagined Communities* (C)
Pranav Jani & Mytheli Sreenivas, “Anti-colonialism and Resistance:”
South Asia” (C)
In class:
Jawaharlal Nehru, “Tryst With Destiny”
Faiz Ahmad Faiz, “Dawn of Freedom”

Weeks 2-3: The “Nonviolent Revolution”?

- M April 3 Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan* (1-111)
W April 5 Singh, *Train to Pakistan* (112-172)
M April 10 Saadat Hasan Manto, from *Memories of Madness* (447-498)
W April 12 Manto, *Black Margins* (handout)
Meenejeh Moradian and David Whitehouse, “Gandhi and the Politics of
Nonviolence” (C)

Weeks 4-5: Legacies of Partition

- M April 17 Mohsin Hamid, *Moth Smoke* (1-100)
W April 19 Hamid, *Moth Smoke* (101-146)

M April 24 Hamid, *Moth Smoke* (146-246)
W April 26 If possible: Deepa Mehta, *Earth* (film)

Week 6: Geopolitical Contexts after 9/11

- M May 1 Tariq Ali, “The Color Khaki” (C)
Arundhati Roy, “The End of Imagination” (C)
*Research Unit on Political Economy (Mumbai), “Why the United States
Promotes India’s Great-Power Ambitions” (C)
W May 3 Ian Pappé/Samih Fersoun on 1948 (C)
Edward Said, “The Essential Terrorist” (C)
Student Research: Representations of Hamas elections

Week 7-8: Resisting Occupation

- M May 8 Sahar Khalifeh, *Wild Thorns* (1-121)
W May 10 Khalifeh, *Wild Thorns* (122-207)

M May 15 Mourid Barghouti, *I Saw Ramallah* (1-103)
W May 17 Barghouti, *I Saw Ramallah* (104-182)
Student research: The Wall (Apartheid or Security?)

Weeks 9-10: Redefinitions

- M May 22 Suheir Hammad, *ZaatarDiva*

W May 24 Hammad, *ZaatarDiva*

M May 29 – NO CLASS

W May 31 *Paradise Now* (film)
Said, “The One-State Solution” (C)
Mostafa Ali on Palestine (C)

Final: Wed, June 7, 1:30-3:18