

**English 460**  
**Transnational Islamic Literature**  
**Zubeda Jalalzai**

Class Time: Mon/Wed 10:00-11:50 am  
Adams Library 405  
Office: 261 Craig-Lee  
Email: [zjalalzai@ric.edu](mailto:zjalalzai@ric.edu) (checked during business hours)

This course studies postcolonial/global literatures that have connections to the “Islamic world.” As such, the geographical boundaries generally associated with literary study (British, U.S., Indian) are implicitly questioned by this class that looks more at the circulation of ideas and writers rather than their unproblematic connection to one nation or another. Just as we will be reading a number of writers who cannot always be placed easily in a single national space, these writers cannot always be identified as unproblematically “Muslim.” Their writings reflect variations of international or global consciousness informed by a relationship to Islam (ranging from secular and/or anti-religious, to fundamentalist, mystical, political, and global Islamic cultures). In addition to reading contemporary novels, the class also includes classical and medieval Islamic literature to serve as background and theoretical essays on globalization, Islam, identity, and other relevant philosophical or political issues. A great deal of reading, response papers, a substantial final research paper, a presentation, and engaged class participation are required.

**Texts:** available at Off Campus Book Store, 1017 Smith Street

Abdel Fattah, Randa. *Does My Head Look Big In This?* (2005) New York: Scholastic  
Paperbacks (Reprint edition), 2008.

Aboulela, Leila. *Minaret: A Novel*. New York: Grove Press, 2005.

Ben Jalloun, Tahar. *Leaving Tangier*. New York: Penguin, 2009.

Hamid, Mohsin. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. New York: Harcourt, 2008.

Hosseni, Khalid. *The Kite Runner*. New York: Riverhead Books, Penguin Group, 2003.

Khayyam, Omar. *The Ruba'iyat of Omar Khayyam*. Trans. Peter Avery and John Heath-Stubbs. London: Penguin Books, 2004.

Pamuk, Orhan *Snow*. Trans. Maureen Freely. New York: Vintage International, 2005.

Rumi, Jalal al-Din. *The Essential Rumi*. The New Expanded Edition. Trans. Coleman Banks. New York: HarperOne, 2004.

Rushdie, Salman. *Midnight's Children*. New York: Random House, 2006.

*Tales from the Thousand and One Nights*. Trans. N.J. Dawood. New York: Penguin, 1973.

**Attendance:** Much of your grade depends on your class participation; therefore, non-attendance will lower your grade. You are allowed two unexcused absences. For every absence after two, your *final grade will decrease by 1/2 letter grade* (ex: if you have 4 total absences, 2 are allowed, and 2 are unexcused. If your *FINAL* grade is a "B" [3.0], two unexcused absences will decrease it to a "C+" [2.33]). **If you arrive late or leave early on two occasions, you will have earned one unexcused absence.**

**Grading:**

Final Research Seminar Paper (17-20 pages)	50%
Class Presentation Based on Paper	30%
Class Participation	20%
(including 2 response papers)	

**Failure to submit any one of the major assignments will result in failure of the class.**

**Late Papers:** All papers must be completed on time. **I do not accept late papers.** If you suffer a major illness or death in the family, you may submit missed assignments but only if you can verify your absence. Late paper grades will be reduced 1/2 letter grade for each school day late.

**Classroom etiquette:** Once class is in session, leave the room **ONLY FOR EMERGENCIES**. A constant flow of traffic in and out of the room is disruptive and disrespectful to your class mates. **No Lap Tops, Cell Phones, or Texting in Class.** Take notes with pen and paper, and turn cell phones off while class is in session. Texting is very obvious from the front of the room and certainly detracts from your participation.

**Contact:** For any course business or announcements that must be communicated outside of class, I will use your RIC email accounts exclusively. Please check your RIC email regularly.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of someone else's words or ideas as your own. If you plagiarize someone's words or ideas you will receive a "0" on the assignment and you may either fail the course or be asked to leave the class. **Every case of plagiarism will be reported to the English Department.** Depending on the nature of the plagiarism, you may also be asked to leave the college. Do not pass off the ideas you get from Wikipedia, *Cliff Notes*, or *Sparks Notes* (or ANY on-line or printed

material) as your own. If you are indebted to any outside source (including a paper you've written for another class) you must cite that source. The consequences for not doing so are serious. Do cite the sources of your information in oral presentations as well as written work. **Cutting and pasting material from the internet as well as paraphrasing too closely to the original language (even with proper citation) is plagiarism.**

### Schedule

Week 1	<p>Mon. Introductions . Get Handouts of <i>Qur'an</i> readings.</p> <p>Wed. <b><i>Qur'an</i></b>: (610–632 CE) 2. Al-Baqarah (The Cow) 4. An-Nisaa' (The Women) 5. Al-Maa'idah (The Table Spread with Food) 12. Yusef (Joseph) 19. Maryam (Mary) 72. Al-Jinn (The Jinn) -On modesty, selections from <i>suras</i> 24 and 33.</p>
Week 2	<p>Mon. <b><i>The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayam</i></b></p> <p>Wed. <b>Rumi</b> (Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī) (1207–1283 CE) Chapters 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 19, 27</p>
Week 3	<p>Mon. <b>Response Paper 1 Due</b> <b><i>Thousand and One Nights</i></b> (14<sup>th</sup> Century) <b>Prologue</b> [The Story of King Shahrayar and Shahrazad] -“The Tale of the Hunchback” -“Sinbad the Sailor and Sinbad the Porter” -Epilogue</p> <p>Wed. <i>Leaving Tangier</i>, Chapters 1-7</p>
Week 4	<p>Mon. <i>Leaving Tangier</i>, Chapters 8-23</p> <p>Wed. finish <i>Leaving Tangier</i></p>
Week 5	<p>Mon. <i>Midnight's Children</i>, Book One Wed. <i>Midnight's Children</i>, Book Two (through page 271)</p>
Week 6	<p>Mon. <i>Midnight's Children</i>, finish Book Two</p> <p>Wed. <i>Midnight's Children</i>, Book Three</p>

Week 7	Mon. <i>Snow</i> , Chapters 1-10 Wed. <i>Snow</i> , Chapters 11-26 <b>Response Paper 2 Due</b>
Week 8	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
Week 9	Mon. <i>Snow</i> , Chapters 27-35 Wed. <i>Snow</i> , Chapters 36-44
Week 10	Mon. <i>Minaret</i> , part 1 (1-61)  Wed. <i>Minaret</i> , part 2 and 3 (65-179)
Week 11	Mon. <i>Minaret</i> , parts 4-6 (180-end) Wed. <i>The Kite Runner</i> , Chapters 1-10
Week 12	Mon. <i>The Kite Runner</i> , Chapters 11-17  Wed. <i>The Kite Runner</i> , Chapters 18-25
Week 13	Mon. <i>The Reluctant Fundamentalist</i> , Chapters 1-5 Wed. <i>The Reluctant Fundamentalist</i> , Chapters 6-12
Week 14	Mon. <i>Does My Head Look Big in This?</i> (1-175)  Wed. <i>Does My Head Look Big in This?</i> (176-360) <b>Presentations</b>
Week 15	Mon. <b>Presentations</b> Wed. <b>Presentations</b> <b>Final Research Papers Due</b> <b>Course Evaluations</b>