

Arabic Stories and Poetry in Translation

A series of workshops at Birkbeck and SOAS

Presented by Wen-chin Ouyang and Marina Warner

# Refugee Writings, Creative Encounters

With

**Yousif M. Qasmiyeh and Selma Dabbagh**



**FRIDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2018**

Workshop: 2.30-5.30pm, Keynes Library,  
Birkbeck, University of London  
43 Gordon Square

Public Event: 7-8.30pm, Room 116  
SOAS, University of London



The poet Yousif M. Qasmiyeh and the novelist Selma Dabbagh will lead the workshop in an exploration of the issues facing writers and artists when they voice the world of Arabic culture, and find themselves acting as representatives - whether they wish to or not.

We shall begin the practical work by exploring the legacy of Umm Khulthum whose songs continue to bring Arabic poetry to a vast audience.



## Refugee Writings, Creative Encounters: Speaker Biographies

**Yousif M. Qasmiyeh's** DPhil research at the University of Oxford examines multiple conceptualisations of time and containment in Arabic and English literary texts which trace the journeys of refugees or would-be-refugees, within the context of the burgeoning field of 'Refugee Writing.' Besides teaching Arabic at Oxford, Yousif is also Writer-in-Residence for the AHRC-ESRC funded Refugee Hosts research project, Arabic language researcher on the Prismatic Translation strand of the OWRI-funded Creative Multilingualism project, and 'Creative Encounters' editor for the *Migration and Society* journal. Forthcoming and recent publications include 'Writing the Camp: Death, Dying and Dialects' (in *Refugee Writing: Contemporary Research Across the Humanities*, edited by Cox et al, EUP 2019), 'At the Feast of Asylum' (*GeoHumanities*, 2016), 'If this is my face, so be it' (*Modern Poetry in Translation*, 2016) and 'Thresholds' (*Critical Quarterly*, 2014). He co-convenes the Oxford Comparative Criticism and Translation discussion group at the University of Oxford on the theme of 'minor literatures' in translation.

**Selma Dabbagh** is a British Palestinian writer of fiction. Based in London, she has also lived and worked in Cairo, Jerusalem and Bahrain. Her first novel, *'Out of It,'* (Bloomsbury), set between Gaza, London and the Gulf, was a *Guardian Book of the Year*. It has been translated into Italian, French and Arabic. Publications that have anthologised her short stories include *Granta*, *the British Council*, *Wasafiri* and *Al Saqi*. In 2014, her play *The Brick* was produced by BBC Radio 4 and nominated for an Imison Award. She regularly writes for *The Electronic Intifada* on Palestinian culture, and has written for *The Guardian*, *GQ* and other publications. She is currently working on a film script and a second novel. [www.selmadabbagh.com](http://www.selmadabbagh.com)