

The Department of English Language &
Literature Presents

Film Week

Diaspora in Film

17-21 November 2013, 7 pm

Ceremonial Hall

(across from Al Ahli Bank)

Khaldiya Campus, Kuwait University



Free Admission

Welcome

The Department of English Language and Literature welcomes you to its ninth annual film week event. The word “diaspora” has its roots in the Greek term *diasperien*, from *dia-*, meaning “across,” and *-sperien*, meaning “to sow or scatter seeds.” It was first used to describe the historical dispersal of the Jews from Palestine. Today, diaspora refers to any community of people dislocated from their native homeland as a result of slavery, war, migration, famine, colonialism/neocolonialism/globalization, religious or political persecution, or poverty, among others. Modernity has been defined by the mass movement of peoples—from the Transatlantic slave trade, which forcibly shifted an estimated twelve million West Africans to the Caribbean, North and South America, and elsewhere, to the Palestinian exodus from Palestine in 1948. The diasporic experience has been characterized, on the one hand, by a longing for a lost homeland and a clinging to an essentialized national identity and, on the other hand, by a recognition of the hybridity of any identity and the productive possibilities of transnationalist trajectories. Diaspora—whether voluntary or involuntary—is often traumatic. As such, it provides a lens through which to reconsider the overlooked historical and ongoing effects of global capitalism. This week’s films trace some of the complexities of diaspora and express a range of nuanced responses.

After each screening, we will open the floor to discussion and comments.

Snacks will be served every evening.

Enjoy the show

17 November 2013

Amreeka

Directed by Cherien Dabis
Featuring Nisreen Faour, Melkar Muallem, and Hiam Abbass
USA+, 2009, 96 minutes
English; some Arabic with English subtitles

A heart-warming story about Muna, a single mother from Ramallah, and her son, Fadi, who immigrate to a small town in Illinois with dreams of a better life. Caught between the old world and the new, Muna and Fadi must carefully navigate unfamiliar, at times unnerving, terrain. Dabis’s award-winning film tells a familiar tale of immigration with both humor and sympathy.

18 November 2013

Yasmin

Directed by Kenny Glenaan
Featuring Archie Panjabi, Renu Setna, and Syed Ahmed
UK, 2004, 87 minutes
English; some Punjabi

Yasmin, a young British Pakistani woman, walks a fine line between her Westernized self and her role as a good Muslim daughter. The precarious balance she has managed to hold collapses after 9/11. In the face of poverty and racism, Yasmin, her brother Nasser, and their father, each in their way, must confront what it means to be Asian and Muslim in Britain today.

19 November 2013

Le Grand Voyage

Directed by Ismaël Ferroukhi
Featuring Nicolas Cazalé and Mohamed Majd
France/Morocco, 2004, 108 minutes
Arabic & French with English subtitles

Réda, a young French-Moroccan student, must drive his father from the south of France all the way to Mecca for him to perform the *haj*. The road trip uncovers the complexities structuring the relationship between father and son, first-generation and second-generation immigrants.

20 November 2013

God Grew Tired Of Us

Directed by Christopher Quinn
Documentary
USA, 2006, 90 minutes
English

John Bul Dau, Daniel Abol Pach, and Panther Bior are three “lost boys” from the Sudan, forced to leave because of the devastating civil war. They are relocated to the United States. Over the next four years, a film crew follows them as they settle into their new home. They create lives for themselves but remain committed to the place they have left behind.

21 November 2013

The Sweet Hereafter

Directed by Atom Egoyan
Featuring Ian Holm, Sarah Polley, and Gabrielle Rose
Canada, 1997, 116 minutes
English

A tragic accident kills most of the children in a remote Canadian town. A big city lawyer arrives to investigate the accident and encourages grieving parents to file a class-action lawsuit. His own regrets about his failed role as a parent haunt him as he uncovers unexpected secrets. Egoyan’s non-linear plot structure and exploration of alienation perhaps express his own experience as a second-generation Armenian in Canada.