

Research

Research Interests:

- Modern Arabic Literature
- Translation Studies
- Arabic and Comparative Literature
- Women's Literature

Doctoral Project:

Everyday Heroines: (Re)Formation of Subjectivity and Kinship in al-Zayyat and Ashour.

This project seeks to examine nuanced female characters that defy stereotypes while not being typically revolutionary. Their choices in expressing their subjectivities distinguish them from the mainstream, yet present them as everyday women who resist categorization and fixed labeling. To demonstrate the individuality of each character, this project employs Susan Friedman's concept of intersectionality as a methodology of analysis, alongside a set of theoretical frameworks. The analytical approach begins with utilizing Beauvoir's notion of becoming a woman and incorporates bell hooks' understanding of kinship.

The research explores diverse female characters in four novels written in Egypt during the second half of the twentieth century by Latifa al-Zayyat and Radwa Ashour. It aims to investigate the (re)formation of women's subjectivities through the notion of kinship (both blood-related and non-blood-related). This concept is shaped by the presence and absence of love, the establishment of friendship as a substitute for romantic and familial ties, and alternative modes of motherhood.

The study begins with love as a framework, starting in a romantic form with the character of Laila in *The Open Door* (1960) and continuing in *The Owner of the House* (1994) both by al-Zayyat, leading to a Beauvoirian expression of authentic subjectivity in the character of Samia. This character paves the way for Sawsan, a non-conformist consciousness in Ashour's *Khadeega and Sawsan* (1986). In this novel, we observe a transitional phase of contemplating or rethinking relational dynamics, where different structures of familial and romantic love continue to provide a context for the (re)formation of female subjectivity.

Against the backdrop of failing traditional kinships, the text demonstrates a state of disillusionment and challenges the idea of romantic love as the primary form of relationships. This theme is developed with Nada in Ashour's *Farag 2008* (also known as *Blue Lorries*), where bell hooks' concept of friendship emerges as an alternative form of non-blood kinship in the chosen absence of romantic love. In addition, the study extends to examine traditional and non-traditional forms of motherhood and the mother-daughter dynamics within the four novels.

Publications:

Writing the Self, ed. Noran Amin & Safinaz Saad, Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press. Forthcoming Summer 2027.

“When We Talk About Literature: Report on a Meeting of EURAMAL’s Early Career Scholars”. With Adéla Provazníková. *Maydan Rivista*, March 2026.

Becoming Samia: The (Hi)story of an Authentic Woman in *The Owner of the House*. In *Humanidades y comunicación desde una perspectiva de género. Estudios plurales*, ed. by Antonia Víñez Sánchez, Juan Sáez Durán, and Sergio Marín Conejo. Valencia: Editorial Tirant Lo Blanch, June 2025, 93–119.

[*Alienation à la Madeleine: The Migration Experience of a French Woman in Radwa Ashour’s Blue Lorries. In Displacement, Emplacement, and Migration: An Interdisciplinary Collection of Essays*, ed. by Touhid Chowdhury. Bamberg: UB Press, 2024, 69-83.](#)

Female Subjectivity in Times of Constraints: Naguib Mahfouz in the Beginning and the End and Gabriel García Márquez in Chronicle of a Death Foretold. DAR The American University in Cairo: 2016.

International Collaborations:

09/2025, Organizer, EURAMAL Project, “Mapping Our Methodologies: Conversations Across Traditions in Arabic literary Studies”, Workshop for early career researchers, Oslo, Norway.

12/2022, Organizer, DAAD Project "Diverse Pedagogy and Reception: (Re)forming Subjectivities in Arab Women’s Writings", Workshop, British University in Cairo and Cairo University, Egypt.

02/2020, Co-organizer in DAAD Project, „Rezeptive Dialektkompetenz und Interkomprehension in der AraF-Didaktik“, Workshop, Mohammed V University of Rabat, Morocco.

06/2019, Co-organizer, „Kompetenzorientierung im Arabischunterricht“, German-Arab Conference of the Fachverband Arabisch, University of Bamberg, Germany.

Selected Presentations:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 09/2025 | Panel organizer “What can we learn from reading literature” with my contribution “Arabic Literature within Contemporary Humanities”. Nordic Society for Middle Eastern Studies (NSMES 2025), Oslo, Norway. |
| 09/2025 | “Skimming for Meaning, Writing for Mastery: Literature-Based Writing in Arabic Instruction”. European Network for Teachers of Arabic ENTA 7, SOAS, London, UK. |
| 09/2025 | Panel organizer “Different journeys, shared dilemmas: Transformation and Identity in Women’s Arabic Literature” with my contribution “The Alchemy of Self-Love: Silent Revolutions Transforming the Invisible”. German Orientalists’ Day DOT 2025, Erlangen, Germany. |
| 09/2025 | Panel “Behave Yourself! Adab and the Will to Change the World”, with my contribution on “Reconstructing kinship in a fractured world: a literary model”. German Orientalists’ Day DOT 2025, Erlangen, Germany |
| 12/2024 | Panel organizer “Crafting an Advanced Arabic Curriculum in higher education” with my contribution “An Advanced Arabic Reading Course”. European Network for Teaching Arabic (ENTA-6) Teaching Arabic Across Contexts, Leiden, Netherlands. |

- 05/2024 “Éloignement as the Dystopia of the Modern World: Radwa Ashour on the Metamorphosis of Places”. The 15th EURAMAL conference: Ecocritical Approaches and Environmental Issues in Modern Arabic Literature. Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic.
- 05/2024 “Hinter den Kulissen: Entwicklung eines Fortgeschrittenen Arabischlehrplans an der Universität Bamberg“. VI. Konferenz des Fachverbands Arabisch e.V., LSI Bochum, Germany.
- 10/2023 “Embracing Love: The Journey of Samia's Self-Discovery in *The Owner of the House*”. GENDERCOM IX. 29-30 October, Cadiz, Spain.
- 08/2023 “Rewriting the Self: the case of two Female Writers beyond Egypt of the 1960s”. Narrating lives: International Conference on Storytelling, (Auto)Biography and (Auto)Ethnography. 26-27 August, Valletta, Malta
- 03/2023 The Private vs. The Public: Beyond Latifa al-Zayyat’s Bildungsroman. Women of the World: International Conference (10-11 March 2023), Faculty of Education, Alexandria University, Egypt.
- 09/2022 Negotiating Female Subjectivities in two novels by Latifa al-Zayyat. DAVO Workshop, German Orientalists Day 2022 (DOT 12-17 September), Free University of Berlin, Germany.
- 09/2022 (How)Can Places speak? Spaces narrating Subjectivities in Ashour’s *Farag*. Conference: The Street and the City IV – Moments 7-9 September, University of Lisbon, Portugal.
- 07/2022 “Mothers and Daughters: Nada, Madeline and Hamdiya”. Conference: From Stabat Mater to Mater Movens: Analysing Discourses on Motherhood, 9-10 July 2022 – London Centre for Interdisciplinary Research (LCIR), UK.
- 06/2022 “The Narrative Voice in Latifa alZayyat Later Works: *The Owner of the House* as a case study”. Conference: 14th EURAMAL CONFERENCE 6-8 June 2022, Sofia.
- 01/2020 “A glance at the Arabic literature: The rise of the Arabic Novel”, Seminar: Introduction to the Arabo-Islamic World, University of Bayreuth, Germany.

Last updated: March, 2026.