



المركز العربي للأبحاث ودراسة السياسات
Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies

وحدة دراسات الخليج والجزيرة العربية
Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies Unit

The Gulf Novel A Parallel Sociology

20-21 January 2024

[About the Symposium](#) | [Timetable](#)



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About the Forum

Novels written in the countries of the Arabian Gulf have undergone remarkable developments over the past two decades. While these developments are associated with a marked improvement in the quantity of novels published, an increasing volume of novels is an Arab and global trend more generally. Gulf novels have also garnered significant readership and received literary awards and international acclaim, propelling Gulf novelists to the forefront of Arab novelists for the first time since the birth of the modern Arabic novel.

The current surge of Gulf novels is closely linked to the substantial social transformations in Gulf societies in the last third of the twentieth century. Without disregarding the theoretical perspectives connecting the novel to the city, it is certain that major social shifts have shaped Gulf societies, endowing them with entirely new characteristics. These transformations are evident in the expansion of cities with global reputations, the rise of culturally diverse communities, the abundance and impact of oil resources, the development of state bureaucracy, and other features. Undoubtedly, Gulf novels are inseparable from these transformations.

Novels are not presumed to express these transformations, nor is it a given that Gulf novels adopt a realistic trend in the sense implied by literary criticism. Rather, Gulf novels have focused on social structures and their transformations, associated with the Gulf citizen's endeavour to comprehend these changes. Furthermore, Gulf novels have navigated between the present and the past to understand the current social structures and the preludes of modern Gulf societies. They also aim to challenge stereotypes formed during the era of oil abundance in these societies.

The Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies Unit at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies tackles these questions in this symposium. The objective of this symposium is not to offer technical analyses of Gulf novels from the perspective of narratology, nor thematic analyses that merely explore the content of the novels. Instead, it seeks to reveal the nature of Gulf novels and their patterns of representing societies and social structures in Gulf countries. The goal is to determine whether grasping these representations contributes to a more precise, profound, and comprehensive understanding of Gulf societies.

In theory, the symposium does not adopt a reflective perspective on literature, merely considering it as a mirror of society. Instead, it commences from the notion that literature is a discursive product inseparable from its social and political context, moving beyond symbolic effects. As such, the symposium targets two groups of researchers: literary critics specializing in the field known as the "sociology of literature" and sociologists specializing in Gulf societies who regard novels as documents bearing indicators of the social structures in the Gulf to some extent.

Outcomes of the Symposium

The ACRPS intends to publish the papers submitted for participation in the symposium in an Arabic language book.

About the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies Unit

The Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies Unit is a specialized unit dedicated to producing objective knowledge about the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula and the societies therein. The unit holds an annual Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies Forum that provides scholars and policymakers a free and open academic environment to discuss the most pressing issues facing the Arab Peninsula and its societies. The unit also welcomes research and holds symposiums and panels addressing pressing issues in the area from an academic perspective.

Timetable

Day One

Saturday, 20 January 2024

17:30-18:00	Registration
18:00-18:15	Opening Remarks (Auditorium 2)
18:15-19:45	Session 1 (Auditorium 2) The Gulf Novel and the Question of Identity Chair: Hanan Al-Fayyad Saad Albazei: "Cities of Exodus": Abdul Rahman Munif and the Question of Identity Muhsin Jassim Al-Musawi: Uniformity and Variance in Gulf Narratives

Day Two

Sunday, 21 January 2024

9:15-10:30	<p>Session 2 (Auditorium 2)</p> <p>The Gulf Novel and Society Representation: A Sociological Perspective</p> <p>Chair: Hasan Madan</p> <p>Haya Alshahwani: Discovering Social Structures and Social History in Gulf Novels Alia Amri*: Narrating Everyday Life in Saudi Novels: A Sociological Attempt at Historicizing What Has Not Been Historicized</p>
10:30-10:45	Coffee Break
10:45-12:00	<p>Session 3 (Auditorium 2)</p> <p>The Gulf Novel and Historical Memory</p> <p>Chair: Ayman El-Desouky</p> <p>Zainab Alyassi: The Gulf Novel: A Memory of Pearls and Oysters Luay Hamzah Abbas: The Omani Novel: From Myth to Imagining History</p>
12:00-12:15	Coffee Break
12:15-13:30	<p>Session 4 (Auditorium 2)</p> <p>The Woman's Novel in the Gulf</p> <p>Chair: Maryam Al-Kuwari</p> <p>Fahad Husain: The Woman's Gulf Novel and the Enlightenment Hamed Albelayhed: Social Transformations in the Woman's Gulf Novel: A Sociological Approach</p>
13:30-14:30	Lunch Break

* This participant will present online.

<p>14:30-15:45</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 5 (Auditorium 2)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Other in Gulf Novels: As Represented and as Representative</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Faisal al-Mudahka</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mageb Aladwani: Representations of the Other: The Western and the Eastern in the Gulf Novel</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Maisa Alkhawaja: Narrative Identity Building of the Other in Gulf Societies: A Study of Models of the Afro-Gulf Novel</p>
<p>15:45-16:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Break</p>
<p>16:00-17:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Roundtable (Meeting Room 003)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Representation of Gulf Societies in Novels</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Haider Saeed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ahmed Abdulmalik, Bushra Khalfan, Mohamed Alyahyai, Salha Obeid, Taleb Alrefai, Omaila Alkhamis, Yousef Al-Mohaimeed, Zahran Alqasmi</p>