



GRADUATE ENGLISH FORUM SERIES

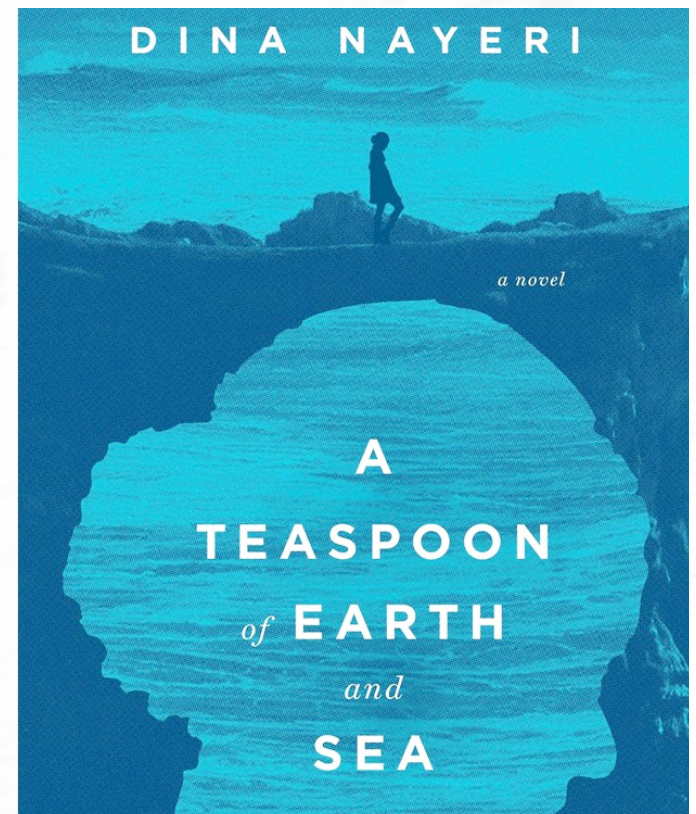
THURSDAY, NOV. 18
3 – 4:30 PM
VIA ZOOM

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SCHEHERAZADE'S DAUGHTER: DINA NAYERI AND THE IRANIAN ART OF STORYTELLING

My dissertation titled "Things Left Unsaid: Historical Silences and Multiethnic Women's Fiction" addresses the use of narrative by ethnic American women (often immigrants or second-generation citizens) who write about personal tragedies and trauma to counter historical gaps. My first chapter titled "The Scheherazade Complex: 'Talking back' from the Iranian Diaspora in Dina Nayeri's Fiction" analyzes Dina Nayeri's debut novel *A Teaspoon of Earth and Sea* (2013) and as background provides a detailed picture of the tempestuous political and social conditions in Iran before and after the 1979 Revolution. The chapter analyzes the deep-set social satire in Nayeri's novel and the importance of oral narrative/storytelling by women (which is an age-old custom) to navigate the oppressive cultural conditions that relegated women to the lower echelons of Iranian society, and the myriad ways in which storytelling acts as a form of trauma remediation.

Presenter: Tania Islam
Faculty Respondent: Priya Joshi



INTERDISCIPLINARY AESTHETICS: CROSS-MODAL MODERNIST ARTWORKS & IDEAS FOR COPING

The centuries-long development of cross-modal art and literature reaches a pivotal moment during the modernist period, during which artistic utilization of cross-modal techniques shifts from efforts at metaphorical meaning to attempts to involve spectators' corporeal bodies. But when Futurist painters declare they intend to paint sounds, noises, and smells, not a single gallery-goer reports experiencing synesthetic sensations when viewing the work. If not metaphorically, how could anyone take seriously the Futurist claim of a noisy painting? Yet, the early medical studies of clinical synesthesia that were the inspiration for many artists leading up to the turn of the twentieth century, by the turn of the twenty-first century, are replaced by neurophysiological studies of the brain's semantic networks that demonstrate the subconscious brain of most humans regularly utilizes cross-modal information. In this talk, Vanessa Loh proposes methods for stimulating synesthetic experiences when engaging with cross-modal works and addresses the larger implications for consciousness studies.

Presenter: Vanessa Loh
Faculty Respondent: Nichole Miller



THE STREET ENTERS THE HOUSE, 1911,
UMBERTO BOCCIONI