Expressing contrast with أما ...ف

This combination is much more common in Arabic than the equivalent in English. It can express the meaning “however, but, whereas,” etc. and is thus a good substitute for لكن. The first word أما actually means “as for…” and the one letter particle ف introduces the information about whatever followed أما. Think of the pattern:

*I live in Cairo. As for my brother, he lives in Beirut.*

The ف goes where the comma would be in English. Look at the following examples then read the comments below them:

سيارة محمود قديمة أما سيارة أحمد فهي جديدة.

أسكن في مدينة صغيرة أما أخي فهو يسكن في مدينة كبيرة

أبي متقاعد أما أمي فهي تعمل في مستشفى.

Note:

1. The أما ...ف bracket the second item in the comparison. The first statement is not changed at all. The most common error is to put the أما before the first statement and the ف before the second one, which will not make sense.
2. ف would not be translated in English.
3. ف attaches directly to the word that follows.

أما ... ف

“as for……..,”

The phrase in the box above is an excellent way to make contrasts. The first term (أما) means “as for…” and is used to introduce the subject you are going to comment on. The ف , which is not generally translated in English, means “then” and functions like a comma, giving the information about the topic.

سورية تقع في آسيا، أما مصر فهي تقع في إفريقية.

Syria is located in Asia, as for Egypt, it is located in Africa.