**LEVANTINE CITIES: ALEXANDRIA, ATHENS, ISTANBUL**

Comparative Literature COLT1811T-S01

Fall 2014

***Professor Vangelis Calotychos***

Monday -Wednesday - Friday 12:00 – 12:50 p.m.

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**Course Description:** Historically, Mediterranean cities Athens, Alexandria and Istanbul have been a space of encounters, circulations, and exchanges of people, commodities, and ideas--spaces that divide as well as unite. These cities have been shaped by the interaction of different ethnic groups and religions (Arabs, Armenians, Greeks, Kurds, Turks; Christians, Jews and Muslims), sometimes co-existing, other times assimilating or overtaking one another. These cities have inspired many works of literature and film, whose dominant themes cluster around social tensions or connections between the diverse communities of the region as a result of foreign intervention. In this class, we will explore cultures and eclectic identities of three Mediterranean cities Athens, Alexandria, and Istanbul through selected works of literature and film. We will focus on the representation of Mediterranean cities in national and European literatures and films, nationalism and identity issues, the relationship between fiction and the history/ memory of migrations, wars, and minorities in the region; and the origins and sustenance of discourses that describe the Mediterranean with nostalgia and cosmopolitanism. How are thematic and historical issues resolved, such as those involving antiquity and modernity, tradition and modernization, colonialism and nationalism, religion and secularism? How are these cities defined in the works of western writers? And are such representations appropriated, resisted, and parodied by those *on the ground*? Finally, are the recent riots in the main city squares of all these three cities in any way connected?

**WEEK 1**

**Sept. 3 Introductory Remarks**

**Sept. 5** Constantine Cavafy, “Ithaka”; “Return from Greece.”

**WEEK 2:**

**Sept. 8** Peregrine Horden & Nicholas Purcell, Part I: ‘Frogs around A Pond’: Ideas of the Mediterranean,” in *Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*, pp. 1-49.

Ferdinand Braudel, ‘Preface to the First Edition’, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, Vol. 1,* pp. 17-24.

**Sept. 10** Herman Melville, *Journal of a Visit to Europe and the Levant*, 57-71

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *Letters from the Levant during the Embassy to*

*Constantinople*, 146-171

Edward Said, *Orientalism,* 1-27 (h/o)

**Sept. 12:** Kahanof, Jacqueline. *Mongrels of Marvels: the Levantine Writings of Jacqueline*

*Shohet Kahanoff* (selections)

Ammiel Alcalay*, Between Jews and Arabs: remaking Levantine Culture*

(selection)

**WEEK 3: Traumas**

**Sept. 15** Steven Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople: 1453* (selections) (pdf)

OR/AND John Haldon, *The Fall of Constantinople*, pp. 198-247 (pdf)

Michael Herzfeld, “Expansion and Collapse: ‘Ours Once More…” In

*Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece*,

123-40 (pdf).

**Sept. 17** Orhan Pamuk, *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. New York: Knopf, 2005.

**Sept. 19 “ “**

Caglar Keyder, “The Setting” in *Istanbul: Between the Global and the Local*, 3-28

**WEEK 4**

**Sept. 22** Fatih Akin, *Crossing the Bridge - Sound of Istanbul* (2005) (film)

**Sept. 24** Barry Unsworth,*Pascali’s Island*

**Sept. 26** Barry Unsworth,*Pascali’s Island*

**WEEK 5**

**Sept. 29** James Dearden, *Pascali’s Island* (film) (1998)

**Oct. 1** Rea Galanaki, *The Life of Ismail Ferik Pasha: Spina nel Cuore*.

**Oct. 3 “ “**

**WEEK 6**

**Oct. 6** Rea Galanaki, *The Life of Ismail Ferik Pasha: Spina nel Cuore (continued)*

Ipek Celik, “New Directions for Studying the Mediterranean,” Clio 41:1 2011

Yota Batsaki, “’In Third Space’: Between Crete and Egypt in Rhea Galanaki’s *The Life of Ismail Ferik Pasha.”*

*.***Oct. 8** Lawrence Durrell, *Justine*

**Oct. 10** Lawrence Durrell, *Justine.*

Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt*, ix-33

**WEEK 7**

**Oct. 13 NO CLASS**

**Oct. 15** Idwar Kharrat, *City of Saffron.*

**Oct. 17** Idwar Kharrat, *City of Saffron.*

Alexander Stille, “Resurrecting Alexandria.” The New Yorker May 8, 2000: 90-99

Deborah Starr, “Recuperating Cosmopolitan Alexandria” Cities (2005): 217-228

Andre Aciman, “Back to Egypt: An Alexandrian in Search of Lost Time”

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2011/02/06/back-to-egypt.html>

**WEEK 8**

**Oct. 20** Naguib Mahfuz, *Miramar.*

Naguib Mahfouz, “Alexandria in the Twenties” Mediterraneans 8/9 (1996): 128-129

**Oct. 22** Naguib Mahfuz, *Miramar.*

**Oct. 24** Naguib Mahfuz, *Miramar*

Hala Halim, “Epilogue/Prologue,” in *Alexandrian Cosmopolitanism: An Archive, 271-311.*

**WEEK 9**

**Oct. 27** Constantine Cavafy, *Collected Poems*.

**Oct. 29 “ “**

**Oct. 31 “ “**

**WEEK 10**

**Nov. 3** Jules Dassin, *Never On Sunday* (film) OR/AND Gabriele Salvatores, *Mediterraneo* (1991)

**Nov. 5** Menis Koumandareas,*Their Smell makes me Want to Cry* (select stories)*.*

**Nov. 7** Menis Koumandareas,*Their Smell makes me Want to Cry* (select stories)

**WEEK 11**

**Nov. 10** Kostas Tachtses, *The Third Wedding Wreath*

**Nov. 12 “ “**

**Nov. 14 “ “**

**WEEK 12**

**Nov. 17** Lawrence Durrell, *Bitter Lemons*

**Nov. 19**

**Nov. 21**

**WEEK 13**

**Nov. 24** Documentary screening of Elias Demetriou, *Pyla: Living Together, Living Separately*

**Nov. 26 NO CLASS**

**Nov. 28 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

**WEEK 14**

**Dec. 1** Costas Douzinas, *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis* (excerpt)

**& readings on the Greek crisis; Gezi Park protests; and ‘Arab Spring’.**

**Dec. 3 “ “**

**Presentation of final papers**

**Dec. 5 Presentation of final papers.**

**REQUIRED PRIMARY WORKS**

Constantine Cavafy, *Collected Poems.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Lawrence Durrell, *Bitter Lemons.* New York: E.P. Dutton, 1957.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Justine.* New York: Washington Square Press, 1958.

Kharrat, Idwar. *City of Saffron.* Translated by Frances Liardet. London: Quartet, 1989.

Koumandareas, Menis. *Their Smell makes me Want to Cry.* Translated by Patricia Felisa

Barbeito & Vangelis Calotychos. Birmingham: Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman &

Modern Greek Studies, University of Birmingham, 2004.

Mahfuz, Naguib, *Miramar.* Translated by Fatma Moussa Mahmoud. New York: Anchor Books,

1993.

Orhan Pamuk, *Istanbul: Memories and the Cit*y. New York: Knopf, 2005.

Kostas Tachtses, *The Third Wedding Wreath.* Translated by John Chioles. Athens: Hermes, 1985.

Barry Unsworth, *Pascali’s Island.* New York: W.W. Norton, 1997.

*The above books can be bought at the Brown bookstore. All other readings will be distributed by the instructor or may be accessible in electronic form.*

SECONDARY MATERIALS:

Ammiel Alcalay*, Between Jews and Arabs: remaking Levantine Culture.* Minneapolis:

University of Minnesota Press, 1993. (also electronic resource)

Ferdinand Braudel, ‘Preface to the First Edition’, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean*

*World in the Age of Philip II, Vol. 1,* pp. 17-24. (h/o)

Ipek Celik, “New Directions for Studying the Mediterranean,” Clio 41:1 2011

Costas Douzinas, *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis.* Cambridge: Polity, 2013.

Hala Halim. *Alexandrian Cosmopolitanism: An Archive.* New York: Fordham University Press,

2013.

Michael Herzfeld, *Anthropology through the Looking Glass*, 1-12; 64-70; 123-151 (h/o)

Peregrine Horden & Nicholas Purcell, Part I: ‘Frogs around A Pond’: Ideas of the

Mediterranean,” in *Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*, pp. 1-49. Malden, Mass.: Backwell, 2000.

Kahanof, Jacqueline. *Mongrels of Marvels: the Levantine Writings of Jacqueline Shohet*

*Kahanoff.* Edited by Deborah A. Starr and Sasson Somekh. Stanford, CA: Stanford

University Press, 2011.

Keyder, Caglar. *Istanbul: between the global and the local.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and

Littlefield, 1999.

Herman Melville, *Journal of a Visit to Europe and the Levant*, 57-71

Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Edward Said, *Orientalism.* New York: Pantheon, 1978.

**Possible Films**

Gabriele Salvatores, *Mediterraneo* (1991)

Fatih Akin, *Crossing the Bridge-Sound of Istanbul* (2005)

Nuri Bilge Ceylan, *Distant* (2005)

Jules Dassin, *Never on Sunday* (1960)

Constantine Giannaris, *From the Edge of the City* (1998)

Costas Ferris, *Rembetiko* (1983)

Youssef Chahine, *Alexandria Why?* (1979)

**ASSIGNMENTS**

There will be two short papers (5 pages each; due on **October 15th & November 17th**) and a final term paper (8-10 pages; due on **December 12th**). No secondary sources will be required for the first paper. The final paper is a research paper on a topic of your choice. In November, students will be required to compose an abstract detailing the topic and thesis for this paper. They will then share it with the instructor and their peers and work on researching the topic and developing their argument over successive drafts.

There will be occasional short responses to the reading.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE HANDED IN ON TIME. Extensions will not be given for typical problems.

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION**

First short Paper (5 pages) 20%

Second short paper (5 pages) 20%

Oral presentation 10%

Final Paper (10 pages) 25%

Attendance and participation 25%

**ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend every session of the class. Students who miss class without instructor permission may have their grade lowered. Each student’s participation and preparedness is intrinsic to the success of our class discussions.

**PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism, which is commonly understood as using another’s words or ideas as one’s own, is a very serious offense. Cases of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with strict university policy on academic dishonesty. If you are unsure whether a particular action constitutes plagiarism, you should consult your instructor well in advance of handing in your written work.