

HON394

SP2020

**From Beirut to Tangiers: Contemporary Mediterranean
Culture, Society, and Politics**



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Arizona State University

Class Location: MERCB B103

Class Time: MW 3.05-4.20pm

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Office Hours: Tue, 1.30-3.30pm (Tempe)

Thu, 2pm-4pm (Downtown)

“The Mediterranean speaks with many voices; it is a sum of individual histories.”

Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*

“Whoever is not afraid to cross the border carries the war on his back.”

-Jazra Khaleed, [The War is Coming](#)

Course Description

This one-credit Honors seminar will explore the linguistic, religious, and socio-political diversity of the region known as the Mediterranean primarily through novels and films from the 1940s to present. We often think of North Africa, Europe, and the Middle East as culturally and politically distinct regions of the world. Yet, they are geographically connected by the Mediterranean sea and historically connected by decades of travel, commerce, intellectual dialogue, colonial rule, war, and exile. Throughout the semester, we will study individual voices, stories, and experiences that have crossed national and regional borders. In doing so, we will strive to achieve a more nuanced understanding of the current political impasses of the Mediterranean.

Course Objectives

1. To introduce you to the diverse and interconnected histories of peoples of the Mediterranean.
2. To help you think critically about national borders and unified identities they attempt to generate.
3. To broaden your understanding of contemporary Middle Eastern, European, and North African politics.
4. To creatively engage with political, historical, and literary inquiry.

Readings

There are three required books for this course. You can obtain copies through the ASU bookstore or you can choose to buy from other sellers. If you decide to buy from other sellers, please make sure to obtain the print edition specified. Electronic editions of these books **will** be accepted if you consult with me in advance.

1. Albert Camus, *The Stranger*, translated by Matthew Ward, New York, NY: Vintage International, 1989
2. Latife Tekin, *Dear Shameless Death*, translated by Saliha Paker and Mel Kenne, Marion Boyars Publishers Ltd, 2001
3. Khaled Khalifa, *No Knives in the Kitchens of This City*, translated by Leri Price, Cairo: Hoopoe Press, an imprint of the American University in Cairo Press, 2016

All other readings and resources will be posted on Canvas.

Course Requirements

- ❖ Daily Engagement: attendance, participation, and low-stakes writing
- ❖ In-class Presentations: On the first day of class, you will sign up to give two presentations over the course of the semester. These presentations must be on two different authors/texts, and one must be before February 7, the other before March 7 (see schedule below). Your goal is to give a primer on the historical context, the author's life, and the main ideas you'd like us to discuss as a group. Each presentation should be between 10-15 minutes in length, and should end with framing questions for the discussion.
- ❖ Course Blog: You will contribute to the course blog, [From Beirut to Tangiers](#), in three ways.
 - Reading Reflections: These reflections will be 300-500 words. You will write 2 reading reflections over the course of the semester, one on each text you are presenting on. The posts will be due at 5pm the day before the class you are signed up to present. (650 points/post)
 - Discussion Reflections: These reflections will be 200-300 words. Unless you presented that day, you will write a reflection post due at 5pm the day after our class session. Your discussion reflection may be posted as a comment or a response to the day's presenter's original post, or as a standalone post itself. (100 points/post)
 - Long Form Essay/Short Story/Top-10 List: This post will be the final blog post that you will use to creative engage with the various ideas, places, and texts we'll learn about throughout the semester. Please see "Final Blog Post" handout for more details. (2000 points)

Grading

- ❖ Daily Engagement: **4200 points** (300 points/session)
- ❖ In-class Presentations : **1400 points** (700 points/presentation)
- ❖ Course Blog: **4400 points**
 - 1300 points for reading reflections
 - 1100 points for discussion reflections
 - 2000 points for final blog post

Final Grading Rubric

Points	Grade
9900-10000	A+
9300-9899	A

9000-9299	A-
8700-8999	B+
8300-8699	B
8000-8299	B-
7800-7999	C+
7000-7899	C
6000-6999	D+
0-5900	E

Attendance and Participation

Your active presence in the classroom is crucial to your learning in this class. However, I understand that sometimes, life happens and the reason for your absence is your own business. For this reason, you may miss one session without penalty. You don't need to send me an e-mail requesting an excused absence. Once you have reached your limit of **one** unexcused absence, I will deduct **100 points per each additional absence** from your final point total at the end of the semester.

A note from a doctor or health professional, a signed letter from a University team or program, or documentation of a family emergency all constitute excused absences, and they won't impact your grade.

Being more than ten minutes late to class counts as non-attendance. Leaving early without prior approval also counts as non-attendance.

If you anticipate missing course on a regular basis because of school-related activities (arts, athletics, etc.), come and see me as soon as you can and we will figure things out. Similarly, if you anticipate missing course or being late on a regular basis due to extenuating circumstances, come and see me as soon as you can.

If you don't have the readings with you, you will receive 0 points for daily engagement out of a possible 300. If you anticipate having trouble getting copies of the readings, come and see me as soon as you can.

Simply showing up to class with your readings will only get you **120 points out of a possible 300 per session** because learning is a collaborative effort. The viability of this course depends on your active participation. Active participation has four components:

- ❖ First, you must come prepared to every session. This means that you are expected to have done the readings, to have reflected upon them and taken notes, and to bring the week's readings with you to class.
- ❖ Second, you must be able to demonstrate that you have done this work by contributing to class discussions with comments and questions.
- ❖ Third, you must listen carefully and thoughtfully to what others have to say.
- ❖ Fourth, you must post your discussion reflections on the course blog by 5pm the day after our class session.

Finally, you will probably disagree with some of the arguments voiced in class. I encourage you to express your disagreement with a fellow classmate or with me. Disagreements can be very constructive and productive. However, I also expect you to express your disagreement respectfully. Remember that you are disagreeing with an argument or an idea, and not a person. If you are unsure about what this would look like in practice, refer to the discussion guidelines document we created as a class on the first day of the semester.

Academic Integrity

Academic communities function best when their members treat one another with honesty, fairness, respect, and trust. Hence, you are expected to adhere to ASU's Code of Academic Integrity which states that academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, please consult the Provost Office's [page](#) on academic integrity. If you are unsure about what counts as violations of academic integrity, you can also consult the library guide [here](#). I also encourage you to come and talk to me if you have any questions about the standards of academic integrity.

General Policies

Accommodations

Please follow the appropriate University policies to request an accommodation for [religious practices](#) or to accommodate a missed assignment due to [university sanctioned activities](#).

Accessibility Statement

In compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended (ADAAA) of 2008, professional disability specialists and support staff at the Disability Resource Center (DRC) facilitate a comprehensive range of academic support services and accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

Qualified students with disabilities may be eligible to receive academic support services and accommodations. Eligibility is based on qualifying disability documentation and assessment of individual need. Students who believe they have a current and essential need for disability accommodations are responsible for requesting accommodations and providing qualifying documentation to the DRC. Every effort is made to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Qualified students who wish to request an accommodation for a disability should contact the DRC by going to this [website](#), calling (480) 965-1234 or emailing DRC@asu.edu.

Late Work Policy

As a rule, work will not be accepted late except in case of documented emergency or illness.

If you miss a presentation or reflection letter deadline, 100 points will be deducted from your assignment grade for each six hours past the deadline.

If you miss a presentation, you will be counted as absent for the day of the class (even if you are in class), and you will not receive any points for your presentation.

Technology Policy

Please be sure to turn off and put away your cell phones before each class. **If I spy you checking your phone, I will not say anything but you will be counted as absent for the day.**

You may use your laptop or your e-reader/tablet as your primary reading device. That being said, remember that a big component of this course is active in-class participation. If your use of any electronic device becomes distracting to you or others around you, I reserve the right to further restrict electronic devices used in class.

On a few specified days of the semester, we will use laptops for classroom activities; these will be announced in advance. If you think you might need accommodations for these activities, come and talk to me as soon as possible.

E-mail and Office Hours

I am happy to answer any questions via e-mail, but please be aware that questions that require more extensive answers are often more productively answered in person. **I will take at most 24 hours during the week, and 48 hours during the weekend, to respond. Please include HON394 in the subject line.**

I will not read drafts of blog posts over e-mail. If you need feedback on a draft, or substantive clarification about a topic discussed in class, it is best to come to office hours.

My office hours are as noted on top of the first page of this syllabus. Feel free to come and talk to me during those times about any questions or concerns. Keep in mind that you can always schedule an appointment with me if you are unable to come to my regular office hours.

Multiculturalism Statement

Barrett, the Honors College at Arizona State University, is committed to creating a multicultural learning environment, which is broadly defined as a place where human cultural diversity is valued and respected. Barrett courses integrate multicultural and diversity issues in ways that are designed to enhance students' honors experience and promote learning goals. We hope that our students will contribute their unique perspectives to this effort by respecting others' identities and personal life histories and by considering and raising issues related to multiculturalism and diversity as appropriate to individual course content.

Statement of Ethics

The Barrett community is committed to upholding values of academic, professional, and personal honesty of the highest order. We believe that ethical and respectful behavior is one of the most important measures of the worth of an individual and, as such, the overall integrity of our community as a whole.

Title IX

[Title IX of the Education Amendments](#) protects individuals from discrimination based on sex in any educational program or activity operated by recipients of federal financial assistance. Sexual harassment, which includes acts of sexual violence, is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX. ASU is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination based on sex and provides a number of resources and services to assist students, faculty and staff in addressing issues involving sex discrimination, including sexual violence.

We strongly encourage victims of sexual violence, sexual harassment, stalking and relationship violence to seek support and report incidents. The [Office of Equity & Inclusion](#) has been designated as ASU's Title IX coordinating office. Help from the Title IX Office can be found [here](#).

For help that is **confidential** please go to [ASU Counseling](#). Walk-ins are welcome. If you have experienced sexual assault please consult [this](#) resource and [this](#) resource for help.

Faculty and staff are required to report any allegation of sexual harassment, which includes acts of sexual violence. Full reporting procedures can be found [here](#). According to the procedures (instituted in 1978, but revised May 29, 2015), “reports alleging sexual harassment by students may be made to any employee within the university. All employees, unless precluded by law, are required to immediately disclose any allegation of sexual harassment by a student to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibility who will coordinate with the Title IX Coordinator.”

ASU’s Policy on Handling Threatening or Violent Individuals on Campus

Students are entitled to receive instruction free from interference by other members of the class. An instructor may withdraw a student from the course when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process per [Instructor Withdrawal of a Student for Disruptive Classroom Behavior](#).

Appropriate behavior is defined by the instructor and includes keeping course discussion focused on the assigned topics. Students must maintain a cordial atmosphere and use tact in expressing differences of opinion.

The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities accepts incident reports from students, faculty, staff, or other persons who believe that a student or a student organization may have violated the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Course Schedule

To meet the emerging needs of the class, this schedule is subject to change; any changes will be announced in class and updated on the online version of the syllabus.

Prepare all readings before class on the dates indicated below. Bring the assigned text to class each day.

DATE	READING	ASSIGNMENT
Monday, January 13	In-class reading of Najat El Hachmi, The Foreign Daughter , <i>Words Without Borders</i> , April 2017 (Canvas)	In-class: Sign up for presentations

Wednesday, January 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hisham Aidi, "So Why Did I Defend Paul Bowles?" <i>New York Review of Books</i>, December 20, 2019 (Canvas) ● OPTIONAL: <i>The Sheltering Sky</i> (1990), dir. Bernardo Bertolucci (DVD available at the ASU library) 	
Monday, January 20	NO CLASS - Martin Luther King Jr. Day	
Wednesday, January 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Antonio Gramsci, "Some Aspects of the Southern Question" (Canvas) ● OPTIONAL: <i>Rome, Open City</i> (1947), dir. Roberto Rossellini (streaming available through Kanopy ASU) 	
Monday, January 27	<i>The Great Beauty</i> (2013), dir. Paolo Sorrentino (Canvas)	
Wednesday, January 29	Albert Camus, <i>The Stranger</i> (p.v-59)	
Monday, February 3	Albert Camus, <i>The Stranger</i> (p.63-123)	
Wednesday, February 5	<i>Kedi</i> (2017), dir. Ceyda Torun	
Monday, February 10	Latife Tekin, <i>Dear Shameless Death</i> (1)	
Wednesday, February 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Latife Tekin, <i>Dear Shameless Death</i> (2) ● OPTIONAL: <i>Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul</i> (2005), dir. Fatih Akin 	
Monday, February 17	Elif Batuman, " The head scarf, modern Turkey, and me, " <i>The New Yorker</i> , vol. 92, no. 1, 8 February 2016 (Canvas)	
Wednesday, February 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● West-Eastern Divan Orchestra in Salzburg (concert video), Films on Demand (ASU Login Required) ● Edward Said (video), Films on Demand (ASU Login Required) ● OPTIONAL: <i>The Time That Remains</i> (2009), dir. Elia Suleiman 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OPTIONAL: Reel Bad Arabs (2006), dir. Andrew Killoy et al. 	
Monday, February 24	Khaled Khalifa, <i>No Knives in the Kitchens of This City</i> (read as much as you can, at least from p.1-119)	
Wednesday, February 26	Khaled Khalifa, <i>No Knives in the Kitchens of This City</i> (p.120-215)	
Monday, March 2	Tickling Giants (2016), dir. Sara Taksler (Canvas)	
Wednesday, March 4	Mapping the Mediterranean in the 21 st Century (no reading)	Evaluations (in-class)
Friday, March 6		Final Blog Post due on the blog by 11.59pm.