

A CITY OF TWO CONTINENTS: ISTANBUL

TURKISH 120-220/AMES 127/ICS 162/SES 120

Spring 2012

T/Th, 11:40-12:55, 109 Soc. Sci.

Prof. Erdağ Gökna

Turkish Cultural Studies

Office hrs: 10-12 Fri, 308 Lang.

goknar@duke.edu

Istanbul is the only city in the world located in Europe and Asia. In 1923, after sixteen centuries, it lost its status as an imperial capital city (of Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman empires) and fell into disregard in an era of secular nationalism. Nevertheless, from ancient to modern, Istanbul's cultural legacies have allowed the city to be read as a "palimpsest" – an overwritten, layered text of multiple, even contradictory or concealed, meanings.

In the last decade, Istanbul has reemerged from its peripheralization to reemerge as a global city. As one indication of its changed status, Istanbul was selected as the European Capital of Culture in 2010. As an ancient and modern historical site of the intersection of people, ideas, and cultures, Istanbul is a particularly apt setting to explore tensions of identity, East/West relations, modernity, globalization, Islam, cosmopolitanism and "Turkishness."

This course traces dominant representations of the "city of two continents" in history, literature and film. Through textual and visual analysis, students will examine the major cultural forces (from secularism to Sufism) that define Istanbul's urban spaces. Some of the places we will visit and explore include the *mahalle*, the harem, the historical old city, the street, the Bosphorus, the *gecekondu*, the *pazar*, and new urban spaces. Class-time will be spent interpreting the meanings and functions of these contexts to arrive at deeper understandings of Istanbul's traditions and its modernity and postmodernity.

We will be examining modern and contemporary texts that have a direct or indirect historical component. As we do so, certain characters, scenes, and contexts will obsessively re-appear in ways that allude to larger cultural narratives. Supplemental readings and discussion topics will focus on nationalism, orientalism, gender, representation, globalization, and literary/cultural theory.

Class sessions will focus on student participation and discussion. By the end of the semester, students will have gained the interpretive tools to make important interventions in debates concerning urban politics and city culture that continue to leave their mark on Europe and the Middle East.

This course counts toward the Turkish minor and the Duke Islamic Studies Certificate as well as to majors and minors in SES, ICS, and AMES. It is recommended for students participating in Duke in Istanbul and Duke in Turkey study abroad programs.

Course Requirements and Grading:

1. Regular attendance; absences will lower your grade
2. Discussion leading reports: Summarize main points or analyze scenes (10%)
3. 1-2 page interpretive reading exercises based on various prompts (10%)
4. 5-page Istanbul culture report: Place, person, concept, itinerary, or object (15%)
5. Two essay tests (30%)
6. PowerPoint presentation focusing on final paper project (5%)
7. 10-page final paper of historical or cultural analysis (20%)
8. Annotated EndNote bibliography of 10 outside sources (10%)

Reading Schedule:

Week 1 Introduction

Thurs., Jan. 12: Introduction

Week 2 Ottoman Kostantiniyye

Tues., Jan. 17: Mansel, "Death of Capital" & "Epilogue" from *Constantinople, The City of World's Desire*

Derviş, et. al., from *Becoming Istanbul: An Encyclopedia*

Pamuk, "Hüzün" from *Istanbul: Memories & the City*

Thurs., Jan. 19: Freely, "The View from the Bridge," from *Strolling through Istanbul*

Clark, "Islamic Empire," from *Istanbul: A Cultural History*

[Reading Response 1 due Tues.]

Week 3 Orientalizing Istanbul

Tues., Jan. 24: Said, *Orientalism*, Introduction
Pierre Loti, *Constantinople: The Way It Was*

Thurs. Jan. 26: Lowry, from *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*,
Intro, Ch. 1., Ch. 8 (pp. 1-13 & 131-43)

Barkey, "Islam & Toleration: The Ottoman Model"

Week 4 Gendered Istanbul

Tues., Jan. 31: Montagu, from *Turkish Embassy Letters*
Lowe, from *Critical Terrains*

Thurs. Feb. 2: Peirce, from *The Imperial Harem*
Begin reading Halide Edib, *The Clown and His Daughter*
Film: *Harem Suare* [DVD 11850]

[Reading Response 2]

Week 5 **Kemalism & Hamidian Istanbul**

Tues., Feb. 7: Halide Edib, from *The Clown and His Daughter*

Thurs., Feb. 9: Halide Edib, from *The Clown and His Daughter*

Week 6

Tues., Feb. 14: Kandiyoti, "Women and the Nation"
Review & Discussion

Thurs., Feb. 16: **First Essay Test (take home exam)**

Week 7 **Hybrid Identities: Germany/Istanbul**

Tues., Feb. 21: Film: *Wir sitzen im Süden (We're sitting in the South)*
Presentation by doctoral student Johanna Schuster-Craig

Thurs., Feb. 23: Film: *Crossing the Bridge* (Fatih Akın)
Kosta, "Transcultural Exchanges in Crossing the Bridge"

[RR 3]

Week 8 **Short Paper Due Mon., Feb. 27** **Becoming Istanbul**

Tues., Feb. 28: Istanbul Culture Report

Thurs., March 1: Istanbul Culture Report
Begin reading Tanpınar, *A Mind at Peace*

Week 9 **SPRING BREAK**

Tues., March 6: **NO CLASSES**

Week 10 **Modernist Istanbul**

Tues., March 13: Tanpınar, from *A Mind at Peace*

Thurs., March 15: Tanpınar, from *A Mind at Peace*
[RR 4]

Week 11**Istanbul & Nation**

Tues., March 20: Library Research Talk: Christof Galli
EndNote Demonstration: Greta Boers
Begin reading Pamuk, *The Black Book*

Thurs., March 22: Pamuk, from *The Black Book*

[RR 5]

Week 12**Post-Modern Istanbul**

Tues., March 27: Pamuk, from *The Black Book*

Thurs., March 29: Pamuk, from *The Black Book*

Week 13**Paper Proposal Due Mon. April 2 @ Noon City & Secular State**

Tues., April 3: Film: *Elephants and Grass* (Derviş Zaim)

Thurs., April 5: Documentary: *Coup/Darbe*
Recent Debates on the Secularization Thesis

[RR 6]

Week 14**Neo-Ottoman Istanbul**

Tues., April 10: Taşpınar, "Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism"
Review & Discussion

Thurs., April 12: **Second Essay Test**

Week 15**Presentations**

Tues., April 17: PPT Presentations

Thurs., April 19: PPT Presentations

[RR 7]

Week 16**Presentations**

Tues., April 24: PPT Presentations

Week 17

Final Papers due Monday April 30 @ 5 PM (hard copy to my mailbox in 316 Languages)