

**HUMANITIES 340: Interpretation and Values**  
***Mediterranean Identities from the Margins***  
**California State University, San Bernardino**

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

We invite students to explore, through literature, music and art, the interactions and exchanges between peoples of "the lands of the Middle Sea"—North Africa, West Asia, the Middle East, and Southern Europe. Rather than re-inscribe conventional notions of East and West in our study of the Mediterranean, this course acknowledges and will interrogate the binaries of center and margin, self and other, tradition and modernity. Our seminar begins in reverse chronological order with the 19th and 20<sup>th</sup>-century representations of Egypt, Spain, and Italy followed by medieval and Early Modern representations of the storyteller, traveler, and soldier of the Mediterranean. Organized according to the idea of a literary and cultural journey through the Mediterranean, the seminar will explore the identities of women, travelers, pirates, witches, renegades, soldiers, spies, adventurers, and collectors. Themes of the course include contact, exchange, trade, captivity, conversion as well as fascination with the exotic and antiquity.

We analyze literature that depicts the diversity of races, languages, religions, and social characters that collide to develop a dialectics of survival and acculturation. We will study how texts of different genres and traditions embody Mediterranean syncretism, forming a common cultural ground. In concert with textual analysis will be an exploration of music as an expression of identities which are very rich and heterogeneous in the Mediterranean—from the Middle Eastern influence that reaches Spain, and the Sephardic tradition, to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century ballads of British sailors. In the tradition of the liberal arts seminar, our course is designed with the expectation of class participation, individual presentations, small group work and a comparative analysis that undergoes peer review and revision.

## GOALS

1. Identify elements that define the Mediterranean as a point of convergence between Europe, Africa, and Asia
2. Appreciate the differences and similarities between Mediterranean cultures resulting from the exchange of ideas, goods and travel, as well as from warfare
3. Analyze literature and culture from a comparative perspective
4. Approach critically texts to examine how they illustrate through language and structure key themes discussed in class.

## REQUIRED BOOKS:

- Stoker, Bram (1847-1912). *The Jewel of Seven Stars* 1903. ISBN 9781438287478
- Contreras, Alonso de (1582-1641). *The Adventures of Captain Alonso De Contreras: A 17th Century Journey*. Paragon House, 1989. ISBN 1557781680

## INDIVIDUAL READINGS

- Edwards, Amelia (1831-1892). *Pharaohs, Fellahs, and Explorers* 1891. Ch.8 <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/edwards/pharaohs/pharaohs.html>
- Keats, John. (1795-1821) "Ode on a Grecian Urn". 1821 <http://www.bartleby.com/101/625.html>
- Shelley, Percy Bysshe (1792-1822). "Ozymandias" 1818. <http://www.bartleby.com/41/515.html>
- Maqama of the Lion, Al-Hamadhani, Badi al-Zaman (976-1007). <http://sacred-texts.com/isl/mhm/index.htm>
- Maqama 41, "The Berbers", Ibn Yusuf Al-Tamimi Al-Saraqusti (d. 1143). *Al-Maqamat Al-Luzumiyah* (Trans. J.T. Monroe). Leiden: Brill Pub, 2002. p. 418-424
- Poe, Edgar Allen (1809-1949). "Cask of Amontillado" 1846. <http://www.eapoe.org/works/tales/caska.htm>
- Browning, Robert (1812-1889). "My Last Duchess" 1842 <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/173024>
- Stevenson, Robert Louis (1850-1894). "Olalla." 1885. <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks06/0606531h.html>
- Boccaccio, Giovanni (1313-1375). *The Decameron*. Ed. Jonathan Usher. Trans. Guido Waldman. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008.

(First Day Novel III, First Day Novel V, Third Day Novel I, Fifth Day Novel IX, Sixth Day, Novel X).

[http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian\\_Studies/dweb/texts/DecIndex.php?lang=eng](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/texts/DecIndex.php?lang=eng)

- Cervantes, Miguel de (1547-1616). Exemplary Novels II: "Dialogue Between Scipio and Berganza" <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/14420/pg14420.txt>
- Sephardic Ballad: "La doncella guerrera."
- Armistead, Samuel G. "The Sephardim." *The Literature of Al-Andalus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 455-471.
- Martin, Adrienne "Wild Women and Warrior Maidens." *An Erotic Philology of Golden Age Spain*. Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 2008. 114-130.
- Cervantes, Miguel de (1547-1616). *Don Quixote I-II*. Trans. E. Grossman. (2005) ISBN-13: 9780060934347. (Ch. 25-27, 54-55, 63-65, Vol. II).

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/996>