

**ENGL 710 “Are We Turn’d Turks?”:  
England, Spain, and & Islamic Identities in Renaissance Literature  
Bowie State University – Spring 2017**

Professor: Dr. Horacio Sierra  
Office: MLK O226

Class Meetings: T 4:55-7:25  
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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:00-4:00 & Thursdays 10:30-12:00

**Course Description**

Just as an analysis of news coverage of the Arab world and popular media portrayals of Muslim peoples is necessary to understand how Western cultures articulate their ideologies about Islamic cultures, the literature studied in this course will offer us a view of the earliest literary depictions of Muslim individuals in European print culture. The exponential growth of the moveable type printing press and, to a certain extent literacy, during the sixteenth and seventeenth century allowed for vast numbers of Europeans to form opinions of Islam and Muslims that have stayed with us until this day. To understand how we arrived at the images of Islam we have today we must recognize how these portrayals were influenced by fictional narratives that originated during the Renaissance.

In William Shakespeare’s *Othello*, the title character scolds his bar-brawling comrades “Are we turn’d Turks? and to ourselves do that / Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?” (2.3.182-82) to imply that being Turkish/Ottoman/Muslim is a shameful identity of barbarism, bellicosity, and brutality. And yet Othello, known as “the Moor,” comes from an Islamic background and is also admired by many of his Christian comrades in Venice. We will begin with an analysis of *Othello* and then move beyond this seminal text to better understand how Western Europe, particularly England and Spain, portrayed Muslim characters as a historical reflection of a long-standing Islamic presence in Europe and the ways in which Islam was perceived as both a sister monotheistic Abrahamic faith and a threat to the existence of Christianity. Informed by the scholarship of Edward Said and Homi Bhaba, students will learn how to apply post-colonial theories to literature within a historically sound framework that honors the complex relationship between Western European nation-states and the Ottoman Empire during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

**Required Texts & Materials**

- Fuchs, Barbara and Aaron Ilika, eds. *The Bagnios of Algiers; and, The Great Sultana: Two Plays of Captivity by Miguel de Cervantes*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010.
- *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 8th ed. New York: MLA, 2016. ISBN: 1603292624.
- Shakespeare, William. *Othello: Texts and Contexts*. Ed. Kim F. Hall. New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2007. ISBN: 0312398980
- Vitkus, Daniel, ed. *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.
- Access to the course’s Blackboard page and Facebook page.

You must have a printed version of the day’s text with you. Digital copies of texts via Kindles, Nooks, iPads, etc. are not allowed. You should be an active reader and write marginalia on your texts that reflect your engagement with the text.

### Recommended Secondary Sources

- MacDonald, Joyce, ed. *Race, Ethnicity, and Power in the Renaissance*. Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1997.
- D'Amico, Jack. *The Moore in English Renaissance Drama*. Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1991.
- Davis, Robert. *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy: 1500-1800*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Case, Thomas. *Lope and Islam: Islamic Personages in His Comedias*. Newark: Juan de la Cuesta – Hispanic Monographs, 1993.
- Bartels, Emily. *Speaking of the Moor: From Alcazar to Othello*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.
- Matar, Nabil. *Europe Through Arab Eyes: 1578-1727*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

### Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to

- define the major tenets of Christian doctrine, differences between Catholic and Protestant ideology, and the Five Pillars of the Islamic faith
- outline the history of religious wars related to the Protestant Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, and Christian vs. Islamic nation-states
- explain the literary and cultural theories of Orientalism and post-colonialism
- apply Post-Colonial literary theories to the literature read in class with a solid awareness of Orientalism
- isolate sections of literary texts that support an argumentative thesis that contextualizes the texts within the framework of Christian-Islamic relations in Europe during the Renaissance
- analyze, interpret, and discuss literary works through selected critical approaches and present a clearly-written research paper utilizing appropriate critical tools and observing the MLA protocol for the research paper;
- synthesize research and arguments from an original scholarly paper for an oral presentation that is effectively presented to a scholarly but non-specialist audience

### Final Grade Breakdown

Response Papers	35%
Participation	10%
Midterm	10%
Research Paper Proposal	5%
Research Paper Bibliography	5%
Research Paper (First & Final)	25%
Research Paper Presentation	10%

## **Assignments**

### **Response Papers**

This class will be as exciting as the texts, you, and I can make it. Students must complete all of the week's readings before coming to class. Most classes will begin with me asking you questions about the day's texts. These will not be rhetorical questions. I expect you to have closely read and seriously thought about the day's assigned texts as well as their relationship to previously read texts. Students cannot earn an A in the course without actively participating in it via class discussion. I value students who contribute to class discussion with thoughtful comments, questions, and opinions in a courteous manner that appreciates the non-competitive, communal spirit of the Humanities classroom. Class discussions will be facilitated by the use of the Socratic Method.

Response Papers will enable you to prepare for this discussion by asking you to apply your knowledge to the readings. Your Response Papers can be written in the first-person voice as long as you engage with the texts from a scholarly perspective. Be sure to follow directions for each week's assignment in terms of length and the need for quotes. Your Response Paper must be submitted at the beginning of class in printed form.

### **Research Paper**

Each student is expected to produce a research paper of 15-20 pages based on the semester's assigned readings. Research papers must conform to the requirements set forth in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Papers should be word processed, and two copies should be submitted, one hard copy, and one in electronic form, to the Dropbox on the Blackboard website. Furthermore, each research paper must have a clearly articulated critical or theoretical approach drawn from the array of critical approaches discussed in class. You will be graded on four different components: a proposal, a working bibliography, a presentation, and the research paper itself, which will be a combined grade of your First and Final submission of the research paper.

### **Midterm**

Your Midterm will be a take-home exam and consist of short essay questions.

### **Participation**

Graduate seminars are to be facilitated by professors. The bulk of the discussion, analysis, and discourse should come from the students. You must be prepared to provide insight, ask questions, answer questions, and offer critical inquiries to the topics discussed in class by your professor and your peers.

### **E-mail**

You must check your e-mail at least once a day in order to be notified of the latest announcements concerning the class.

### **Office Hours**

My office hours are for you. I encourage you to stop by if you want to discuss texts, have questions about your progress in the course, or if you have any other class-related concerns. I also advise bringing drafts of your papers to my office hours so we can discuss them on a one-on-one basis. If my office hours do not work for you, please contact me with advanced notice so we can schedule a better time. E-mail is the best way to reach

me. However, do not expect to receive replies during the evening or at night. Responses will be slower on weekends.

### **Attendance, Tardiness, & Personal Responsibility**

Upon your second unexcused absence, your final course grade will be lowered by one letter grade. Upon your third unexcused absence, your grade will drop by another letter grade. Upon your fourth unexcused absence, you will fail the class. Being more than ten minutes late to class or not bringing with you a printed copy of the day's texts will count as an unexcused absence.

Excused absences may be granted due to family or personal health emergencies, certain academic and athletic events, and significant religious holidays. These absences are excused only if they are documented to my satisfaction. If possible, please talk to me about your absence before you miss class. Work is still due the date of the absence except in exceptional circumstances. You are responsible for keeping yourself up-to-date on class discussions, readings, and assignments.

Work is still due the date of the absence except in exceptional circumstances. You are responsible for keeping yourself up-to-date on class discussions, readings, and assignments. When you have been absent, you must take the initiative to communicate with your professor about what you have missed and what is due. Graduate school is about being studious, completing good work on time, being disciplined, and managing your time. Be responsible. You know what your assignments are, so carve out the time to complete them effectively and on time.

### **Plagiarism**

You commit plagiarism when you present the ideas or words of someone else as your own. Remember, you are responsible for understanding the university's definitions of plagiarism and academic dishonesty, which include the following:

- \*Submitting all or part of someone else's work as if it is your own.

- \*Copying without crediting the source, any of the following:

- ش Any part of another person's essay, speech, or ideas

- ش Any part of an article in a magazine, journal, newspaper

- ش Any part of a book, encyclopedia, web page, etc.

- ش Any idea from another person or writer, even if you express that idea in your own words.

- ش Any part of song lyrics, poetry, or movie scripts

- \*Copying verbatim text without enclosing it in quotation marks and citing the source.

- \*Collaborating or receiving substantive help in writing your assignment unless such collaboration is part of the given assignment. (However, you may receive general advice from tutors.)

- \* Failing to cite sources, or citing them improperly.

**Important Tip:** You should never copy and paste something from the internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

Consult me if you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism will be reported to the Graduate Director and the Dean. All acts of willful and inadvertent plagiarism will result in a "0" for that particular assignment and will likely result in failure of the entire course.

### **Classroom Behavior**

Silence your electronic devices and put them away while class is in session. Notify me if you have a personal emergency for which you must monitor your electronic device. Do not text while in class. Step outside if you need to do so.

You may not use laptops or other computer devices in class. If you must use one due to a disability please have the Coordinator of Disability Services notify me. No electronic audio or visual sounds or images from this class may be recorded or transmitted without the written consent of the professor.

### Schedule for Reading, Discussion, & Due Dates

This schedule highlights the days the texts will be discussed in class and the dates writing assignments will be due. Although I will do my best to adhere to this schedule, the reading and writing responsibilities for some dates might be changed. I will notify you of such changes.

Additional readings, handouts, and class activities will be given throughout the semester as the needs of the class dictate. You will be responsible for these additional assignments as part of your class participation grade. Essay due dates are indicated; assignments are always due at the beginning of the class period, so make sure you have printed them in advance.

#### 1/24 Introduction to Course and Syllabus

- Norton Anthology, all topics and links under “Introduction”  
<http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/16century/welcome.htm>
- DonQuijote.org, “The Battle of Lepanto”  
<http://www.donquijote.org/culture/spain/history/the-battle-of-lepanto>
- “Christianity” from *Brill Dictionary of Religion* (Blackboard)
- “The Reformation” from *The Blackwell Companion to Catholicism* (Blackboard)
- James Beverley, “Islam” (Blackboard)
- “From Arabic to English”  
<http://archive.aramcoworld.com/issue/200702/from.arabic.to.english.htm>
- Giancarlo Finazzo, “The Virgin Mary in the Qur’an”  
<https://www.ewtn.com/library/mary/marykran.htm>
- “Images and Maps from *Three Turk Plays*” (Blackboard)

- #### 1/31
- Jeremy Robbins, “Political, Intellectual, and Social Contexts” from *The Challenges of Uncertainty: An Introduction to Seventeenth-Century Spanish Literature* (Blackboard)
  - Cemal Kafadar, “The Ottomans and Europe” (Blackboard)
  - Linda Darling, “The Renaissance and the Middle East” (Blackboard)
  - Walter Andrew, “Suppressed Renaissance” (Blackboard)
  - Daniel Vitkus, “Introduction” from *Three Turk Plays From Early Modern England*, 1-16

- #### 2/7
- William Shakespeare, *Othello*  
“Race and Religion” Contexts 171-227

- #### 2/14
- “Post-Colonialism” and “Orientalism” handouts (Blackboard)
  - Edward Said, “From Orientalism” (Blackboard)
  - Homi Bhabha, “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse”  
<https://prelectur.stanford.edu/lecturers/bhabha/mimicry.html>
  - Miranda Kaufmann, ““Making the Beast with two Backs”–Interracial Relationships in Early Modern England” (Blackboard)
  - “Ibn Munqidh on the Franks” (Blackboard)
  - “Blackness in Renaissance Art” presentation

- #### 2/21
- Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine* – Part I

- #### 2/28
- Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine* – Part II

3/7 Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*

3/14 George Peele, *The Battle of Alcazar*

Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, Book 1, Cantos 1 and 2

3/21 Spring Break

3/28 -Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote* excerpt, Chapter 41, XLI

<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/996/pg996-images.html>

-L. Rouhi, "Miguel de Cervantes, Early Modern Spain, and the Challenges to the Meaning of Islam" (Blackboard)

**Due: Midterm**

4/4 María de Zayas, "Slave to Her Own Lover" (Blackboard)

4/11 Miguel de Cervantes, *The Bagnios of Algiers*

4/18 -Miguel de Cervantes, *The Great Sultana*

-MLA Handbook "Research and Writing" 1-50

-Discussion of Library and Online Resources

4/25 -Daniel Vitkus, "A Christian Turned Turk" 23-39

-Robert Daborne, *A Christian Turned Turk*

**Due: Research Paper Proposal (a copy for each person in class)**

5/2 -Daniel Vitkus, "The Renegado" 39-45

-Philip Massinger, *The Renegado*

-Luciano García-García, "Washing the Moor White on the Early Modern English Stage (1550-1666): Five Undetected Cases" (Blackboard)

**Due: Bibliography (a copy for each person in class)**

5/9 Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, Excerpts from "Clavijo's Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403-06" travel narrative

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/clavijo/cltxt1.html>

**Due: Research Paper First Submission**

5/16 Washington Irving, "Legend of the Arabian Astrologer" and "Legend of the Moors" from *Tales of the Alhambra*

[http://granadablog.net/tales\\_of\\_the\\_alhambra/index.php?chapter=0](http://granadablog.net/tales_of_the_alhambra/index.php?chapter=0)

**5/23 Due: Research Paper Final Submission and Presentations**