508:304 Ottoman Empire

For six centuries, the Ottomans ruled over a large extent of territory that at one time stretched from the banks of the Danube River in Hungary to the Upper Nile in Sudan and from the port of Algiers in North Africa to the port of Basra in Iraq. While it had been established by Turkophone Muslims, the Ottoman Empire itself was comprised of societies exhibiting a bewildering diversity of religions, ethnicities, and languages.

This survey course follows the historical trajectory of the Ottoman Empire from its humble origins in the late thirteenth century to its remarkable survival until shortly after the First World War. Along the way, we will make thematic stops on a number of key issues relating to social and cultural history including, but not limited to, those of gender, inter-communal relations, slavery, and knowledge production. Some of the more important historiographical controversies in the writing of Ottoman history, such as the nature of the early Ottoman state and the question of decline will also be introduced throughout the semester.

Grading: Attendance is mandatory—if you miss three or more lectures, this will directly affect your final grade. Your participation grade has two interrelated components: the weekly online responses (on SAKAI, in the designated forums) to the primary source readings and the in-class discussion of the same material. Once during this semester, you must also write an expanded response paper (one to two pages) for one of the assigned primary source readings. There will be three quizzes during the semester: a map quiz asking you to correctly place a number of major cities and regions on a blank map, and two ID quizzes on key individuals and concepts. The midterm exam (in class) will have both essay and short answer questions. The final exam will also take place in class and will test the subjects we have covered after the midterm exam.

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<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Map quiz</td>
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<td>Two ID quizzes</td>
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<td>Mid-Term exam</td>
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Plagiarism: Plagiarism is not acceptable under any circumstance. All confirmed cases of plagiarism will be penalized by a failing grade for the assignment and a referral to the Office of Student Conduct. For Rutgers University regulations on academic integrity, please read the following document:


Required Texts:
- Colin Imber, The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650: The Structure of Power, 2nd ed. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)
- Donald Quataert, The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922, 2nd ed. (Cambridge UP, 2005)
- Readings marked with (*) can be found on SAKAI under “Resources”
Schedule

Week 1

Wed Jan 21 - General Introduction to Ottoman History

Week 2

Mon Jan 26 - Pre-Ottoman Anatolia
  • Imber, pp. 1-7

Wed Jan 28 - The House of Osman
  • Imber, pp. 7-10

* Primary source reading: Ibn Battuta in Asia Minor

Week 3

Mon Feb 2 - A Balkan Sultanate: Ottomans in Europe *** Map quiz ***
  • Imber, pp. 10-15

Wed Feb 4 - Framing the early Ottomans: akin and gaza
  • *Heath Lowry, The Nature of the Early Ottoman State, pp. 1-13

* Primary source readings: Gregory Palamas among the Turks; Ahmedi, excerpt from the Iskendername

Week 4

Mon Feb 9 - Catastrophe and survival: the Timurid debacle
  • Imber, pp. 15-22

Wed Feb 11 – Political legitimacy in the post-Mongol Islamicate world

* Primary source reading: Doukas on Bayezid and Tamerlane
Week 5

Mon Feb 16 – The End of the World: The conquest of Constantinople

• Imber, pp. 22-37

Wed Feb 18 – The kul system

• *Leslie Peirce, “An Imperial Caste: Inverted Racialization in the Architecture of Ottoman Sovereignty”

* Primary source readings: Kritovoulos, Apology to his compatriots & the fall of the City; The sermon of Isidoros Glabas

Week 6

Mon Feb 23 – The Safavid challenge *** ID Quiz #1 ***

• Imber, pp. 22-48

Wed Feb 25 – Ottoman religio-political ideology

*Primary source readings: Selim I’s letter to Shah Ismail; the trial of Haciye Sabah

Week 7

Mon Mar 2 – Arab lands under Ottoman rule

• *Albert Hourani, A History of the Arab Peoples, pp. 207-242

Wed Mar 4 – State and society: the Ottoman millet system

• *Bruce Masters, Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World, pp. 41-67

*Primary source reading: Excerpts from the travelogue of Nahrawali

Week 8

Mon Mar 9 – Age of Suleyman and the Ottoman World Empire

• Imber, pp. 48-66; *Giancarlo Casale, Ottoman Age of Exploration, pp. 84-116

*Primary source reading: Excerpts from the Miratu’l-memalik by Seydi Ali Reis
Wed Mar 11 – *** Midterm exam (in class) ***

March 14 - March 22 Spring Recess

Week 9

Mon Mar 23 – Central administration and bureaucracy in the classical period

- Imber, pp. 143-176

Wed Mar 25 – The administration of justice: secular and religious law

- Imber, pp. 216-251

*Primary source reading: The legal opinion of Shaikh Hasan al-Kafrawi on the status of Jews and Christians in Muslim Lands (1772)

Week 10

Mon Mar 30 – “The Sultanate of Women”

- Imber, pp. 66-86

Wed Apr 1 – Gender relations, families, and households

- Imber, 96-115; *Leslie Peirce, “Seniority, Sexuality, and Social Order: The Vocabulary of Gender in Early Modern Ottoman Society”

*Primary source reading: Six Ottoman court records from Anatolia

Week 11

Mon Apr 6 – Crises of the seventeenth century: a second Ottoman Empire?


Wed Apr 8 – The military establishment

- Imber, pp. 252-292

*Primary source reading: The regicide of Osman II (1622)
Week 12

Mon Apr 13 – Istanbul, the provinces, and decentralization

• Quataert, pp. 37-51

Wed Apr 15 – The Decline Thesis *** ID Quiz #2 ***

• Dana Sajdi, “Decline, its Discontents, and Ottoman Cultural History”

* Primary source reading: Excerpts from Mustafa Ali, *Nasihatu’s-selatin*

Week 13

Mon Apr 20 – Ottoman reform movements in the long nineteenth century

• Quataert, pp. 54-72

Wed Apr 22 – Production of knowledge and the question of Westernization

* Primary source reading: The Edict of Gülhane

Week 14

Mon Apr 27 – Abdulhamid II and the Young Turks

• *Selim Deringil, The Well-Protected Domains,* pp. 44-67; *Sukru Hanioglu, Young Turks in Opposition,* pp. 200-212

Wed Apr 29 – Nationalism and confessional violence in the modern era

• Quataert, pp. 172-190; Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism”

* Primary source reading: The Ottoman Constitution of 1876

Week 15

Mon May 4 – WWI, the end of Empire, and contemporary narratives about the Ottomans

***Last day to submit your response paper***

Final exam: May 11, in class, at 8 pm