Introduction to the Ottoman Empire: A Tutorial

Course no. 0622101401
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00-12:00, Gilman 456
Instructor: Avner Wishnitzer
Office Hours, Thursdays, 14:00, room 450

Course Description
This course is meant to impart basic knowledge and tools for the study of the Ottoman Empire, one of the most important polities in the history of the Mediterranean. We will therefore not limit ourselves to selected episodes in the history of that empire, but also learn about major historiographical debates, read primary sources and ask how the study of Ottoman history may be relevant in the 21st century. In order to do that, we will use alongside the readings, movies, television scenes and contemporary music. Classes will be conducted as discussions based on the reading materials so as to engage the students and encourage their active involvement.

Course Requirements and Grading
Students must attend all classes and prepare themselves for discussions. The final grade in the course is made of the grade of the final exam (60%), contribution to discussions in class (20%) and two additional assignments (10% each). The first assignment is a written essay (two pages, double spaced) and the second is a short presentation (5 minutes) about one of the historical figures listed in the Syllabus. In addition, all students must join the trip to Acre on Tuesday, 6 June 2017.

Exams:
17 July 2017
20 August 2017
A. The Emirates of the Sons of Osman

1. Why Study the Ottoman Empire?

2. On Order and Disorder in 13th-Century Anatolia

3. Mostly about Disorder: Dervishes and Heterodox Islam in 13th-Century Anatolia


Source: Descriptions of dervishes, 13-16th centuries, from Karamustafa, *God’s Unruly Friends*

Historical Figures: Celaladdin Rumi, Yunus Emre, Haci Bektaş

4. Rise of the Ottoman Emirate

Source: From Ibn Battuta's Book of Travel

Historical Figures: Sheikh Edebali, Osman I, Orhan

5. From Emirate to Empire


Sources: From the letter sent by the St. John knights about the fall of Constantinople (trans. W. L. North); From Tursun Bey's Chronicle about the conquer of Constantinople (trans. Halil Inalcik and Rhoads Murphey)

Historical Figures: Mehmet II, Sheikh Badreddin

B. The Patrimonial State: Government, Society and Culture in the 15th and 16th Centuries

6. The Patrimonial State (I)

Source: Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq: *The Turkish Letters*, 1555-1562

Historical Figures: Kanuni Sultan Süleyman, Hürrem Sultan

7. The Patrimonial State (II)


Source: From Mustafa Ali's Mirror for Princes (trans. Andreas Tietze)

Historical Figures: Ebüsuud Efendi, İbrahim Paşa, Sinan Paşa
8. The Re'aya
Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 133–55.
Source: From the kanunname of the district of Jerusalem (trans. Amy Singer)

9. Gender and other Hierarchies
Source: Women in the Shari'i court of Jerusalem (trans. Amnon Cohen)

10. The Ottoman Empire and the Religious Minorities
Source: Abdülmecid’s decree concerning the blood libel against the Jews of Rhodes (trans. Abraham Shalom)

Historical Figures: Dona Gracia, Yossef Hamon

* opening of the first assignment

11. Court Culture
Source: two divan poems (trans. Avner Wishnitzer)

12. Popular Culture

Historical Figures: Karagöz and Hacivat, Nasreddin Hoca/Hodja

13. The Ottomans and other Muslim Empires (I)

Historical Figures: Ismail I, Selim I

14. The Ottomans and other Muslim Empires (II)
Source: Correspondence between Selim I and Ismail I (trans. McNeill and Waldman)

Historical Figures: Hāfez-e Shīrāzī, Akbar

C. The Second Ottoman Empire: Government, Society and Culture in the 17th and 18th Centuries
15. Crisis (I)


*Instead of a Source:* from Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red*

*Historical Figures:* Mahmud Abdülbaki, Israel Najara, the Köprülüs

• Submitting the assignment

16. Crisis (II)

*Instead of a Source:* from Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red*

*Historical Figures:* Niyazi Misri, Kadizade Mehmet, Mustafa Ali

17. The 18th Century: A Look from the Center


*Source:* Illustrations from Surname-i Vehbi

*Historical Figures:* Nevşehirli Damad İbrahim Paşa, Patrona Halil, İbrahim Müteferrika, Nedim

18. Away from the Center


*Source:* The governor of Damascus about the moves of Zāhir al-ʿUmar

*Historical Figures:* Ahmed Jezzar Paşa, Zāhir al-ʿUmar

19. Reform or Perish


*Source:* In defense of the Nizam-i Cedid (trans. William Wilkinson)

*Historical Figures:* Selim III

D. The Ottoman Empire in the Long 19th Century

20. The 19th century: a general look

21. Law and Order: the Tanzimat in the Periphery
22. The Hamidian Period

*Sources:* Documents pertaining to the Hijaz Railway

*Historical Figures:* Midhat Paşa

23. The Reforms in the Arab Provinces

*Source:* Governor Ali Ekrem Bey's speech in front of the Bir-Saba' Sheiks

*Historical Figures:* Ali Ekrem Bey, Hüseyin al-Hüseyni

24. Europe and Us

*Source:* from Ahmed Midhat's *Felatun Bey ile Rakım Efendi*

*Historical Figures:* Fatma Aliye, Halide Edib Ahmed Midhat

25. The Last Decade: Revolution, Genocide and Dissolution


*Historical Figures:* Talat Paşa, Mustafa Kemal, Ziya Gökalp

26. Ottoman Phantoms