

HIST31871

Culture in Ottoman Society, ca. 1300-1800

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Safa Geldiniz—Welcome!

‘Culture in Ottoman Society’ explores the human landscape of the Ottoman Empire, a rich, vibrant, cosmopolitan society often overshadowed by its military reputation. We will focus each week on a major aspect of Turco-Islamic popular or elite culture, like poetry, scholastic pursuits, gender, religious movements, or family. We will approach these in part through close engagement with translated primary texts as well as miniatures, coins, textiles, and other visual and material objects.

‘Culture in Ottoman Society’ is most concerned with the empire’s people, with their cultural practices and impulses, with how these practices changed, and with how the empire’s inhabitants sought to create meaning and beauty in the world around them—in other words, with what really ‘moved’ Ottoman society in art, music, faith, poetry, books, sex, and ideas.

Indicative Content:

- In Search of “Homo Ottomanicus”
- Ottoman Self-Perceptions
- Political Structures
- The Human Economy
- Sufis, Saints, Heretics
- Inside the Medrese
- God, Creature, Cosmos
- The Literary Salon
- Miniature and Mosque (Arts/Aesthetics)
- Family Life and Nightlife
- Order and Disorder, Reaction and Change



How is it Taught?

The course is 33 hours of contact time in 1 x 3-hour lecture/seminar per week. This time will be a combination of online lecture and both synchronous and asynchronous discussion, source analysis, and group activities.

How are you Assessed?

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| 1.) A source analysis exercise of app. 2,000 words | (40%) |
| 2.) An academic book review of app. 3,000 words | (60%) |

Indicative Readings:

- Doug Howard, *A History of the Ottoman Empire* (2017)
- Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (2010)
- Kate Fleet and Ebru Boyar, *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul* (2010)
- Walter Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *Ottoman Lyric Poetry* (2006)
- Dror Ze'evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500-1900* (2007)

- Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (1999)