

History 410 (01): Aspects of Early Modern Ottoman Empire  
Fall 2008

TU-TH 3:30-4:45 @ OSH 129

Dr. Safa Saraçoğlu (Last name pronounced as: sa-RAH-cho-lou)

Office: OSH 131

Tel: (570) 389-4158

E-mail: [msaracog@bloomu.edu](mailto:msaracog@bloomu.edu)

Web page: <http://facstaff.bloomu.edu/msaracog/index.htm>

**Office Hours:** T/R 11:00-12:30, 2:00-3:00; W 11:00-12:00 & by appointment.

**Course Description:** This course is designed to give a historical understanding of different aspects of the Early Modern Ottoman Empire. This is a reading-intensive course. We will meet once a week to discuss parts or entirety of a book assigned for that week. By reading and discussing these books, we will gain a better understanding of the Ottoman Empire and the world around it. While we will begin our discussions with a book on the foundation myths of the Ottoman Empire, in the course of our remaining meetings we will read about multiple loci of power in imperial administrative structure and the palace, gender roles at the local and imperial levels, Ottoman military strength, the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the rest of Europe and perspectives of foreigners on the Ottoman Empire.

**Goals:** This course will familiarize you with different aspects of the Early Modern Ottoman Empire *and* the writing of its history. Students will develop their writing and critical thinking skills through the completion of several writing assignments. By discussing every book (and important reviews of those books) assigned in detail, you will hone your abilities not only in following the main arguments of a monograph, but also locating it in the historiography of the Ottoman Empire in general. You will also gain a grasp of historical events that shaped the geography that we will discuss and learn how these events contributed to the shaping of the modern world as we know it.

**Structure of the Course:** The format of the course will include general discussion during our meetings and small discussion groups. We will also watch a documentary to reinforce the material presented in readings and lectures.

**Grading:**

Attendance and Participation: \_\_\_ 100 pts.

Response Papers (3): \_\_\_\_\_ 180 pts.

Final Paper: \_\_\_\_\_ 120 pts.

**TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_ 400 pts.**

**Letter Grades**

Letter grades are recorded for individual assignments according to the following scale:

A	4.0	Superior Achievement	C+	2.33	
A-	3.67		C	2.0	Average Achievement
B+	3.33	Above Average Achievement	C-	1.67	
B	3.0		D+	1.33	
B-	2.67		D	1.0	Minimum Achievement
			E	0	Failure

---

## **Requirements and Grading**

**Attendance and Participation:** You are required to attend classes and participate in discussion. You will lose 10 points for every unexcused absence. If you miss more than four classes, you will not earn any points from attendance and participation. Exceptions to this policy will be made only in dire circumstances (e.g., serious illness, death in the family), which must be documented.

The last two meetings of the class (December 4<sup>th</sup> and on December 11<sup>th</sup>) are very important. If you miss any of these two meetings, you will lose half of your attendance and participation points.

You should come to class prepared to engage actively in discussions. Participation involves reading the assigned material **and** contributing to group discussions. This is a small class based mostly on our class discussions. I will not lecture in class; instead, I will ask questions that will lead to discussions. Then I will observe your participation to these discussions and take notes about your participation. By the end of the semester, I will have a very good idea about your participation and give your grade accordingly. Should you have questions/concerns regarding your participation, get in touch with me, and I will be happy to talk to you and answer your questions.

**Book Reports:** In this course, you will be required to write 3 book reports based on your readings. In each of these papers, you will analyze one of the monographs that we will discuss in class (**with the exception of Cemal Kafadar's *Between Two Worlds***). You will choose the three monographs that you wish to write about. As you can see on the schedule below, we will devote two weeks for the discussion of each book. When you decide to write a report on a particular book, you need to let me know of your decision by the end of our last (Thursday) meeting in the first week devoted to that book. You will hand in your paper before our last (Thursday) meeting for that particular book. Thus, the due dates for your three papers will be based on your choices.

All papers must be typed, double-spaced, and should be about three to four pages in length. In these papers, you should not simply describe the content of readings, but analyze the material in light of the issues raised and discussed in class. You should also analyze the skills of the historian who wrote the book. What sources did she/he use and how effectively, how does the book fit in to the general historiography of the Empire and how did other scholars evaluate this work—for this you will need to refer to the book reviews that you will download from the course's website.

**Final Paper:** You will write a historiographic analysis of at least two books on a topic of your choice—pertaining to Early Modern Ottoman Empire. You may use **only** one of the books that we discussed in class **and** that book needs to be one that you have not written a book report on earlier. This means that you need to decide on a broad topic that would be of interest to you (in doing this you would benefit from consulting Daniel Goffman's book—particularly the suggested readings at the end. This paper must be typed, double-spaced, and should be about eight to ten pages in length. In this paper, you will analyze the books in a comparative framework.

I will meet with each of you individually to discuss your topic and the books that you choose to analyze for that topic three times. The first meeting will be on the 5<sup>th</sup> week, the second one on the 9<sup>th</sup> and the third on the 12<sup>th</sup>. You will need to make appointments during my office hours and if these hours do not fit your schedule, we will discuss and determine another time that we can meet. In our first individual meeting (Week 5), you will suggest a topic that you want to focus on for your final project. Once we agree on that topic, you will conduct a bibliographic search and come to the second meeting (Week 9) with a list of books that you can use for your final project. In our last meeting (Week 12) we will discuss the structure of your final papers. These meetings are prerequisite for your final paper and presentation. That is, if you miss them, or if you do not do the necessary work for them and come unprepared, you will not be able to submit a final paper.

We will not meet on weeks 13 and 14. You will be working on your final papers and eating turkey, or a vegetarian alternative, until you pass out. We will also not meet on Tuesday December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

However, we will meet on December 4<sup>th</sup> and on December 11<sup>th</sup> (the day our final is scheduled) and you will present your papers to your classmates. I will collect your papers at the end of our meeting on December 11<sup>th</sup>. If you miss any of these two meetings, you will lose half of your attendance and participation points.

**A Note about the Reading Assignments:** Finishing a book in two weeks may seem too much reading for some of you. Please do not let this intimidate you; after all, the purpose of this class is not to torment you with heavy reading loads, but to introduce some of the interesting topics pertaining to the Ottoman Empire. We will spend a great deal in understanding and assessing the theses, framework, and methodology of these books by reading the introduction and the conclusion of each book very closely. A better understanding of these will help us understand the remaining of the book. It is very important to avoid getting lost in the jungle of names and dates. Our primary goal is not memorizing the names of important characters in the near history of, for example, Aintab in Anatolia (the region that Leslie Peirce analyzes in her lengthy book). Instead, we need to discuss the accuracy of Peirce's methodology in approaching judicial procedure and gender roles in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire. If you need help with the assigned books, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

**Plagiarism Policy:** Plagiarism, that is, appropriating someone else's ideas or words and using them as your own, will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is cheating. University policies designate it as a violation of the Student Discipline Code and plagiarism will result in automatic failure of this course and possible expulsion from the university.

### **Academic Integrity (Bloomsburg University Policy and Procedures 3512)**

"Academic integrity refers to the adherence to agreed upon moral and ethical principles when engaging in academic or scholarly pursuits. The university's academic integrity is part of an effort to nurture a community where trust, honesty and personal integrity guide all of our dealings with one another. Personal integrity is vital to our pursuit of educating and becoming educated. This student academic integrity policy is only part of, not the entirety of, efforts to foster a community of trust; trust is built first on our actions toward each other. The responsibility to be honest, fair, and forthright with others is a responsibility that each member of the Bloomsburg University community must accept.

"The following types of behaviors are examples of academic dishonest. This list is not, and cannot be exhaustive. Students who are unsure if an act is academically dishonest have a duty to consult their professor before engaging in the act."

Academic dishonesty includes: cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, misrepresenting circumstances, impersonation, obtaining an unfair advantage, aiding and abetting of academic dishonesty, falsification of records and official documents, and unauthorized access to computerized academic or administrative records or systems. For detailed definitions of these examples of academic dishonest, consult Bloomsburg University's Academic Integrity Policy (PRP 3512) at [www.bloomu.edu/about/govern/pol.3512.htm](http://www.bloomu.edu/about/govern/pol.3512.htm).

#### **Statement on classroom behavior:**

**Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated.** Such behaviors are defined as: 1) verbal, physical or psychological threats, harassment, and physical violence; 2) refusal to comply with reasonable directions from the instructor; 3) repeatedly arriving after class has begun or leaving class early; 4) distractive talking, including speaking out of turn or monopolizing discussions; 5) use of any electronic device not related to class during the class period; 6) use of an electronic device related to class but in a manner that restricts discussion/learning; 7) use of alcohol, tobacco products, or controlled substances. **If any such behaviors take place in class, the disruptive**

**student will be asked to leave and not allowed to return until the matter is adjudicated through the Office of Student Standards**

**Books Assigned:**

- Barkey, Karen. *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994.
- Goffman, Daniel. *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Kafadar, Cemal. *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Murphey, Rhoads. *Ottoman Warfare, 1500-1700*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1999.
- Peirce, Leslie. *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Peirce, Leslie. *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

---

**THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH SUFFICIENT NOTICE IF NEED BE. FOR AN  
UPDATED VERSION, ALWAYS REFER TO MY WEBSITE NOTED ABOVE.**

---

## Class Schedule:

### **Weeks 1 and 2: Aug. 26 & 28; Sep. 2 & 4**

Introduction to Course  
Concepts of analysis  
The politics of creation myths

**Readings:** Kafadar, Cemal. *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*.

### **Weeks 3 and 4: Sep. 9 & 11; Sep. 16 & 18**

Locating the Empire in a broader context

**Readings:** Goffman, Daniel. *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*

---

Schedule meetings for Week 5

---

### **Weeks 5 and 6: Sep. 23 & 25; Sep. 30 & Oct. 2**

How to rule an Empire  
Ottoman state centralization

**Readings:** Barkey, Karen. *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*

### **Weeks 7, and 8: Oct. 7 & 9; Oct. 14 & 16**

Military might?

**Readings:** Murphey, Rhoads. *Ottoman Warfare, 1500-1700*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1999.

---

Schedule meetings for Week 9

---

### **Weeks 9 and 10: Oct. 21 & 23; Oct. 28 & 30**

Understanding the epicenter of power

**Readings:** Peirce, Leslie. *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*

### **Weeks 11 and 12: Nov. 4 & 6; Nov. 11 & 13**

Local courts, gender and representation

**Readings:** Peirce, Leslie. *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab*.

---

Week 11: Schedule meetings for Week 12

---

### **Weeks 13 and 14: NO MEETINGS-WORK ON YOUR FINAL PAPERS**

---

THE CLASS WILL NOT MEET ON DEC. 2<sup>ND</sup>

---

### **Weeks 15 and 16: Dec. 4; Dec. 11**

Presentation of final papers.