

HIST335/535

The Gunpowder Empires of the Islamic World, 1450-1796

Instructor: Dr. Ferenc Péter Csirkés (FASS 2033)

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Time and venue: online, Monday 8:40-10:30, Tuesday 12:40-13:30

The course focuses on the so-called gunpowder empires of the Islamic world of the early modern era, i.e. the Ottoman Empire, Mughal India, and Safavid Iran. As part of a universal trend, it was this age when much of the current territorial, confessional, political, social and cultural boundaries dividing the Islamic world were set up. After an introduction, in weeks 3-7 we will focus on the political and religious history of these polities, while weeks 8-14 will be dedicated to comparing them with each other from various aspects, including administration, the military, economy, trade, the role of and attitude to minorities, as well as various facets of culture. The last class revisits these issues by way of a critique of decline narratives related to the Islamic World.

By the end of the course, students will be aware of most of the larger trends in the history of the early modern Islamic world and of their possible connections with various global processes. They will also learn about problems of sources and methodology in research, as well as theoretical issues arising from Orientalist and nationalist narratives about the subject. Our approach will be complex and comprehensive, encompassing political, social, religious and cultural history, as well as art history, which we will discuss not only as comparative but also as connected phenomena. Recurrent issues to be addressed during the course will include but be not limited to notions of authority and the agency of various individuals and social or ethnic groups in transmitting ideas, objects, commodities, etc. between larger political and cultural entities in the Islamic world during the period under discussion. We will rely on both secondary and primary sources, the latter including not only narrative sources but also the arts and material culture. Graduate as well as undergraduate students interested in the Islamic world and South Asia as well as early modern world history are all welcome to take the course. Knowledge of primary research languages is welcome but not a requirement.

Class set-up: lecture and discussion of weekly readings.

Evaluation: midterm (50%) and final (50%) exam, both mandatory. Both exams have two parts: the first part will be a quick oral quiz, recorded, as per YÖK regulations. Students have to answer 5 questions based on a list of terms that will be posted. They need to answer at least 3 correctly in order to be eligible to take the second part of the exam. The second part has a take-home format; at a prearranged time, students receive via email a question regarding the readings and lectures; undergraduates have 2.5 hours, graduates have 2 hours to write and email the instructor a discursive essay addressing the question with the use of the primary readings as evidence for their arguments. They are allowed to use their lecture notes and scholarly sources; of course, in the latter case, they are required to use proper academic conduct and cite it. Graduate students taking the course as HIST 535 have additional weekly readings and are also required to submit a research paper which should be developed in conversation with the instructor, and the subject of which has to be confirmed by week 7 at the latest. However, they are advised to start working on it as soon as possible. As the majority of the graduate students are aspiring Ottomanists and in order that they benefit as much as possible from the course, the subject of their research paper may involve the Ottoman Empire but cannot have it as its focus. It has to focus on either of the two other regions we discuss in class and may bring in the Ottomans for the sake of comparison.

NB: The present syllabus is subject to change and adjustment as the course progresses! It is *your* responsibility to be up to date about the changes; you will be informed about them in due time.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the course, students will

- acquire broad familiarity with the main events, concepts, processes of early modern Islamic history with a global perspective
- demonstrate the use of principles to analyze human societies
- recognize and reflect on the contingency of analytical frameworks concerning human societies
- demonstrate the ability to develop research methods and questions, and start using coherent analytical frameworks to broach historical phenomena through primary and secondary sources

Attendance policy

Attendance is mandatory. Absence without a documented medical or other well-founded *and* documented reason shall result in a half grade decrease. Two unfounded absences shall result in exclusion from the course. Attendance shall be taken on a regular basis.

Advice regarding conduct during class

Take notes! Most importantly, taking notes by the hand, and making notes in printouts, underlining, etc. already sets you on the learning process by facilitating a deeper engagement with the assigned texts. Because of the global pandemic, this is an online class, a situation that requires both the students and the instructor to make adjustments in how to proceed.

Both the primary and the secondary readings are mandatory; neglect either and you will not be able to successfully perform in the course. While the primary readings give you a narrative, theoretical frameworks, and historical concepts, during the exam, you will have to base your arguments on the evidence contained in the primary sources.

I will try to make the class interactive, especially the shorter part on Tuesday, which will be dedicated to the close reading and analysis of the primary readings. The more you engage with the texts and the discussion, the better you will understand the complexity of the material and the better I can see the trajectory of your interests in what is going on.

UNIT I

Week 1: Introduction: Themes, periodization, geography

HIST335: Woods, John E. *The Aqquyunlu. Clan, Confederation, Empire* (Revised and expanded ed.). Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1999, pp. 1-23

HIST535: Readings: Hodgson, Marshall G.S. *The Venture of Islam. Conscience and History in a World Civilization*. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1974, vol. 3, pp. 1-134.

Week 2: The nomadic matrix and imperial antecedents in the post-Mongol period

HIST335: Dale, Stephen F. *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 1-47; Parker, Charles H. *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 1-11. Ashiqpashazade, "The reign of Osman Ghazi." (transl. Robert Dankoff).

HIST535: Sneath, David. *The Headless State: Aristocratic Orders, Kinship Society and Misrepresentations of Nomadic inner Asia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007, pp. 1-64, 189-204.

UNIT II

Week 3: Political history. The Ottomans: the road from the beginning to the "glorious 16th century"

HIST335: Dale, pp. 48-62; Lowry, Heath. "The Debate to Date." In: *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*. New York: SUNY Press, 2003, pp. 5-13.

HIST535: Imber, Colin. *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650. The Structure of Power*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, pp. 1-86.

Week 4: Political history. The Ottoman Empire at Its Peak

HIST335: Streusand, Douglas E. *Islamic Gunpowder Empires: Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2011, 135-150. Ross, Denison E. "The Early Years of Shāh Ismā'īl, Founder of the Ṣafavī Dynasty." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland* 1896, pp. 254-264, 283-307, 326-340; Khafipour, 194-203, 228-239.

HIST535: Roemer, Hans Robert. "The Safavid Period." In: *Cambridge History of Iran, The Timurid and Safavid Periods*. Ed. Peter Jackson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 189-232.

Week 5: Political history. The Persianate World in the Post-Mongol Age; The Safavids: dervish order to empire The Safavid Empire at its Peak; Islam in India before the Mughals

HIST335: Streusand, 150-158; Khafipour, 179-192; Iskandar Beg Monshi, "The Portrait of Shah Abbas."

HIST535: Roemer, 232-350.

Week 6: Political history. The Mughals: Central Asian collapse to empire in India

HIST335: *Baburnama* (selections); Abu al-Fazl, *Akbarnama* (selections).

HIST535: Richards, John F. *The Mughal Empire*. Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 1-28, 94-185.

Week 7: Religion: "Heterodoxy" and Orthodoxy

HIST335: Babayan, Kathryn. "The Safavid Synthesis: From Qizilbash Islam to Imamite Shi'ism." *Iranian Studies* 27 (1994), pp. 135-161; Dressler, Marcus. "Inventing Orthodoxy: Competing Claims for Authority and Legitimacy in the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict." In: Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (eds.). *Legitimizing the Order*. Leiden: Brill, 2005, pp. 151-173; Wink, André. *Akbar*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2009, pp. 86-107.

HIST535: Minorsky, Vladimir. "The Poetry of Shāh Ismā'īl I." *BSOAS* 10:4 (1942), pp. 1042a-1053a.

UNIT III

Week 8: Mid-term test. Administration

HIST335: Ibn Hasan. *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1970. 304-44; Inalcik, Halil. *The Ottoman Empire. The Classical Age 1300-1600*. London: Phoenix, 2000, pp. 89-118; Savory, Roger M. "The Safavid Administrative System." In: *Cambridge History of Iran, The Timurid and Safavid Periods*. Ed. Peter Jackson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 351-372.

Week 9: Military and Social Change

HIST335: Matthee, Rudi. "Unwalled Cities and Restless Nomads. Firearms and Artillery in Safavid Iran." In: *Safavid Persia. The History and Politics of an Islamic Society*. Ed. Charles Melville. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 1996, pp. 389-416; Ágoston, Gábor. "Habsburgs and Ottomans: Defense, Military Change and Shifts in Power." *The Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 22.1 (1998), pp. 126-141.

HIST535: Gommans, Jos J.L. *Mughal Warfare: Indian Frontiers and Highroads to Empire, 1500-1700*. London; New York: Routledge, 2002, pp. 1-39.

Week 10: Economy and Trade

HIST335: Pamuk, Şevket. "The Price Revolution in the Ottoman Empire Reconsidered." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33 (2001), pp. 69-89; Matthee, Rudi. "The Safavid Economy as Part of the World Economy." In: *Iran and the World in the Safavid Age*. Ed. Willem Floor and Edmun Herzig. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012, pp. 31-47; Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, pp. 79-93, 185-204.

Week 11: The “other”: Non-Muslim Minorities and Contacts with the West

HIST335: Moreen, V.B. “The Status of Religious Minorities in Safavid Iran 1617-61,” *JNES* 40, 1981, pp. 119-34; Matthee, Rudi. “Between Aloofness and Fascination: Safavid Views of the West.” *Iranian Studies* 31 (1998), pp. 219-246; Stanfield-Johnson, Rosemary. “Sunni Survival in Safavid Iran: Anti-Sunni Activities during the Reign of Tahmasp I.” *Iranian Studies*, 27/1-4 (1994), pp. 123-133.

HIST 535: Matthee, Rudi. “Introduction.” In: *The Spanish Monarchy and Safavid Persia in the Early Modern Period: Politics, War and Religion*. Ed. García Hernán, Enrique, Rudi Matthee, and José Cutillas Ferrer. Valencia: Albatros, 2016, 17-28.

Week 12: Legitimacy and Historiography

HIST335: Fleischer, Cornell H. *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire. The Historian Mustafa Âli*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 235-310.

HIST535: Quinn, Sholeh and Melville, Charles. “Safavid Historiography.” In: *Persian Historiography*. Ed. Charles Melville. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012, pp. 209-257.

Week 13: Legitimacy and the Arts

HIST335: Dale, 134-176; Syed, Muhammad Aslam. “How could Urdu be the Envy of Persian (rashk-i-Fārsī)! The Role of Persian in South Asian Culture and Literature.” In: *Literacy in the Persianate World. Writing and the Social Order*. Ed. Spooner, Brian and Hanaway, William L. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archeology and Anthropology, 2012, pp. 279-310; Andrews, Walter G. and Kalpakli, Mehmet. *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the beloved in early-modern Ottoman and European culture and society*. Durham [N.C.]: Duke University Press, 2005, pp. 1-32.

HIST535: Yarshater, Ehsan. “Safavid Literature: Progress or Decline.” *Iranian Studies* 7 (1974): *Studies on Isfahan, part I*, pp. 217-270; Necipoğlu, Gülru. “A Kanun for the State, a Canon for the Arts: The Classical Synthesis in Ottoman Art and Architecture during the Age of Süleyman.” In: *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps, Actes du Colloque de Paris Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, 7-10 mars 1990*. Ed. Gilles Veinstein. Paris: Documentation française, 1992, pp. 195–216; Necipoğlu, Gülru. “The Süleymaniye Complex in Istanbul: an Interpretation.” *Muqarnas* 3 (1985), pp. 92-117; Blair, Sheila S. “The Development of the Illustrated Book in Iran.” *Muqarnas* 10 (1993), pp. 266-294.

Week 14: Conclusions: Decline or reorientation?

HIST335: Matthee, Rudi. *Persia in Crisis. Safavid Decline and the Fall of Isfahan*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012, pp. 1-26, 243-256; Kafadar, Cemal. “The Question of Ottoman Decline.” *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 4:1-2 (1997-98), pp. 30-75; Stein, Burton. “Eighteenth Century India: Another View.” In: *The Eighteenth Century in Indian History*. Ed. P.J. Marshall. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 62-89.

HIST535: Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, pp. 253-281.

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Andrews, Walter G. and Kalpakli, Mehmet. *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the beloved in early-modern Ottoman and European culture and society*. Durham [N.C.]: Duke University Press, 2005.

Cambridge History of Iran, The Timurid and Safavid Periods. Ed. Peter Jackson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Chatterjee, Kumkum. *The Cultures of History in Early Modern India: Persianization and Mughal Culture in Bengal*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Dale, Stephen F. *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Fleischer, Cornell H. *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire. The Historian Mustafa Âli*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986.

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- Khafipour, Hani. *The Empires of the Near East and India: Source Studies of the Safavid, Ottoman, and Mughal Literate Communities*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2019.
- Literacy in the Persianate World. Writing and the Social Order*. Ed. Spooner, Brian and Hanaway, William L. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archeology and Anthropology, 2012.
- Matthee, Rudi. "The Safavid Economy as Part of the World Economy." In: *Iran and the World in the Safavid Age*. Ed. Willem Floor and Edmun Herzig. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012.
- Matthee, Rudi. *Persia in Crisis. Safavid Decline and the Fall of Isfahan*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012.
- Moin. Azfar A. *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
- Necipoglu, Gülru. "A Kanun for the State, a Canon for the Arts: The Classical Synthesis in Ottoman Art and Architecture during the Age of Süleyman." In: *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps, Actes du Colloque de Paris Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, 7-10 mars 1990*. Ed. Gilles Veinstein. Paris: Documentation française, 1992, pp. 195–216.
- Parker, Charles H. *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Quinn, Sholeh and Melville, Charles. "Safavid Historiography." In: *Persian Historiography*. Ed. Charles Melville. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012.
- Richards, John F. *The Mughal Empire*. Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Sneath, David. *The Headless State: Aristocratic Orders, Kinship Society and Misrepresentations of Nomadic inner Asia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.
- Streusand, Douglas E. *Islamic Gunpowder Empires: Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2011.
- Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. *Explorations in Connected History*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005.