What did early modern Ottomans dream about? How did they view the past of their cities like Istanbul? What did they discuss at garden gatherings, coffee houses and Sufi lodges? In this course, we will explore recent approaches to the cultural history of the early modern world to discuss social dynamics of producing and consuming `imaginary realms` in the Ottoman empire from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Topics include readers, writers and production of knowledge; poetry, history and political uses of remembrance; dreams, fortunetelling and establishment of social networks. We will also work closely with Ottoman sources in translation and Ottoman architecture through class trips to historical sites.

Course Requirements
Preparation for each class and participation actively in the discussions are vital responsibilities of each class member. For each week’s readings, you are required to bring 3 questions and a selected quotation to be discussed. At least once throughout the semester you will also make a 15 minute presentation of the week’s readings and lead the discussion in class. The aim of this presentation is not to provide a summary of your readings but to present a critical reflection focusing what you found interesting and why. These questions, presentations as well as your participation count 15% of the final course grade.

You will write 5 short position papers (2 double pages) on the weekly readings and submit them at class on Tuesdays throughout the semester. These short papers should entail not a summary of readings, but your critical reflection on them. You will lose 10% of your grade for late papers submitted without a valid medical excuse. Papers submitted later than a week will not be accepted. Short papers count 30% of the final course grade.

You will submit a response paper (4 pages double spaced for undergraduate students, 6 pages double spaced for graduate students) about one recommended talk you will attend during the semester. This response paper counts for 15% of your final course grade.

Your final paper is a book review or review essay about a recent publication about early modern Ottoman cultural history. The papers are expected to be about 8 pages double spaced for undergraduates (book review) and about 20 pages double spaced for graduate students (review essay on three books). You have to submit both a hard and an electronic copy through “Turn-it-in”. This final paper counts for 40% of your final grade.

The syllabus is subject to change.

Readings in the course pack are electronically available at: http://libunix.ku.edu.tr search Reserves by Course under HIST 460. You could also purchase a reader in hardcopy from the photocopy center.
Recommended Readings and Surveys

Suraiya N. Faroqhi and Kate Fleet, The Cambridge History of Turkey, vol 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2013. [Please check the excellent articles on “the culture of the arts” by Hagen, Kafecioğlu and Kuru in this very recent publication!]


Gülru Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, Architectural Culture in the Age of Sinan, (Hong Kong: 2005).


Part I:
Intellectual Life and Urban Culture

Week 1 (3 Feb)  Introduction

Carlo Ginzburg, The Cheese and the Worms The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller, (Baltimore: 1992), 1-17, 30-33 & 41-47.

Cemal Kafadar, Kim Var İmiş Biz Burada Yoğ İken, Dört Osmanlı: Yeniçeri, Tüccar, Derviş ve Hatun, (İstanbul: 2009), 13-29.


Week 2 &3 (10 &17 Feb)  Istanbul: A City of Poets, Scholars and Sufis


Week 4&5 (26 Feb &2 March)  Readers and their Books


Please Note:
We will have the fourth week’s lectures at the Süleymaniye Manuscript Library. February 26th, Time to be announced.

Part II
Writing and the Politics of Remembrance

Week 6 (9 March) History-Writing: a Barber, a Bureaucrat, a Mapmaker, and their Histories

Week 7 (16 March) Travel Writing: Istanbulites, Visitors and their City
Selections from the works of Evliya Çelebi, Eremya Çelebi, İnciciyan and Hohanvesyan.

Week 8 (23 March) Illustrated Manuscripts: Eunuchs and their Patronage
Emine Fetcâci, Picturing History at the Ottoman Court, (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis: 2013); 2-23, 149-189, 239-267, 299-300.

Part III
Between This World and the Hereafter

Week 9 (25 March) Sufism and Spiritual Pursuits


Please note:
This week’s class will take place at Galata Mevlevihanesi at Tünel on March 25th.
Time to be announced.

Week 10 (6 April) Dreams and the Mirror of the Hidden


Cemal Kafadar, “Mütereddit Bir Mutasavvuf: Üsküplü Asiye Hatun’un Rüya Defteri, 1641-1643” in Kim Var İmiş Biz Burada Yoğ Iken, (İstanbul: 2009), 123-191. [Translations of the selected letters to be distributed before class]

Özlem Felek, “(Re)creating Image and Identity: Dreams and Visions as a Means of Murad III’s Self-Fashioning” in Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies, Özgen Felek and Alexander Kynsh eds. (Albany: State University of New York, 2012),249-273. [Selections of Murad III’s letters will be distributed in class.]

Final paper proposals due in class.

Spring Break

Week 11 (20 April) Fortune-Telling and the Book of Omens


Week 12 (29 April) Apparitions and the Place of the Dead

Please Note:
This week’s class will take place at Eyüp, the city of the dead on May 6th.
Time to be announced.

Week 13 (May 4th) Connected Cultural Histories?: Ottomans and the Early Modern World

Nishat Manar, ‘Sufis as Poets, Musicians, and Connoisseurs of Music And Scholars Of Comparative Religion – 13th- 17th Century’, in *The Islamic Path- Sufism, Politics And Society in India*. Ed. S.Z.H.Jafri & Helmut Reifeld, (Delhi, 2006.)

**Guest Lecturer, Prof. Nishat Manzar, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

Week 14 (May 11th) Review and Concluding Remarks
Response Paper and Final Papers due last day of class.
Koç University Statement on Academic Honesty with Emphasis on Plagiarism

Koç University expects all its students to perform course-related activities in accordance with the rules set forth in the Student Code of Conduct (http://vpaa.ku.edu.tr/academic/student-code-of-conduct). Actions considered as academic dishonesty at Koç University include but are not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and impersonating. This statement’s goal is to draw attention to cheating and plagiarism related actions deemed unacceptable within the context of Student Code of Conduct:

All individual assignments must be completed by the student himself/herself, and all team assignments must be completed by the members of the team, without the aid of other individuals. If a team member does not contribute to the written documents or participate in the activities of the team, his/her name should not appear on the work submitted for evaluation.

Plagiarism is defined as ‘borrowing or using someone else’s written statements or ideas without giving written acknowledgement to the author’. Students are encouraged to conduct research beyond the course material, but they must not use any documents prepared by current or previous students, or notes prepared by instructors at Koç University or other universities without properly citing the source. Furthermore, students are expected to adhere to the Classroom Code of Conduct (http://vpaa.ku.edu.tr/academic/classroom-code-of-conduct) and to refrain from all forms of unacceptable behavior during lectures. Failure to adhere to expected behavior may result in disciplinary action.

There are two kinds of plagiarism: Intentional and accidental. Intentional plagiarism (Example: Using a classmate’s homework as one’s own because the student does not want to spend time working on that homework) is considered intellectual theft, and there is no need to emphasize the wrongfulness of this act. Accidental plagiarism, on the other hand, may be considered as a ‘more acceptable’ form of plagiarism by some students, which is certainly not how it is perceived by the University administration and faculty. The student is responsible from properly citing a source if he/she is making use of another person’s work. For an example on accidental plagiarism, please refer to the document titled “An Example on Accidental Plagiarism”.

If you are unsure whether the action you will take would be a violation of Koç University’s Student Code of Conduct, please consult with your instructor before taking that action.

An Example on Accidental Plagiarism

This example is taken from a document prepared by the City University of New York. The following text is taken from Elaine Tyler May’s ‘Myths and Realities of the American Family’: “Because women’s wages often continue to reflect the fiction that men earn the family wage, single mothers rarely earn enough to support themselves and their children adequately. And because work is still organized around the assumption that mothers stay home with children, even though few mothers can afford to do so, child-care facilities in the United States remain woefully inadequate.”

Below, there is an excerpt from a student’s homework, who made use of May’s original text: “As Elaine Tyler May points out, “women’s wages often continue to reflect the fiction that men earn the family wage” (588). Thus many single mothers cannot support themselves and their children adequately. Furthermore, since work is based on the assumption that mothers stay home with children, facilities for day care in this country are still “woefully inadequate.” (May 589)”.

You may think that there is no plagiarism here since the student is citing the original author. However, this is an instance of accidental plagiarism. Although the student cites May and uses quotation marks occasionally, the rest of the sentences, more specifically the following section: “Thus many single mothers cannot support themselves and their children adequately. Furthermore, since work is based on the assumption that mothers stay home with children, facilities for day care in this country are still “woefully inadequate.” (May 589)” almost exactly duplicates May’s original language. So, in order to avoid plagiarism, the student either had to use quotation marks for the rest of the sentences as well, or he/she had to paraphrase May’s ideas by using not only his/her own words, but his/her own original ideas as well. You should keep in mind that accidental plagiarism often occurs when the student does not really understand the original text but still tries to make use of it. Understanding the original text and understanding why you agree or disagree with the ideas proposed in that text is crucial both for avoiding plagiarism and for your intellectual development.