

Such was their image of power...to this day Mughal, usually spelled as Mogul, remains a metaphor for a powerful man.

Francis Robinson

The Mughal Emperors: And the Islamic Dynasties of India, Iran, and Central Asia, 113

“Iṣfahān niṣf-i jahān” (Isfahan is Half the World)

Popular Quote

*Gar firdaus bar rū-e zamīn ast, Hameen ast-o hameen ast-o hameen ast”
(If there is a paradise on earth, it is this, it is this, it is this!)*

Poet-Musician Amir Khusro (d.1325)

The city has served as the site of power, its spaces made coherent and hold in the image of man himself. The city has also served as the space in which these master images have cracked a part. The city brings together people who are different, it intensifies the complexity of social life, it presents people to each other as strangers. All these aspects of urban experience - difference, complexity, strangeness- afford resistance to domination. This craggy and difficult urban geography makes a particular moral promise. It can serve as a home for those who have accepted themselves as exiles from the Garden.

Richard Sennett

Flesh & Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization

ISLAMIC CITY

Windows to Muslim History, Society and Culture

REL 278 (Fall 2018) T & TH 12:15-1:30 p.m. (Sloan 100)

WHAT IS IT ABOUT? (Previously Course Description):

There are various ways of studying a culture, civilization or a religious tradition. One can choose the window of history (thus studying its historical origins and evolution), read the various texts its inhabitants has produced, listen to the stories that were deemed important by its inhabitants, listen (or/and speak) to the inhabitants OR approach them “spatially”, i.e., by paying close attention to the spaces that they created. It is the latter that we will do this term. Our explorations seek to imagine, discover and share with one another a bird's eye view of premodern Muslim spaces, those created within the boundaries of the three biggest empires in human history, the Ottomans, the Safavids and the Mughals. We will seek to understand Islamic societies and its inhabitants “the Muslims” by painting a picture/image of a major "Islamic City"

with its religious, cultural, social, political, and economic life as experienced within the imperial boundaries of these three empires. Led by a TLA-team (T=Technology; L=Library; A=Academic) you are invited to explorations of traditional Islamic civilization in which you will ‘choose’, ‘discover’, ‘imagine’ and ‘present’ *an Islamic city* and its political, religious, social, economic and cultural life.

Instructors:

James Sponsel (Library), Brian Little (T&I) & Syed Rizwan Zamir (Religious Studies)

Contact:

- ◇ Mr. Sponsel, In Person ([jasponsel@davidson.edu](mailto:jasponsel@ davidson.edu));
- ◇ Mr. Little, In Person (Cham B256); #2429; brlittle@davidson.edu
- ◇ Mr. Zamir: In Person (EU Hall 104); #2950; rizamir@davidson.edu

Meeting Hours:

- ◇ Mr. Little: 8:30-12:30 & 1:30-5:00
- ◇ Mr. Sponsel: In Person (LIB 1004); By Appointment--9-12:30; 1:30-5 M-F and Tues. 7-9pm (Schedule appointments): <https://davidson.libcal.com/appointment/24140>
- ◇ Mr. Zamir: Thurs & Fri 2:00-3:30 (Schedule appointments <https://bit.ly/2vGoLYD>)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

DLT TEAM:

It is expected that by the end of the class, the students will hopefully have:

1. Learned about three of the biggest Muslim empires Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals of the pre-modern world and their religious, political, economic, cultural and social life;
2. Learned about Islam and Muslims through the city-spaces Muslims created in a period of their high political and cultural glory;
3. Gained appreciation of spaces (and city-space in particular) as among the various ‘key windows’ to understanding a culture and civilization and its underlying worldview;
4. Experimented in ‘plotting’ the story of a cultural world other than one’s own;
5. Learned how to “look and find” (research) information on a phenomena;
6. Learned how to “navigate and bring together” (synthesize) what one sees and finds
7. Creatively imagined and visualized one’s discoveries;
8. Shared with the intended audience the synthesis of discoveries in ways that are accessible, reliable, thoughtful and visually compelling;

9. Thoughtfully planned how to best manage your own intellectual property
10. Reflected on the role of imagination in looking and finding, navigating and bringing together and sharing one’s findings;

INSTRUCTEES, PARTICIPANTS, CONTRIBUTORS, COLLABORATORS (YOURS?):

TEXT-GUIDES ON THE JOURNEY:

- 1) *The Empire of the Great Mughals: History, Art and Culture* 2nd Edition by Annemarie Schimmel (Author) <https://amzn.to/2KknNux>
- 2) *Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire (Library of Middle East History)* by Andrew J. Newman (Author) <https://amzn.to/2NdNlrd>
- 3) *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922 (New Approaches to European History)* 2nd Edition by Donald Quataert (Author) <https://amzn.to/2tiknr2>

Text-Guides for Basic Background in Islam:

Note: Prior knowledge of Islam and Muslim civilization is not expected or assumed. For your own comfort, you may pick ONE of the introductory books listed on Veils & Webs.
 {Veils & Webs (rizwanzamir.net) > Hover Over Dear Strangers > Click “Resources” }

INTELLECTUAL PRACTICES (Previously Course Assignments):

Midterm Review (SRZ)	30%
History of Your City (1500-words), Annotated Bibliography & Presentation.)	13%
Presentations on City-Spaces (6% each)	12%
Guided Tour	25%
Showcasing	10%
Contributions/Process/Efforts/Struggles/Journey/Quality	10%

Disabilities: A student who requires accommodation for a documented disability of any type should see the instructor immediately to discuss modifications to course requirements. “Davidson College values the diversity of its community and is an equal access institution that admits otherwise qualified applicants without regard to disability. The college seeks to

accommodate requests for accommodations related to disability that are determined to be reasonable and do not compromise the integrity of a program or curriculum. To make such a request or to begin a conversation about a possible request, please contact Beth Bleil, Director of Academic Access and Disability Resources, in the Center for Teaching and Learning by visiting her office in the E.H. Little Library, by emailing her at bebleil@davidson.edu, or by calling 704-894-2129. It is best to submit accommodation requests within the drop/add period; however, requests can be made at any time in the semester. Please keep in mind that accommodations are not retroactive.”

Honor and Conscience: The College expects students to fully abide by the Honor Code. The instructor wonders about the convergence between the two.

Additional Resources & Support: There are numerous resources available to help you through the course. Please see the section entitled “Resources” under the “Dear Strangers” tab from Veils & Webs (rizwanzamir.net).

THE MAP (THE FIVE STAGES)

Week 1 (Aug 20-24): Introduction to the Course & the Stakes in the Study

Opening (The First Day):

- **Watch (in class):** “What Makes an Islamic City?” [here](#)

Preparation for Thursday

- **Watch:** “Man and Nature” *The Traditional World of Islam* (R) (Part 3) <https://bit.ly/2wh1agQ>
- *An Ottoman Traveller*, 1-8
- REVIEW:
 - "Isfahan Is Half The World" <https://bit.ly/2yXVYD9>
 - “6 things you didn’t know about the Ottoman Empire” in [BBC History Magazine](#)
 - “Mughal Dynasties” by Francis Robinson in [History Today](#)
 - “Taj Mahal: Memorial of Love” [PBS Treasures of the World](#)

STAGE I: OVERVIEW OF THE THREE EMPIRES

Week 2 (Aug 27-31): THE OTTOMANS I

Preparation for Tuesday

- **Watch:** *Islam: The Empire of Faith* (Part III) <https://bit.ly/2KjU58V>
 - Optional, but may be worth it : [The Ottoman Empire Rises](#); [The Ottoman Empire](#) (watch as much or as little as you deem needed)
- *The Ottoman Empire*, 13-53 &

Preparation for Thursday

- *The Ottoman Empire*, 75-110

Week 3 (Sept. 3-7): THE OTTOMANS II

Preparation for Tuesday

- *The Ottoman Empire*, 111-174
- Robert Hillenbrand, “The Ottomans”, in *Islamic Art and Architecture* (pdf)

Preparation for Thursday

- Suraiya Faroqi, *Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in Ottoman Empire* (selections)
- Yusuf Ibish, “Traditional Guilds in the Ottoman Empire” (pdf)
- Yusuf Ibish, “Elias Qudsi's sketch of the guilds of Damascus in the nineteenth century” (pdf)

Week 4 (Sept. 10-14): THE SAFAVIDS I

Preparation for Tuesday

- **Watch:** *Safavid Dynasty of Persia* (available through [e-library](#))
- *The Safavid Iran*, 13-80;

Preparation for Thursday

- *The Safavid Iran*, 81-103; **MORE TBA**

Week 5 (Sept. 17-21): THE SAFAVIDS II

Preparation for Tuesday

- Robert Hillenbrand, “The Safavids”, in *Islamic Art and Architecture* (pdf)
- “Isfahan: The Public and Private Worlds of Shah Abbas” in *Shah Abbas: The Remaking of Iran* (pdf)

Preparation for Thursday **TBA**

Week 6 (Sept. 24-28): THE MUGHALS I

Preparation for Tuesday

- **Watch:** *The Early Mughal Empire* (There are actually 4 total episodes here on the Mughals and this is just the first one, but scroll down on the same link to see the others. Episodes 19-22. Please try to watch all 4, or if you cannot, then at least one in addition to this [one](#)).
- *Empire of the Great Mughals*, 15-80

Preparation for Thursday

- *Empire of the Great Mughals*, 81-141

Week 7 (Oct 1-5): THE MUGHALS II & THE THREE EMPIRES TOGETHER & JUXTAPOSED

Preparation for Tuesday

- *Empire of the Great Mughals*, 263-302
- “Shiism and the Muharram Processions” in *The Art and Architecture of Twelver Shi’ism* (p. 121-138)

Preparation for Thursday – Networks Among the Three Empires and Comparison Among Them

- Francis Robinson, “Ottomans-Safavids-Mughals: Shared Knowledge and Connective Systems”
- Stephen Dale, “The Islamic World in the Era of European Expansion, 1500-1800” (PDF)

FALL BREAK

Fri, Oct 5 (4:30 p.m.) - Wed, Oct. 10 (8:30 a.m.)

Week 8 (Oct. 11): REVIEW

THURSDAY (OCT 11): REVIEWING THE THREE EMPIRES

(Review will cover texts, class lectures/discussions.)

STAGE II: PREPARING FOR EXPLORATIONS: LEARNING THE TOOLS & LEARNING THE HISTORY OF YOUR CITY

Week 9 (Oct. 15-19): WORKSHOPS

TUESDAY: WORKSHOP ON DIGITAL IMAGINING, TOOLS & THE PROCESS
(Mr. Brian Little will lead; location will be announced)
(BY NOW GROUPS SHOULD HAVE DECIDED ON THE CITY)

THURSDAY: WORKSHOP ON LIBRARY RESEARCH
(Mr. James Sponsel will lead; location will be announced)

Week 10 (Oct. 22-26): WORKSHOP

TUESDAY: MORE WORKSHOPPING WITH JS & BL

- Entries on “Isfahan, Istanbul & Delhi” from
 - *Historic Cities of the Islamic World* (Library e-book)

THURSDAY: COLLABORATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY, 3/4-PAGE OUTLINE AND PRESENTATION ON THE
HISTORY OF YOUR CHOSEN/ASSIGNED CITY (OCT 26)

(Your presentation should make explicit references to texts from which you have obtained the information you share.)

STAGE III: WINDOWS 'TO' AND 'FROM' ISLAMIC CITY-SPACES

Week 11 (Oct. 29-Nov. 2):

Preparation for Tuesday

- PRESENTING (& DISCUSSING) CITY SPACES

Preparation for Thursday

- PRESENTATING (& DISCUSSING) CITY SPACES

Week 12 (Nov. 5-9):

Preparation for Tuesday

- PRESENTING (& DISCUSSING) CITY SPACES

Preparation for Thursday

- PRESENTATING (& DISCUSSING) CITY SPACES

STAGE IV: GUIDED TOURS TO TRADITIONAL ISLAMIC CITIES

WEEK 13 & 14: Interview Meeting with DLT team.

Week 13 (Nov. 12-16): Guided Tours to Islamic Cities

Preparation for Tuesday

- GUIDED TOURS

Preparation for Thursday

- GUIDED TOURS

Week 14 (Nov. 20): NO CLASS MEETING

FINAL STAGE (V): SYNTHESSES, CONCLUSIONS, REFLECTIONS

1. Readings for this section of the course will be reevaluated in light of the evolution of our conversation thus far)
2. The process of preparing the Virtual City Tours and Accompanying text for collection and sharing/showcasing your discoveries begin at this point. James Sponsel and Brian Little will lead the way.

THANKSGIVING: Tues. Nov 20 @ 4:30 pm- Monday Nov. 26 @ 8:30am*

Week 15 (Nov. 26-30): YOUR CITY TODAY

YOU WILL research what your city looks like today and in class meetings we will discuss that. We will also review what we have learned through our study this fall about Islam and Muslims.

DLT TEAM will also pose questions to each of the groups.

Week 16 (Dec. 4): Conclusion

1. Submitting the final version (showcasing);
2. YOUR CONCLUSION(s): Come prepared to state your observations/conclusion of our study;
3. TLA team will also make observations on our endeavors this term.

OTHER RESOURCES (Background Readings):

- Ira Lapidus (1973) “The Evolution of Muslim Urban Society” (B)
- Mohamad Gharipor, “The Bazaar in Islamic City: Design, Culture and History”
- George Makdisi (1970), “Madrasa and University in the Middle Ages”
- Said Arjomand (1999), “Development of the Institutions of Learning from the Tenth to the Fifteenth Century”
- Dohaish (1989), “Growth and Development of Islamic Libraries”
- Titus Burkhart, *Fez: The City of Islam*
- Titus Burckhardt, *Art of Islam: Language and Meaning*
- “Sufism and the People” & “Popular Culture and High Culture in Medieval Cairo” in *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo*
- Ibn Battuta from *One Thousand Roads to Mecca*, 55-67
- Francis Robinson ed. *Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World*
- **Watch:** “Knowledge of the World” The Traditional World of Islam (R) (Part 5)
- **Watch:** “Unity” The Traditional World of Islam (R)-[VC T7632 DVD] (Part 1)
- Seyyed Hossein Nasr, “Art & Architecture” in *Islam in the Modern World*, pp.205-258