



## HIST 233 – The Medieval Hero: East and West

Designed as an introduction to reading and analyzing epic narratives, this course focuses on four such key types of works re-introduced in writing during the Middle Ages: the Shahnama, the Oghuznama, the Alexander Romance, and the Arthurian Legends. Introduced at the outset will be the main themes and narrative tools employed in the construction of epics; the common features which make a “hero”; and the relevant historical contexts. These will then be brought to bear on a close examination of the works in question, with the final case study of Alexander and the Romances serving to explore the common aspects of “Eastern” and “Western” epics and heroes. The course will conclude with a discussion of the afterlife of these epics.

**Instructor:** N. Zeynep Yelçe ([zeynep.yelce@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:zeynep.yelce@sabanciuniv.edu))

**Assistant:** Ahmet Zahit Ekren ([ahmet.ekren@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:ahmet.ekren@sabanciuniv.edu))

### **Class Schedule**

Wednesday, 12:40-14:30 (FASS 1097)

Thursday, 13:40-14:30 (FASS 1101)

### **Office Hours – FASS 2021**

Wednesday, 15:00-16:00 or by appointment

### **Warning**

Please note that one module (weeks 5 and 6) of this course will be held in Turkish due to the nature of selected works. Although English translations of the relevant parts will be partially available, the discussions focusing on specific concepts will pursue in Turkish.

### **Time-Conflict Policy**

Time Conflict requests will not be accepted for this course.

### **Acknowledgement**

This syllabus is a contract between the instructor and the student. By taking this course, the student accepts the rules and requirements of the course. This syllabus may be subject to change. It is the student’s responsibility to follow announcements and e-mails regarding all issues related to this course.



### Course Requirements

Attendance and participation	20 %
Reflection Portfolio	20 %
Midterm Exam	20 %
Final Exam	40 %

Exams constitute of around four essay questions. When answering the questions, you are expected to engage in contextual and conceptual discussion rather than citing exact dates and/or telling a story in detail.

Reflection Portfolio consists of four slides to be prepared as lectures proceed throughout the semester. Each slide contains your notes and reflections about the relevant legend and/or hero. The fifth slide is meant as an overall evaluation and analysis of all slides. No make-up will be offered for portfolio entries.

For more information, please see Course Information on SuCourse.

### Grading

Your letter grade, as well as exam grades, is based on your individual performance. Requests for extra work or other compensation will not be accepted. E-mails concerning such requests will not be replied. Letter grades are calculated according to the following letter grade scale and are not open to negotiation.

min.	min.	min.	min.	min.	min.	min.	min.	min.	min.
59	64	68	72	76	80	84	88	92	96
D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A



### **Attendance and Participation**

Attendance is compulsory in this course. Attendance follow-up starts at the end of the add-drop period. **Attendance is taken on an hourly basis during all sessions.** Failure to attend more than three hours requires points to be taken off the overall grade. **Students who miss 9 hours (regardless of medical reports) in total will automatically receive 0 points for Attendance and Participation.** For more information, please see Course Information on SuCourse.

Participation (contribution to class discussions, poll participation, general involvement, etc.) will be taken into consideration along with attendance in grade calculations.

### **Academic Honesty Policy**

HIST 233 does not tolerate dishonesty and plagiarism. Plagiarism is an ethical and academic offense. Papers with plagiarism issues will be graded F, and your semester grade may be F depending on the severity of the offense. The offense may also be referred to as the University Ethics Committee. For information on plagiarism, please see Course Information on SuCourse.

### **Students with Special Needs**

It is the policy of Sabancı University to accommodate students with special needs and disabilities. To determine accommodations and/or academic adjustments, please contact [specialneeds@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:specialneeds@sabanciuniv.edu).

### **Anti-Discrimination Policy**

HUM 201 classroom is free from all discrimination based on, including but not limited to, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, language, disability, gender, and sexual orientation. Students are expected to maintain this environment.



## **SUCOURSE and COMMUNICATION**

You are responsible for reading your e-mails, following course announcements, as well as exam and assignment dates. You can find all you need to know about the course in SuCourse.

**Homepage:** You can find my e-mail, office hour information, and class schedule here.

**Announcements:** This is the most important tab if you wish to make life easier. Our communication is through Announcements. All announcements and updates are posted here and simultaneously sent to your e-mail address. You are responsible for reading all e-mails and announcements carefully. If you lose or cannot find an e-mail or cannot remember a date, check the Announcements.

**Syllabus:** You can find the syllabus for the whole semester here. For updates, follow the Announcements and Course Information.

**Course Information:** This tab is regularly updated. You can find important information about Discussion and Office Hours, Portfolio Instructions, Exam Rules, Tips for Papers and Exams, Plagiarism, as well as Tips for Remote Learning.

**Lectures:** You can find lecture slides in pdf format here. Lecture videos will not be shared.

**Reading:** The list and links to our sources are provided here. Sources are provided as either online e-books, e-pub or pdf files. Access to these sources will be removed as soon as the semester officially ends.

**Portfolio:** This is where you upload your Portfolio slides.

**Stuff to Explore:** Interesting and useful websites and other material, not mandatory.

**Attendance:** You can follow your attendance (not participation) here.



## COURSE SCHEDULE

**WEEK 01. Feb 15** : Introduction to the Course

**WEEK 02. Feb 21-22** : Making of a Hero

**WEEK 03. Feb 28-29** : Medieval Life and the Medieval Hero

**WEEK 04. Mar 06-07** : The Shahnameh

Read: Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, pp. 38-80 (parts on the legendary kings)

**WEEK 05. Mar 13-14** : Rustam and the *Shahnameh*

Read: Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, pp. 179-198 (Seven Trials of Rustam)

Due: Reflection Slide 1 (March 17, Sunday, 23:00)

**WEEK 06. Mar 20-21** : Oguz and Oguznama

Read: *Oğuz Destanı: Reşideddin Oğuznâmesi*, pp. 17-49; *Oğuz Kağan Destanı*; "Tevarih-i Al-i Selçuk Oğuznamesi," pp. 163-99.

**WEEK 07. Mar 27-28** : Oguznama and the Book of Dede Korkud

Read: "Dirse Han Oğlu Boğaç Han", "Basat Depegözi Öldürdigi"

Due: Reflection Slide 2 (March 31, Sunday, 23:00)

**WEEK 08. Apr 03** : Midterm Exam

**WEEK 09. Apr 10-11** : Spring Break (no class)

**WEEK 10. April 17-18** : Arthurian Legends

Read: Selections from *The History of the Kings of Britain*

**WEEK 11. April 24-25** : Arthur and The Quest of the Holy Grail

Read: Selections from *Le Morte d'Arthur*

Due: Reflection Slide 3 (April 28, Sunday, 23:00)



**WEEK 12. May 02 : Modern Re-presentations**

Watch : Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade (1989) director: Steven Spielberg

Read : Aronstein, "Not Exactly a Knight"

**WEEK 13. May 08-09 : Alexander Romances**

Read: Pseudo-Callisthenes, *The Greek Alexander Romance*.

Watch: "Alexander: The Making of a God"

(available on Netflix)

**WEEK 14. May 15-16 : Alexander and Iskandar**

Read: Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, pp. 441-528 (parts on Alexander)

Due: Reflection Slide 4 (May 19, Sunday, 23:00)

**WEEK 15. May 22-26 : The Hero in Medieval Fantasy: "The Witcher"**

Watch : The Witcher (2019) – Season 1

(available on Netflix)

**WEEK 16. May 29 : Conclusion and Revision**