

Advanced Readings in Research Languages: Persian Chronicles

HIST 602

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Zoom: <https://sabanciuniv.zoom.us/j/95656378371>

Thursday, 10:40-13:30

This advanced graduate course is designed to introduce students to Classical Persian historiography between the tenth and eighteenth centuries. During this *longue durée*, Persian was a lingua franca in Muslim Eurasia, and a language of key importance in intellectual discourse, bureaucracy, mystical thought, poetry, etc. Islamic Persian literature emerged as part of the cultural profile of Iranian dynasties in the periphery of the Muslim Caliphate in the ninth-tenth centuries, ascending to prominence under the Mongols and continuing, to varying degrees depending on the region, down to the nineteenth century as a central element of the cultural traditions that various Islamic regimes followed. In addition, the Persian literary tradition informed other nascent literary languages of the Islamic world, such as Ottoman and Chaghatay Turkish, Urdu and Kurdish, in terms of their vocabulary, literary forms, genres, tropes, and topoi. Knowledge of Persian therefore is of profound importance to every Ottomanist or historian of Islam and the Middle East or Central and South Asia in the medieval through the early modern period. Persian historiography holds a special place both as a key witness to and mirror of the history of a vast swathe of land and a long period, and as a vehicle for the transfer of knowledge in such broad fields as politics, poetry, religion, and philosophy. In addition to touching on political history as reflected in Persian chronicles, overarching themes during the course will include but be not limited to the following questions: How is Persian historiography used in political and religious legitimacy in various Islamic regimes? How can we categorize chronicles? How is Persian literature in general and Persian historiography in particular used to effect transfer of knowledge? How can we read Persian chronicles in search of the history of less prestigious social and cultural groups—religious and ethnic minorities, peasantry and urban underclass, women or slaves—and the periphery? What are the connections, philological and ideological, between various representatives of the genre?

The course will proceed chronologically through the close reading of excerpts from Persian chronicles from the main periods of the history of the genre, complemented by discussion of relevant scholarly literature. While we will be aware of developments in the genre in Southeast Asia, due to our limited time and the interests of most students at Sabancı, the main emphasis will be on the chronicle tradition of Iran, Central Asia, and Anatolia. Students will also familiarize themselves with the basic research tools (bibliographies, dictionaries, databases, etc.) as well as historical and philological methods of the field. In addition to printed material, students will also read manuscripts, getting used to different types of handwriting.

Prerequisites include a minimum of one year of Persian, its equivalent or the instructor's approval.

Learning outcome

By the end of the course, students will

- be familiar with the most important topoi, stylistic and rhetorical features of Persian historiography
- have learned about ways as how to understand historical narratives in their historical and literary context
- familiarize themselves with the basic research tools of Persian historiography
- be able to recognize and reflect on the contingency of analytical frameworks concerning human societies
- demonstrate the ability to develop research methods and use coherent analytical frameworks to broach philological and historical phenomena through primary and secondary sources
- be able to write argumentative research papers on a given subject based on the close reading of sources.

Assessment

- Participation in in-class discussions and completion of weekly reading assignments: 40%.
- Two book reviews (2-3 pages each): 20%. Due date of submission: week 4 and week 8.
- Final research paper (ca. 20 pages long, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins): 40%. The subject of the paper is to be developed in conversation with the instructor and has to be declared by week 10 at the latest. A working draft has to be pre-circulated among students by the final class and presented orally at the last session. Due date for the submission of the final paper: the end of week 1 in the exam period. The paper has to include translations.

Attendance policy

100% attendance is expected. Absence is only tolerated for health reasons or on other serious grounds.

Special needs

[Appropriate language to be provided by the Dean's Office]

Accommodation and academic integrity

[Appropriate language to be provided by the Dean's Office]

Weekly outline

1. Introduction, orientation

The Samanid period

2 Bal‘ami

3. Bayhaqi, “The story of Hasanak”: 189-206.

“Bayhaqi,” EIr: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bayhaqi-abul-fazl-mohammad-b>

Bayhaqī. *The History of Beyhaqi: (the History of Sultan Mas‘ud of Ghazna, 1030-1041)*. Trans. Clifford Edmund Bosworth. Boston, Mass.: Wash., D.C.: Cambridge, Mass.: Ilex Foundation; Center for Hellenic Studies Trustees for Harvard University; Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2011, 1-79.

Green, Nile. “Introduction: The Frontiers of the Persianate World (ca. 800–1900)” in *The Persianate World: The Frontiers of a Eurasian Lingua Franca*. Ed. Nile Green. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2019, 1-74.

Storey-Bregel, vol. 2, 737-741.

The Mongol period

4. Juvayni, “Dībācha,” (227-42 in the pdf).

Melville, *Persian Historiography*, chapters 3-4.

5. Rashid al-Din, “The Conversion of Ghazan Khan”, vol. 2, 1253-56.

Kamola, Stefan. “A sensational and unique novelty: the reception of Rashid al-Din's world history.” *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, 2018

_____. “History and legend in the *Jāmi` al-tawārikh*: Abraham, Alexander, and Oghuz Khan.” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25 (2015): 555-577.

The Timurid period

6. Mirkhwand

7. Sharaf al-Din ‘Ali Yazdi

Submission of book review 2

8. Khwandmir

Ottoman Persian chronicles

9. Idris-i Bitlisi, *Hasht bihisht*

Last day to declare the subject of the research paper

10. Shah Qasim, *Kanz al-javāhir*

The Safavid period

11. Hasan Beg Rumlu, *Aḥsan al-tavarikh*

12. Qadi Ahmad Qomi

13. Iskandar Beg Munshi

Presentation of working papers

Readings

Persian Texts

Bal'amī, Abū 'Alī Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad. *Tārīkh-i Bal'amī*. Ed. Muḥammad Dihqānī. Chāp-i avval. Tih-rān: Nashr-i Nay, 2015.

Bayhaqī. *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*. Ed. 'Alī Akbar Fayyāḍ. Chāp-i duvvum. Mashhad: Dānishgāh-i Firdawsī, 1383.

Fazli Beg Khuzani Isfahani. *A Chronicle of the Reign of Shah 'Abbas*. Ed. Kioumars Ghereghlou. [Cambridge, England]: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2015.

Gubārī. *Sulaymānnāma*. Ms. Süleymaniye, Ayasofya 3392.

_____. *Sulaymānnāma*. Ms. Süleymaniye, Hekimoğlu 764.

Ibn Bībī, Nāṣir al-Dīn Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad. *Akhbār-i Salajiqah-'i Rūm: Bā Matn-i Kāmil-i Saljūqnāmah-'i Ibn Bībī, Jāmi-'i Maṭālib-i Tārīkhī-i Kitāb-i al-awāmir al-'Alā'iyah Fī al-umūr al-'Alā'iyah*. Ed. Muḥammad Javād Mashkūr [Chāp-i 1]. Tih-rān: Kitābfurūshī-i Tih-rān, 1971.

Idris-i Bitlisi. *Hasht bihisht*. Ms. Süleymaniye, Esad Efendi 2197.

_____. *Hasht bihisht*. Ms. Süleymaniye, Nuruosmaniye 3209.

Iskandar Beg Turkmān. *Tārīḥ-i ālamārā-yi 'Abbāsī*. Tehran: Mu'assasa-yi Intiṣārāt-i Amīr Kabīr, 1350sh/1971.

Juvaynī, 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā Malik. *Kitāb-i Tārīkh-i Jahāngushāy*. Ed. Muḥammad Qazvīnī. Chāp-i 4. [Tehran]: Intiṣārāt-i Arghavān, 1991.

Khvānd Mīr, Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn ibn Humām al-Dīn. *Tārīkh-i Ḥabīb al-siyar fī Akhbār Afrād Bashar*. Chāp-i 3. [Tehran]: Kitābfurūshī-i Khayyām, 1983.

Mīr Khvānd, Muḥammad ibn Khāvandshāh. *Tārīkh-i Rawzat al-ṣafā*. Ed. Rizā Qulī Khān Hidāyat [Tih-rān]: Markaz-i Khayyām Pīrūz, 1959.

Nīshāpūrī, Zāhir al-Dīn. *The Saljūqnāma of Zāhir Al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī: A Critical Text Making Use of the Unique Manuscript in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society*. Ed. A. H. Morton. [Warminster]: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2004.

Qāzī Aḥmad Qummī. *Khulāṣat al-tavārīḥ*. [Tehran]: Dānishgāh-i Tih-rān, 1359-1363 [1980-1984], 2 vols.

Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb. *Jāmi‘ al-tavārīkh*. Ed. Muṣṭafā Mūsavī and Muḥammad Rawshan. Chāp-i avval. Tih-rān: Nashr-i Alburz, 1994.

_____. *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Jami‘u’t-tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles*. Trans. W. M. (Wheeler McIntosh) Thackston. [Cambridge, Mass.]: Harvard University, Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 1998.

Rūmlū, Ḥasan. *Aḥsan al-tavārīkh*. Ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā’ī. Tih-rān: Bungāh-i Tarjumah va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1970.

Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī. *Ẓafarnāmah*. Ed. Sa‘īd Mīr Muḥammad Ṣādiq and ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā’ī, Chāp-i 1. Tih-rān: Kitābkhānah, Mūzih va Markaz-i Asnād-i Majlis-i Shūrā-yi Islāmī, 2008.

Secondary readings

Akasoy, Anna, Charles (Charles S. F.) Burnett, Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim (ed.). *Rashīd Al-Dīn: Agent and Mediator of Cultural Exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran*. London: The Warburg Institute, 2013.

Amitai, Reuven. *The Mongols in the Islamic Lands: Studies in the History of the Ilkhanate*. Aldershot [England]; Burlington, VT: Ashgate/Variorum, 2007.

Bayhaqī, Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn. *The History of Beyhaqi: (the History of Sultan Mas‘ud of Ghazna, 1030-1041)*. Trans. Clifford Edmund Bosworth and Mohsen Ashtiany. Boston, Mass.: Wash., D.C. : Cambridge, Mass.: Ilex Foundation; Center for Hellenic Studies Trustees for Harvard University; Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2011.

Binbaş, İlker Evrim. *Intellectual Networks in Timurid Iran: Sharaf Al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī and the Islamicate Republic of Letters*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Browne, Edward Granville. *A Literary History of Persia*. Cambridge [Eng.]: at The University Press, 1929. 4 vols.

Humphreys, R. Stephen. *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Jackson, Peter. *The Cambridge History of Iran. Volume 6. The Timurid and Ṣafavid Periods*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Kamola, Stefan. “History and Legend in the Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh: Abraham, Alexander, and Oghuz Khan.” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25, no. 4 (2015): 557-77.

Landau, Amy S., et al. *Pearls On a String: Artists, Patrons, and Poets At the Great Islamic Courts*. Baltimore: The Walters Art Museum, 2015.

Lazard, Gilbert. “The Rise of the New Persian Language.” *The Cambridge History of Iran: Volume 4. From the Arab Invasion to the Saljuqs*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975, chapter 19.

Markiewicz, Christopher. “History as Science: The Fifteenth-Century Debate in Arabic and Persian.” *Journal of Early Modern History* 21, no. 3 (2017): 216-40.

- _____. "The Crisis of Rule in Late Medieval Islam: A Study of Idrīs Bidlīsī (861-926/1457-1520) and Kingship at the Turn of the Sixteenth Century" (Ph.D. dissertation). Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2015.
- Meisami, Julie Scott. *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth Century*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999.
- Melville, C. P. (Charles Peter). *Persian Historiography*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012.
- _____. "Padshah-i Islam: the conversion of Sultan Mahmud Ghazan Khan." *Pembroke Papers* 1 (1990): 159-77.
- _____. "Persian local histories: views from the wings." *Iranian Studies* 33, nos. 1-2 (2000 [2001]): 7-14.
- _____. "The Caspian provinces: a world apart. Three local histories of Mazandaran." *Iranian Studies* 33, nos. 1-2 (2000 [2001]): 45-91.
- _____. "The early Persian Historiography of Anatolia." In *History and historiography of post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in honor of John E. Woods*. Ed. Judith Pfeiffer & Sholeh A. Quinn. Wiesbaden, 2006, 135-66.
- _____. "From Tabriz to Herat: Persian Historiography in the 15th Century." In *Iran und iranisch geprägte Kulturen: Studien zum 65. Geburtstag von Bert G. Fragner*. Ed. M. Ritter, R. Kauz & B. Hoffmann. Wiesbaden: Dr Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2008, 28-38.
- _____. "Between Firdausi and Rashid al-Din: Persian verse chronicles of the Mongol period." *Studia Islamica* 104-105 (2007 [2008]): 45-65.
- Peacock, A. C. S. *Mediaeval Islamic Historiography and Political Legitimacy: Bal'amī's Tārīkhnāma*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.
- _____. *The Great Seljuk Empire*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015.
- Peacock, A. C. S. (Andrew C. S.), and Sara Nur Yildiz (ed.). *The Seljuks of Anatolia: Court and Society in the Medieval Middle East*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris: Distributed by Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Pfeiffer, Judith (ed.). *Politics, Patronage, and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*. Leiden: Brill, 2014.
- Quinn, Sholeh Alysia. "Historiography vi. Safavid period." *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. XII, Fasc. 4, 363-67.
- Quinn, Sholeh Alysia. *Historical Writing during the Reign of Shah 'Abbas: Ideology, Imitation, and Legitimacy in Safavid Chronicles*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000.
- Robinson, Chase F. *Islamic Historiography*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Szuppe, Maria. "Historiography v. Timurid Period." *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. XII, Fasc. 4, 356-363.
- Tucker, Ernest. "Historiography vii. Afsharid and Zand periods." *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. XII, Fasc. 4, 367-69.

Woods, John E. "The Rise of Tīmūrīd Historiography." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 46, no. 2 (1987): 81-108.

Yıldız, Sara Nur. "From Cairo to Ayasuluk: Hacı Paşa and the Transmission of Islamic Learning to Western Anatolia in the Late Fourteenth Century." *Journal of Islamic Studies* 25, no. 3 (2014): 263-97.

_____. "Ottoman Historical Writing in Persian." In *Persian Historiography*. Ed. Charles P. Melville. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012, 436-502.

Zadeh, Travis. "al-Bal'amī." *EF*.

Bibliographies, general works

Bregel, Yuri. *Bibliography of Islamic Central Asia*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1995.

Storey, C. A. (Charles Ambrose). *Persian Literature: A Bio-bibliographical Survey*. London: Luzac & Co., 1927.

Storey, C. A. and Bregel. Y.E. *Persidskaia Literatura: Bio-bibliograficheskii obzor*. Moscow: Izd-vo "Nauka." 1972.

The Cambridge History of Iran, vols. 4-6.

The Cambridge History of Islam.