

ENGLISH 813

Literature In English Before 1800

Fall 2016

Early Modern Islam and the West

Jyotsna G. Singh



**Portrait of Abd el-Ouahed ben Messaoud, a Moorish ambassador to Queen Elizabeth I in 1600
Moors in Renaissance London**

A 306 Wells Hall

Classes will meet in the library on 9/12, 9/19, 10/10, and 11/7. Room TBA

Mondays 4:10 -7 pm

Office hours: Th 10:15-12:15 and by appointment

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Background:

How did the English (and Europeans) imagine the expanding frontiers of their world in the early modern period? As their geographical knowledge was growing, so were the cultural, linguistic, religious, and racial/ethnic coordinates by which they defined their identities. And within this repertoire of representations, Islamic, often racialized figures variously labeled as “Mahometans,” “Muslims,” “Moors,” “infidels,” “heathens,” and “blackamoors,” began to proliferate in the global imaginings of European Christendom: on the English Renaissance stage, in travel narratives, visual images, and popular polemical texts on Islam and the Prophet Muhammad.

European (specifically English, Protestant) Christendom cast both a skeptical and fascinated eye on the Islamic world on their peripheries. Moving beyond European-perspectives on the cross-pollinations of cultures as well as ethno-religious stereotypes about Islam, we will also explore the Muslim culture, religion, literacy, aesthetics, and gender/sexuality practices and arrangements in *Mughal India (16th-17th centuries)*.

Design and Sequence:

Our overall approach will be to deploy various **comparative** motifs and methodologies, looking at Anglo-Muslim interactions (both real and imagined) via “connected histories” (Subrahmanyam) and “contrapuntal” perspectives (Said, Boone). In doing so, I hope we will attend to the specificities of the local, even while keeping in mind the larger comparative dynamics. We will have wide-ranging, general discussions in the class, exploring the interplay of connections and differences; I expect you to bring notes on each work and be prepared to offer an analysis and opinion of the works at hand. We will read only excerpts (often short ones) from several of the primary texts, pp. TBA.

Finally, while I don't believe that you can master all the disparate texts fully(or simply short excerpts in some cases), I DO expect you to produce papers and presentations that have a clear and well-articulated argument and plan.

PHILOSOPHY: Drawing on wide-ranging and disparate materials, I have designed this multi-directional, sprawling, (and eclectic!) course, akin to a SUFI JOURNEY whereby I hope each of you will joyfully traverse both familiar and unfamiliar byways – each going on “your own strange journey to the ocean of meanings” (Rumi).

Part I -- Race Theory and Historiography: Strategies of Reading

Othello as a Case Study; Iqbal Khan's production; *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Special Issue on Race: Hall and Smith; Subrahmanyam, Moin, Said, Boone.

Part II -- Muslims in the English Imaginary: Marlowe, *Tamburlaine*; the *Turk Plays*, ed. Vitkus; *Purchas, (selections); *Alexander Ross, *The Alkoran*; *Settle, *Cambyses*; *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, Rycout; secondary readings: Matthew Dimmock, Beatrice Manz; Balabanlilar, Vitkus; Hall, contexts of *Othello*.

Part III -- The World of the Mughals: Edward Terry and Thomas Roe (in Purchas); *Baburnama*; *Humayunama*; (selections); Edward Terry, Thomas Coryate (in Terry and on EEBO); Purchas, Book V; Selections from *Tuzuk-I-Jahangiri*, and *Akbar-nama*.

Texts: Special Collections (*)

1. Knolles and Rycout, *Turkish History*, 6th edition, 1687-1700
2. Purchas his *Pilgrims* (selections on Islam; on English traveler narratives about to the Mughal court).
3. Elkanah Settle, *Cambyses*, 3rd edition, 1675.
4. *The Alcoran*, 1649, 1st English edition
5. Shakespeare, *Fourth Folio*, 1685. Esp. *Othello*.
6. *The Tempest* quarto, 1676

Texts: Modern Editions:

1. *Othello*, Bedford Edition, Ed. Kim Hall
2. *Tamburlaine*, Marlowe (any edition)
3. *Baburnama*, Ed. Wheeler M. Thackston
4. *Three Turk Plays From Early Modern England*, Daniel Vitkus, Ed.
5. *Turning Turk: English Theatre and the Multi-cultural Mediterranean*, Ed. Daniel Vitkus
6. *Humayunnama*, Princess Gulbadan, Ed Annette Beveridge (on-line)
7. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, (short excerpts, any English translation).
8. *Ain-I-Akbari or Akbarnama*, (short excerpts, any English translation)

Articles or Chapter Excerpts: I will send you some of the items below via scanned attachments. You can draw others from any edition.

1. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "On World Historians in the Sixteenth Century;" "A Tale of Three Empires: Mughals, Ottomans, and Hapsburgs;" *How to be Alien*, "Introduction;" *Explorations in Connected Histories*, (excerpts)
2. Kim Hall and Peter Erickson, "Introduction," *Shakespeare Quarterly* Special Issue on "Race and Shakespeare"
3. Ian Smith, "We are Othello: Speaking of Race in Early Modern Studies." *Shakespeare Quarterly* Issue on Race
4. Beatrice Manz, "Tamerlane's Career and Its Uses"
5. Mathew Dimmock, "Bunyan's Dilemma" Seventeenth-Century Imposture, Liberty and True Mahomet." Chapter 4.
6. Iqbal Khan, "1960s Birmingham to 2012 Stratford-upon-Avon."
7. Ruby Lal, *Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World* (excerpts)
8. Jyotsna Singh, "Othello's Identity."
9. Azfar Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign* (excerpts).
10. Joseph Boone, "Preface," *The Homoerotics of Orientalism*
11. *Arvas, Introduction.*"
12. Edward Said, "Introduction," *Orientalism*.
13. Lisa Balabanlilar, "Lords of the Conjunction: Turco-Mongolian Imperial Identity on the Continent"

In addition to these references, I will direct each student to other specific readings as they relate to individual projects and presentations

Assignments:

1. Annotated Bibliography and Accompanying Essay (3-5 pages), **20%**;
2. "History of the Book" Report on one special collections item, **15%**;
3. Final Paper (conference paper format, 12 -13 pages) **30 %**;
4. Class Presentation, Digital format or formal paper reading, with some digital visual aids **20%**;

5. Short paper on “reading the Mughals,” **15%**.

You will be given detailed Guidelines for each assignment soon.



August 31 -- Introduction Race Theory, and Historiography –
Introduction to *Othello* and screening of Iqbal Khan’s production

September 5 -- Labor Day

12 -- LIBRARY, Introduction to Special Collections by Pat Olson; Focus
on *Purchas, Books 3 and 5; and the *Qur’an*; Knolles and Rycaut,
Subrahmanyam, Boone, Said.

19 -- Library – Focus on *Qur’an*, *Rycaut, and Purchas; Dimmock
chapter; *Shakespeare Folio, *Othello*; EEBO *Othello*, quarto

26 -- Dimmock, cont. Subrahmanyam; Plays: *Tamburlaine*, *Turk Plays*,
Cambyzes, *Othello (Hall contexts)*; Singh article

October 3 -- Plays, Cont. readings; Workshop on
research, writing, and annotated bibliographical essay

10 -- Library: Introduction to Mughals in *Purchas, Terry and Roe (in
Purchas; Book V in Purchas; EEBO Coryate

17—Subrahmanyam, Moin; Manz; *Baburnama*; *Tamburlaine*

24 -- *Baburnama*; Mughal Paintings; *Humayunnama*. Lal Chapter
Bibliographical Essay Due

31 -- *Humayunama –Tuzuk-I- Jahangiri*; Lal Chapter; Roe, Terry, and
Coryate

November --7 – Library; Examine Shakespeare Folio; *Othello*: Rycaut;
Cambyzes

14 Iqbal Khan visit, class till 5:15.
Wharton Khan Lecture Mandatory 7:30

21 -- *Ain-i-Akbari* or *Akbarnama* – **History of the Book essay due**

28 – Coryate, Roe, Terry, and Mughal Biographies. Discussion: what
did we learn from the Mughal archive?

December 5 --MINI CONFERENCE Paper Presentations (Different topic from
Final and Mughal Paper) -- 20-25 minutes each. Preferably with

accompanying digital site, e.g. Web page, Weebly; FB page; Blog, etc. **Short essay, 3-5 pages on Mughals Due.**

Final Paper Due: December 16. Can relate to but not replicate class presentation.



Timur handing the imperial crown to Babur, Goverdhan c. 1630. Princess Jahanara c. 1631 recently attributed as an image of the princess