

**East/West Mirrors:
European Representations of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, 1300-
1750**

50:516:380

Professor Mokhberi

This course examines European representations of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East from the Middle Ages to the early eighteenth century. It traces European portrayals of foreigners in travel writings, descriptions of diplomatic visits, and various art forms. We will discuss European criticism of foreign customs and politics and investigate Europe's fascination with the exotic, which often resulted in imitation and adoption of foreign habits and luxury goods. We will explore how Europeans imagined and reimagined distant countries and used them as "mirrors" for comparison.



Madame de Pompadour as a Turkish Sultana, Charles André Van Loo (1747)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

-Paper One: 20%

-Paper Two: 20%

-Final Paper: 25%

-Participation: 15%

Participation and attendance is crucial to this seminar course. You must come prepared to discuss all readings and hand-in assignments on time. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence. After that, each unexcused absence will lower your final grade by 2%. Note that if you are absent, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate.

-Assignments: 20%

Every Thursday class starting week two, select one quote from each reading and discuss its relevance to European perceptions of foreigners in approximately 200-300 words. The paper must be posted under the "assignments" tool on the Sakai website by 1:30pm. You are allowed to skip 2 of these assignments of your choice.

READINGS: All readings available on the course Sakai website under "resources".

ETIQUETTE: Please come on time, silence cell phones, and refrain from surfing the Internet during class. It is your responsibility to obtain any missing notes from a fellow student. Feel free to email me with a respectful, formal email and I will try my best to reply as promptly as possible.

PLAGIARISM will be taken very seriously and will be reported. Feel free to discuss the course material and your paper ideas with other students but you can only hand in your own individual work.

January 20: Introduction to Early Modern Travel

January 22: Crusades: Images of the Infidels

Read: Selection from *Song of Roland* and Selections from *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*; Introduction to *Orientalism*

January 27: Marco Polo and representations of China

January 29: Portuguese Explorers and Images of Africa and India

Read: Selections from Marco Polo, Vasco da Gama; and St. Francis Xavier

February 3: The Jesuits in China in 15th-16th centuries

February 5: Matteo Ricci

Read: Selection from Matteo Ricci's writings

Feb 10: Chinoiserie

Feb 12: Idealizing China: Voltaire, Physiocrats and the Chinese

Read: Excerpt from François Quesnay's *Le Despotisme de la Chine* (1767) and Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary vol. IV part I (China)*

Feb 17: Morocco and Europe

Feb 19: France and Siam

Read: Selection from Nabil Matar, *Britain and Barbary*

FIRST PAPER DUE Feb. 19: 4-5 pages

Feb 24: Captives and Corsairs: Elisabeth Marsh

Feb 26: Venice, Ottoman Empire and Europe

Read: Selection from *The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh*

Mar. 3: Images of Despotism and the Harem

Mar. 5: A Venetian at the Persian Court

Read: Selection from Lucette Valensi, *Birth of the Despot*; Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean*; and Leslie Pierce, "Beyond Harem Walls" in *Servants of the Dynasty*

Mar. 10: Nicolay de Nicolas and Representations of the Ottomans

Mar. 12: Fashion and the East

Read: Selections from Nicolay de Nicolas; "Oriental Connections" in *Fashion Prints in the Age of Louis XIV* by Mary Schoesner

SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS MARCH 17th and 19th

Mar. 24: Rome, Persia, and the Ottoman Empire with Persia

Mar. 26: Anthony Sherley's mission to Persia and Don Juan of Persia

Read: Selection from Anthony Sherley and Don Juan of Persia

Mar. 31: John Chardin's *Travel in Persia* and Images of Persians

April 2: Montesquieu's Persian Letters

Read: Selection from Chardin's Travels in Persia

SECOND PAPER DUE April 2nd 4-5 pages

April 7: Fairy Tales and Fables of the East

April 9: 1001 Nights and more Tales

Read: Ros Ballaster's *Fables of the East* 1-42

April 14: Ottoman Empire Lady Montagu

April 16: Turquerie and Images of the Ottomans

Read: Selection from Lady Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters*

April 21: Religion in Europe: Attack on the Church

April 23: Representations of Religions of the World

Read: "Persian Pictures" in Bernard Picart's First Global Vision of Religion

April 28: In-class presentations and consultation on papers

April 30: In-class presentations and consultation on papers

FINAL PAPER (7-10 pages) DUE ON SCHEDULED FINAL EXAM DATE AND TIME

Please note: This syllabus is subject to change and will be updated as necessary.