

**HUM 101:
CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS I**

2025/26 Fall

Boğaziçi University

Instructors:

Assoc. Prof. Betül Avcı (Cultural Studies)
Asst. Prof. Amina Nawaz (Faculty of History)
Asst. Prof. Mujadad Zaman (Faculty of Education)

Humanities

HUM 101 is the first course in a two-semester, interdisciplinary survey series, team-taught by faculty. It consists of mandatory lectures and discussion sections. Each week, students attend a main lecture on Monday evening at the Albert Long Hall, where a guest lecturer, an expert in the field, introduces the week's subject. This is followed by smaller in-class discussion groups. The lectures, organized both chronologically and thematically, provide a general framework for understanding the assigned text(s), while the discussions allow for deeper analysis and critical engagement.

Course Objectives

1. Introduce students to the diverse people, places, ideas, and experiences that span the breadth of human history.
2. Begin an exploration of the humanities disciplines—history, religion, literature, philosophy, cultural studies, and more—by understanding human beings in their full complexity, without prioritizing one ability, emotion, or faculty over another.
3. Develop an appreciation for connecting historical ideas with contemporary realities through dynamic engagement with philosophy, music, religion, and art.
4. Foster vibrant, meaningful discussions that encourage deeper insight, understanding, empathy, and compassion for both ourselves and the world around us.

Student Assessment

The final grade for this course will be determined as follows:

20% Class Attendance

20% Class Participation

(10 mins. quiz based on readings of the week, to be taken at the end of each week, during class hour)

20% Creative Assignment (museum visit or podcast)

40% Final Exam (1 sit-in-class written exam at the end of the semester)

Course Practicals

- Weekly Contact Hours

- 1-hour main lecture, Mondays at 17:00, Albert Long Hall (South Campus)
- 3 hours of seminar and small group discussions

- Absences

Students are expected to attend each weekly seminar + main lecture. Students who miss 2 lectures or 7 seminar sessions, without a valid excuse, will automatically fail the course.

- Announcements

Students are responsible for checking Moodle and their emails regularly.

- Plagiarism

Please refer to the following link for the plagiarism protocol:

<https://transint.bogazici.edu.tr/en/academic-ethics-plagiarism>

- Course Readings

All readings for the course can be found on the course google drive:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FtQv4jJw5RFImVqF44yAoYssJJsDzFQa?usp=drive_link

Semester Syllabus

Week 1 **Introduction: The Cosmos and Beyond**

Lecture **Introduction to the Semester**

Biblical Creation, Genesis
Sacred Texts of the World, pp. 49-51

Creation in the Qur'an
Sajda 32:1-11 and *Baqara* 2:30-37

Kojiki and Nihongi (Japanese)
Sacred Texts of the World, pp. 320-322

"Enuma Elish" (Akkadian)
Sacred Texts of the World, pp. 6-9

"Popol Vuh" (Mayan)
Sacred Texts of the World, pp. 10-11

"The Cosmic Parents and Twin Brothers" (Zuni, Native American)
Sacred Texts of the World, p. 341

"An Earth-Diver Narrative from Siberia (Siberian-Altaiic)
Sacred Texts of the World, p. 345

"Hainuwele, the Maiden of Ceram" (West Ceram, Indonesia)
Sacred Texts of the World, pp. 345-347

"Fulani creation story" (Mali)
World Religions: Primary Sources, p. 2

Week 2 **Life as the Great Voyage: Gilgamesh and Buddha**

Lecture **Rula Baysan (Yeditepe University)**

- *The Epic of Gilgamesh in Puchner Anthology*
Tablet I (pp. 22-24)
Tablet X & Tablet XI (pp. 60-74)

- *The Life of the Buddha According to the Pali Canon*, pp. 5-24

Week 3 Journeying and Home: *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*

Lecture Nagihan Haliloğlu (Boğaziçi University)

- Homer

The Iliad, 'The Wrath of Achilles', lines 1-255

The Odyssey, 'Odysseus with Calypso', pp. 67-68

Week 4 The Greek Divide: Plato and Aristotle

Lecture Mujadad Zaman (Boğaziçi University)

- Plato, *Republic*, 'Allegory of the Cave' (VI 507b-509c)
- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 'What is the Human Good' (Book I 1.4-1.9)

Week 5 On Human Nature: Confucius, Mencius and Xunzi

Lecture Sam Crane (Exeter College, Oxford)

- Confucius, *The Analects* (Book III and IV, pp. 26-34)
- Mencius, *Book of Mencius*, 'Ox Mountain Parable' (pp. 281-285)
- Xunzi, 'Man's Nature is Evil' (pp. 150-155)

Week 6 Un/Knowability: *Tao te Ching* and Ancient Judaism

Lecture Saeko Yazaki (University of Glasgow)

- Laozi, *The Tao Te Ching* (pp. 3-10)
- Hebrew Bible, Proverbs (Chps. 1-3)

Week 7 War and Peace: *Bhagavad Gita* and Thucydides

Lecture Richard King (SOAS)

- *The Bhagavad Gita*, (Chp II, Verses 11-47)
- Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, "Pericles' Funeral Oration"

Week 8 Courage and Virtue: Marcus Aurelius

Lecture Paulo Maranzana (Boğaziçi University)

- Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, Book V

Week 9 The Flight of the Soul: Al-Ghazali, Rumi & Attar

Lecture Omneya Ayad (Üsküdar University, İstanbul)

- Al-Ghazali, *Epitaph*
- Farid Al-din Attar, *Conference of the Birds* (Book III, pp. 6-16)
- Rumi, *Mathnawi*
 - ‘The Boatman and the Grammarian’ (Verses 1-34)
 - ‘Moses and the Shepherd’ (pp. 165-68)

Week 10 Redemption and Renewal: St. Augustine and Macrina the Younger

Lecture David Dawson Vasquez (University of St. Thomas, Rome)

- Saint Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions* (Book VIII, pp. 195-226)
- Macrina the Younger, *Deathbed Prayer*

Week 11 Revelation and Reason: Maimonides and Ibn Tufayl

Lecture Daniel Boyarin (University of California, Berkeley)

- Moses Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed* (pp. 220-241)
- Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* (pp. 130-39)

Week 12 Crossroads and Travel

Lecture Adnan Husain (Queen’s University)

- Marco Polo, *The Travels*, “From China to India”
- Ibn Fadlan, *Mission to the Volga*, “Encounter with Vikings”
- William of Rubruck, *The Journal*, “Account of the Mongols”

Week 13 Polyphonic Humanities: Auditory Experiences

Concert Robert Oliver Beahrs (Istanbul Technical University)

- Native American - *Ate Wakan Tanka* (Lokota)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AewezGlnRfg>
- Africa - *Duna Ma Yelema*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4-uq8cTF7o>
- South Papua - *Song of the Mamuna*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RfsK4AgMOo>

- Italy - Ambrosian Chant - *Ecce apertum est Templum tabernaculi*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrUxaISuk50>
- Germany - Hildegard von Bingen - *De Spiritu Sancto*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYzPR0nwcmY>
- Japan – *Shakuhachi* (Flute)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miUKO5g0ONk>
- Indian – *Kirwani* (Flute)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncQaY1iA15U>
- Indian Qawwali - *Mustt Mustt* (Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDfELfpumEE>

