The Middle East and the World, 1250 to the Present

Where do the frontiers of Middle Eastern history lie? Does one search for the history of the Middle East simply inside of the Middle East itself? How can we begin to explore the alternative geographies that those living in "the Middle East" inhabited? In this course, we will explore the wider history of the Middle East: we will collapse the borders between continents and countries and moving across deserts, jungles, and bodies of water, to see how merchants, scholars, statesmen, freed slaves and others traversed this world. The course is divided into three distinct periods (Medieval, Early-Modern, and Modern) but these are only to serve as rough markers rather than precise boundaries. Indeed, the whole objective of this course is to question the boundaries of both space and time in Middle Eastern history. The course ends with a reflection on the global contours of the Middle East today.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To gain familiarity with the broader contours of Middle Eastern history;
- To begin to imagine the alternative geographies that people in the Middle East inhabited over history, and to call into question the utility of stable categories like "the Middle East" in trying to understand the region, both throughout history and today;
- To learn how to engage with primary documents in the writing of Middle Eastern history.

ASSIGNMENTS

Instead of a term paper, students will be expected to write three ten-page papers over the course of the semester in which they engage closely with a primary source, usually chosen from a list I will provide at the beginning of the semester. These are not to be taken lightly: I expect the same quality of analysis, writing and engagement with the source as I would for an end-of-term paper. There are no precise rules for what one can and can't choose from among the pre-selected primary sources: students can spend their 10 pages discussing one travel narrative, performing a close reading of one document, or trace out a conversation taking place or a process unfolding over a series of documents. Everything is fair game, but students **must** clear paper topics with me beforehand.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Mapping World History

- Martin Lewis and Karen Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: a Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997); "Introduction" pp. 1-20; and "Chapter 1: The Architecture of Continents" pp. 21-46
- David Abulafia, "Mediterraneans," in W.V. Harris, *Rethinking the Mediterranean* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 80-93
- David Armitage, "Elephant and the Whale: Empires of Land and Sea," Journal for Maritime Research (July 2007)

PART ONE: THE MEDIEVAL WORLD, c. 1250-1500

Week 2: Arabia and the Indian Ocean World Economy

- Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1989),"Chapter 6: Sindbad's Way: Baghdad and the Persian Gulf" pp. 185-211; and "Chapter 7: Cairo's Monopoly under the Slave Sultanate" pp. 212-250
- Engseng Ho, "The Two Arms of Cambay: Diasporic Texts of Ecumenical Islam in the Indian Ocean" *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Volume 50, Numbers 2-3, (2007) pp. 347-361
- Roxani Margariti, "Mercantile Networks, Port Cities, and "Pirate" States: Conflict and Competition in the Premodern Indian Ocean World of Trade." *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 51.4 (2008) 543-577

Week 3: The Mediterranean World

- Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travels: a Sixteenth-Century Muslim Between Worlds* (Hill and Wang, 2006)

Week 4: The Sahara

- Ralph Austen, *Trans-Saharan Africa in World History* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), "Chapter 2: Caravan Commerce and African Economies"
- Reading on the Songhay Empire, TBD

PART TWO: THE EARLY MODERN WORLD, c. 1500-1800

Week 5: Middle Eastern Empires and the Sea

- Casale, Giancarlo, "Global Politics in the 1580s: One Canal, Twenty Thousand Cannibals, and an Ottoman Plot to Rule the World." *Journal of World History* 18 (2007): 267-329
- Patricia Risso, "Cross-Cultural Perceptions of Piracy: Maritime Violence in the Western Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf Region During a Long Eighteenth Century," *Journal of World History* Vol. 12, No. 2 (2001), pp. 293-319
- Reading on the Barbary Coast, TBD

Week 6: Middle Eastern Merchants at Sea, c. 1500-1800

- Sebouh Aslanian, "'The Salt in a Merchant's Letter': The Culture of Julfan Correspondence in the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean" *Journal of World History* 19, 2 (2008), 127-88.
- Nelly Hanna, *Making Big Money in 1600: the Life and Times of Isma'il Abu Taqiyya, Egyptian Merchant* (Syracuse, 1998), "Chapter 2: Merchants and Merchant Families" (pp. 15-42)
- Nancy Um, *The Merchant Houses of Mocha: Trade and Architecture in an Indian Ocean Port* (2009) "Chapter 2: The Yemeni Coffee Network"; and "Chapter 4: Merchants and *Nakhudas*"

Week 7: Traversing the Sahara, 1500-1800

- Ralph Austen, *Trans-Saharan Africa in World History* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2010) "Chapter 3: Ruling the Sahara and its 'Shores'" pp. 49-77
- Bruce Hall, *A History of Race in Muslim West Africa, 1600-1960* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009) "Chapter 1: Making Race in the Sahel, c. 1600-1900" pp. 34-98.
- Ghislaine Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails: Islamic Law, Trade Networks and Cross-Cultural Exchange in 19th-Century West Africa* (NY: Cambridge, 2009) "Chapter 2: Trans-Saharan Trade in the Longue Duree" pp. 29-106.

PART THREE: THE WORLD IN THE MIDDLE EAST, c. 1800-1950

Week 8: Imperial Europe in the Mediterranean

- Alison Games, *Web of Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) "Chapter 2: The Mediterranean Origins of the British Empire" pp. 47-80
- Julia Clancy-Smith, *Mediterraneans* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), "Chapter 6: From Protection to Protectorate: Justice, Order and Legal Pluralism"
- Eve M. Trout Powell, *A Different Shade of Colonialism: Egypt, Great Britain, and the Mastery of the Sudan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), "Chapter 4: The Tools of the Master: Slavery, Family, and the Unity of the Nile Valley" pp. 135-168

Weeks 9: British India in Arabia

- James Onley, "Britain's Native Agents in Arabia and Persia in the Nineteenth Century," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (2004) pp. 130-137
- John Willis, "Making Yemen Indian: Rewriting the Boundaries of Imperial Arabia*," International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2009) pp. 23-38
- Stefan Tetzlaff – "Empire, Nationalism, and South Asian Labor Migration to Iraq, c. 1900–1935," *International Labor and Working Class History*, No. 79 (Spring, 2011) pp. 7-27
- Rajat Kanta Ray, "Asian Capital in the Age of European. Domination: The Rise of the Bazaar, 1800-1914," *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (1995), pages TBD.

Week 10: Conquering the Sahara

- Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*, pages TBD
- Another reading TBD

Week 11: Itinerant Communities

- Erik Gilbert, *Dhows and the Colonial Economy of Zanzibar, 1860-1970* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press), "Chapter 5: Mangrove Poles and the Long-distance Dhow Trade in the Colonial Era" pp. 110-123
- Linda Boxberger, *On the Edge of Empire: Hadhramaut, Emigration, and the Indian Ocean, 1880s-1930s* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002) "Chapter 2: Hadhrami Emigration and the *Mahjar*" pp. 39-53
- Jonathan Miran, "Endowing Property and Edifying Power in a Red Sea Port: Waqf, Arab Migrant Entrepreneurs, and Urban Authority in Massawa, 1860s-1880s" *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2009) pp. 151-178

Week 12: Arab Nationalisms and Religious Revivalism in the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean

- Amal Ghazal, "The Other Frontiers of Arab Nationalism: Ibadis, Berbers and the Arabist-Salafi Press in the Interwar Period", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42 (2010): 105-122
- Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, "Theater and Radical Politics in Beirut, Cairo and Alexandria 1860-1914," *CCAS Occasional Papers* (Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, Fall 2006)
- Jonathon Glassman, "Sorting out the Tribes: the Creation of Racial Identities in Colonial Zanzibar's Newspaper Wars," *Journal of African History* 41:3 (2000), 395-428.

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

Week 13: The Global Middle East Today

- Engseng Ho, "Empire Through Diasporic Eyes: the View from the Other Boat" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (2004) pp. 21-241
- Neha Vora, "Unofficial Citizens: Indian Entrepreneurs and the State-Effect in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates," *International Labor and Working-Class History*, Vol. 79 (March 2011) pp. 122-139
- Jill Crystal, "Coalitions in Oil Monarchies: Kuwait and Qatar" *Comparative Politics,* Vol. 21, No. 4 (1989)
- Madawi Al-Rasheed, "The Minaret and the Palace: Order at Home and Rebellion Abroad" in *Kingdom Without Borders: Saudi Arabia's Political, Religious, and Media Frontiers* (London: Hurst 2008) pp. 199-220
- Selected articles from *Time*, *Newsweek*, *New York Review of Books*, *Atlantic Monthly*, all TBD