

AS 100.473
The Indian Ocean: Economy, Society, Diaspora
[Additional web materials here](#)

[Final Examination Questions](#)

The Johns Hopkins University
Department of History
Spring 1999

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Scope and Purpose

The Indian Ocean is a vast sea linking a diversity of societies to its west, north, and south. These stretch from Australia, to Southeast Asia, to the Indian Subcontinent, to Persia and the Arabian Peninsula, to the east African coast. This course is an introduction to the history of the peoples and societies of these areas from the earliest recorded times to the present. Emphasis is on the western part of the Indian Ocean, especially India, Arabia, and east Africa. The Indian Ocean is unique in its history of intensive indigenous shipping and commerce before the arrival of Europeans (1498), and in the coexistence of European and indigenous trade during the modern era. A region of tremendous importance globally, the Indian Ocean has been neglected as a unit of historical inquiry. This is especially strange since the Indian Ocean, together with the Mediterranean, delimits the classical Islamic world of the seventh through fifteenth centuries. In this class we will be particularly interested in transformations in Indian Ocean economies and in the movement of people about the Ocean into modern times.

Required Texts

- K.N. Chaudhuri, *Trade & Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985). ISBN 0521285429
- Derek Nurse and Thomas Spear, *The Swahili: Reconstructing the History and Language of an African Society, 800-1500* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985). ISBN 081221207X
- Michael Pearson, *Pilgrimage to Mecca: The Indian Experience, 1500-1800* (Princeton: Markus Weiner, 1996). ISBN 1558760903
- Sinnappah Arasaratnam, *Maritime India in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). ISBN 0195634241
- Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1873* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1987). ISBN 0821408720

- Frederick Cooper, *Plantation Slavery on the East Coast of Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977 [Reprinted by Heinemann]). ISBN 0435074199
- Marina Carter, *Servants, Sirdars and Settlers: Indians in Mauritius, 1834-1874* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). ISBN 0195632966

Required Coursework

1. Attendance. I expect you to attend class and to inform me by telephone or email beforehand if you must miss class. Do not make a habit of missing class; I will be unsympathetic and it will adversely affect your grade.
2. Participation in course discussions. This is a seminar, not a lecture course. You are expected to read the assigned material and to reflect on it and be prepared to talk intelligently about it in the classroom. Speak up.
3. Weekly informal commentaries on the assigned reading. I expect you to bring a copy of your written comments on each week's assigned reading (one page, single spaced is fine) with you to class. Your comments should discuss the readings and serve as the basis for your oral participation in class. Your commentaries should raise intelligent questions for course participants to deliberate on. You will leave me a copy of your commentary when you leave at the end of class.
4. Map Quiz. Soon after the spring break you will be expected to correctly identify places, towns, bodies of water and other features on a map of the Indian Ocean. What you must know is listed below in the syllabus.
5. A project. The project will be a 15-20 page paper based upon your reading of an assigned set of material on some thematic dimension of Indian Ocean History.
6. A final examination. The final examination will be based on the assigned reading and course discussions. It will consist of a take-home examination in which you will answer questions with essays, well argued and structured.

Map Items

Places

Cape of Good Hope
 Natal
 Mozambique
 Swahili Coast
 Zanzibar & Pemba
 Land of Zandj
 Tanzania
 Kenya
 Horn of Africa
 Somalia
 Ethiopia
 Djibouti
 Sudan
 Nubia
 Madagascar
 Comores
 Seychelles
 Mascarenes
 Mauritius
 Réunion

Arabian Peninsula
Yemen
Hadramaut
Hijaz
Oman
Mesopotamia
Persia
Gujarat
Sri Lanka
Coromandel Coast
Malabar Coast
Java
Sumatra
Malay Peninsula

Bodies of Water

Mozambique Channel
Nile River
Red Sea
Persian Gulf
Gulf of Oman
Tigris River Euphrates River
Bay of Bengal
Arabian Sea
Bay of Cambay
South China Sea
Strait of Malacca
Indus River
Ganges River

Towns

Great Zimbabwe
Sofala
Kilwa
Mombasa
Mogadishu
Aden
Mecca
Jedda
Medina
Muscat
Basra
Siraf
Hormuz
Cambay
Surat
Bombay
Goa
Cochin
Colombo
Calcutta
Malacca

Reading Schedule

January

28: Introduction

February

4: A Synthesis

Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization*, 1-118.

The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, translated from the Greek and annotated by Wilfred H.

Schoff (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1974), 22-49.

11: A Synthesis

Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization*, 121-228.

Charles Verlinden, "The Indian Ocean: The Ancient Period and the Middle Ages," in Satish Chandra, ed., *The Indian Ocean: Explorations in History, Commerce and Politics* (New Delhi: Sage, 1987), 27-53.

18: The Development of Swahili Society and Language

Nurse and Spear, *The Swahili*

Ross Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the 14th Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 1-12, 107.

Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325-1354* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), 106-22.

25: Islam: Pilgrimage

Pearson, *Pilgrimage to Mecca*, 1-103.

Janet Lippman Abu-Lughod, "The World System in the Thirteenth Century: Dead-End or Precursor?" in Michael Adas, ed., *Islamic and European Expansion: The Forging of a Global Order* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 75-102.

Philip Curtin, "The European Entry into the Trade of Maritime Asia," in Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-cultural Trade in World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 136-57

March

4: Islam: Pilgrimage

Pearson, *Pilgrimage to Mecca*, 107-197.

Chandra Richard de Silva, "Beyond the Cape: The Portuguese Encounter with the Peoples of South Asia," in Stuart B. Schwartz, ed., *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 295-322.

Niels Steensgaard, "The Indian Ocean Network and the Emerging World-Economy, c. 1500-1750," in Satish Chandra, ed., *The Indian Ocean: Explorations in History, Commerce and Politics* (New Delhi: Sage, 1987), 125-50.

11: India & Commerce

Arasaratnam, *Maritime India*, 1-116.

Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Incorporation of the Indian Subcontinent into the Capitalist World-Economy," in Satish Chandra, ed., *The Indian Ocean: Explorations in History, Commerce and Politics* (New Delhi: Sage, 1987), 222-53.

25: India & Commerce

Arasaratnam, *Maritime India*, 117-275.

Ashin Das Gupta, "Gujarati Merchants and the Red Sea Trade, 1700-1725," in Blair B. Kling and Michael N. Pearson, *The Age of Partnership: Europeans in Asia Before Domination* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1979), 123-158.

April

1: East Africa: Commerce & Diaspora I

Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar*, 1-115.

Marcia Wright, *Strategies of Slaves and Women: Life-Stories from East/Central Africa* (New York: Lillian Barber Press, 1993), 21-45, 59-79.

"History of a Small Slave Buried Alive, or Filial Love (Swema's Narrative of Enslavement)," typescript.

W.F. Baldock, "The Story of Rashid Bin Hassani of the Bisa Tribe, Northern Rhodesia," in Margery Perham, ed., *Ten Africans* (London, 1963), 81-119.

8: East Africa: Commerce & Diaspora II

Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar*, 116-248.

Y. Talib, "The African Diaspora in Asia," in M. Elfasi, ed., *General History of Africa III: Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 704-33.

Joseph E. Harris, "Return Movements to West and East Africa: A Comparative Approach," in Joseph E. Harris, ed., *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora 2nd ed.* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1993), 51-64.

15: Plantation Slavery in a Muslim Society

Cooper, *Plantation Slavery on the East Coast of Africa*

22: South Asian Diasporas, I

Carter, *Servants, Sirdars and Settlers*, 1-150.

Richa Nagar, "The South Asian Diaspora in Tanzania: A History Retold," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 16,2 (1996), 62-80.

29: South Asian Diasporas, II

Carter, *Servants, Sirdars and Settlers*, 151-299.

Richa Nagar, "The Making of Hindu Communal Organizations, Places, and Identities in Postcolonial Dar es Salaam," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 15 (1997), 707-30.

Richa Nagar, "Communal Places and the Politics of Multiple Identities: The Case of Tanzanian Asians," *Ecumene* 4,1 (1997), 3-26.