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**EUH 4384: The Premodern Mediterranean**

Fall 2016

5:00-6:15 Tuesday and Thursday; FIU Arena 117

Welcome to *The Premodern Mediterranean*. Over the course of the semester, we will explore a geographic region of three continents tied together by water, home to numerous different cultures and religious groups and a preeminent site for exchange before the rise of trans-Atlantic or global contact. We will consider political, economic, and religious trends, and how these factors, along with individual agency, shaped cross-cultural interactions. These interactions were at different times friendly and tense, respectful and violent, charged and indifferent, destructive and profitable.

Because of the breadth of the topic, we will focus this semester on the time period from the dissolution of Roman control of the Mediterranean, around 400 AD, to the rise of sustained global contact, around 1500 AD, and on 4 major types of interaction: Coexistence, Conflict, Commerce, and Captivity. Class topics are not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to serve as case studies for grappling with the course themes and contemplating questions that could be asked of other times and places.

During the course of the semester, we will:

- Understand and be able to explain the religious foundations, the spread, and the evolution of practices for Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in the historical context. (Note: this is not a theology or religious studies course; we will not be going as deeply into the religious as you might in courses in those departments.)
- Explore the situations—both positive and negative, profitable and detrimental—in which cross-cultural interaction occurred, and consider how political, economic, and theological developments shaped these interactions.
- Evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of approaching history from a larger perspective based in geography as defined environmentally rather than by the nation-state.
- Develop skills of critically reading historical materials and creating and articulating evidence-based arguments both orally and in writing.

Global Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the connectedness of Mediterranean peoples united and divided by time, space, religion, culture, national and legal systems, and economic and political interests.
- Students will be able to explain events in the premodern history of the Mediterranean from multiple perspectives, be they based in religion, region, class, gender, or politics, or the perspectives of different modern historians.
- Students will be able to apply knowledge of history to analyze a current media depiction of Mediterranean contact.

**Instructor:**

Dr. Tovah Bender, Department of History  
tbender@fiu.edu

DM 391C  
Office Hours: 1:00-2:30 M; 3:00-4:30 T

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The best way to reach me is via email. I will reply to all emails within 24 hours, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

I am often in my office beyond office hours. If you have questions or would like to continue the discussion, please swing by to see if I am available. You can also contact me to find a mutually convenient time to meet outside of office hours.

**Required Text:**

John Julius Norwich. *The Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean*. Vintage Books: 2006. (abbreviated MS)

All other materials will be available online via the course's Blackboard site. This site will be integral to the class.

You are responsible for coming to class having read, prepared to discuss, and created two question on the readings listed for that day. You MUST have access to a copy of the day's readings in class. A book, a printout, a pre-arranged shared copy, or a laptop with access to the electronic copy are all acceptable options.

Tuesday 8/23: Introduction

For class:

- Map
- Cover years

Thursday 8/25: Living on (and off) the Mediterranean

- Horden and Purcell. *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000. Ch 1: "A Geographical Expression," 9-25. (Blackboard)
- MS. Beginnings (1-14)

Tuesday 8/30: Mare Nostrum: The World Created by Romans

- MS. Rome: The Early Empire (44-72)

**Coexistence: The Rise and Evolution of Religious Communities**

Thursday 9/1: The Roman Empire and the Jews\*

- Exodus 19, 20. You may read these texts in any version of the Old Testament/ Jewish Bible, online or in print. (Link via Blackboard)
- Goodman, Martin. *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations*. 1st U.S. ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007. Introduction: "The Main Witness" and Ch 10: "Romans and Jews," pp. 3-6 and 366-378. (Blackboard)

Tuesday 9/6: Jesus, Paul, and Christianity

- Romans 2-5, 11-15. You may read these texts in any version of the New Testament, online or in print. (Link via Blackboard)
- Wilken, Robert Lewis, ed. *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*. Second Edition. Yale University Press, 2003. Ch 2: "Christianity as a Burial Society," pp. 31-47. (available via JStor)

Thursday 9/8: Mohammed, the Caliphs, and Islam

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- The Koran, Chapter 1. You may read these texts in any version of the Koran, online or in print. (Link via Blackboard)
- MS: Islam (72-87)
- Pact of Umar, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/pact-umar.html>

Tuesday 9/13: The Other Christians: The Byzantine Empire

- Judith Herrin. *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008. Chs 3 and 10: “The East Roman Empire” and “Iconoclasm and Icon Veneration” (22-32 and 105-119)
- **Proposal Due**

Thursday 9/15: Jews in the Mediterranean: Under Christians and Muslims\*

- Mark R. Cohen. *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. Ch 1: “Myth and Countermyth,” pp. 3-14)
- Glick, Thomas F. “Science in Medieval Spain: The Jewish Contribution in the Context of Convivencia.” In *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain*, edited by Vivian B. Mann, Jerrilynn Denise Dodds, and Thomas F. Glick, 1st ed., 83–113. New York: G. Braziller in association with the Jewish Museum, 1992.

**Conflict: Crusade and Conquest**

Tuesday 9/20: *Dar al-islam*\*

- Hitchcock, Richard. *Mozarabs in Medieval and Early Modern Spain: Identities and Influences*. Burlington, Vt: Ashgate Pub, 2007. Ch 2: “Muslims and Christians in al-Andalus in the Early Eighth Century,” pp. 7-23.

Thursday 9/22: Crusades - Standard Narrative

- MS: The Christian Counter-Attack (112-140)

Tuesday 9/27: Crusades – Alternate Narratives

- Cobb, Paul M. *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. Ch 2: “The Frightened Sea” (excerpts) and Ch 7: “From Every Deep Valley” (excerpts) pp. 36-49, 65-70, 194-212.

Thursday 9/29: Library Day\*

- Meet in the library (regular class time, GL 280 – they will open the door off the main 2<sup>nd</sup> floor lobby right at 5pm) to work on developing a reading list for the bibliography.

Tuesday 10/4: After the Fighting\*

- Malcolm Barber. “The Social Context of the Templars.” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 34 (1984): 27-46. (Jstor)
- Carole Hillenbrand. *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*. New York: Routledge, 2000. Ch 6: “Aspects of Life in the Levant in the Crusading Period” (excerpts).

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**Thursday 10/6:** No Class, Finish Annotated Bibliographies

- **Annotated Bibliography Due**

Tuesday 10/11: How to Read a Divided Spain? or, When is a Crusade a Crusade?\*

- O'Callaghan, Joseph F. *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003. Ch 1: "Reconquest, Holy War, and Crusade," pp 1-22. (JStor)

### **Commerce: Exchange, Economic and Social**

Thursday 10/13: Mohammed, Charlemagne, and an Elephant\*

- Henri Pirenne. *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1937. Introduction.
- Henri Pirenne. *Mohammed and Charlemagne*. London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1939. Conclusion (284-5)
- Michael McCormick. *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, A.D. 300-900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 784-798.

Tuesday 10/18: Jewish Merchants

- Mark R. Cohen. *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. Ch 5: "The Economic Factor" (77-103)

Thursday 10/20: Trade and the Late Middle Ages\*

- MS The Closing of the Middle Ages. (194-198 ONLY)
- Freedman, Paul. "Spices and Late-Medieval European Ideas of Scarcity and Value." *Speculum* 80, no. 4 (2005): 1209-27.

### **Captivity: Slavery in the Mediterranean**

Tuesday 10/25: End of a Slave Society?: Slavery in the Early Middle Ages

- Michael McCormick. "New Light on the 'Dark Ages': How the Slave Trade Fuelled the Carolingian Economy." *Past and Present*, Volume 177, Number 1 (November 01, 2002), pp. 17-54

Thursday 10/27: Captivity and Slavery in Iberia\*

- James William Brodman "Municipal Ransoming Law on the Medieval Spanish Frontier." *Speculum*, Vol. 30 (1985): 318-330. (Jstor)
- Blumenthal, Debra. "Defending Their Masters' Honour: Slaves as Violent Offenders in Fifteenth-Century Valencia." In *A Great Effusion of Blood?: Interpreting Medieval Violence*, edited by Mark D. Meyerson, Daniel Thierry, and Oren Falk, 34-56. University of Toronto Press, 2004.

Tuesday 11/1: Slavery and Slavery in Medieval Islam: The Curious Case of the Mamluks

- Reuven Amitai. "The Mamluk Institution, or One Thousand Years of Military Slavery in the Islamic World." In *Arming Slaves: From Classical Times to the*

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*Modern Age*, edited by Christopher Leslie Broan and Philip D. Morgan. 36-58. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Thursday 11/3: The Birth of Plantation Slavery\*

- Philip D. Curtin. *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. Chs. 1 and 2: “The Mediterranean Origins” and “Sugar Planting: From Cyprus to the Atlantic Islands,” 3-28.

Tuesday 11/8: Mediterranean in Literature

- No Reading. We will read a variety of literature in class.

Note: Election day. I will not take attendance today. Please go vote.

Thursday 11/10: Writing Workshop

**Sunday 11/13: Research Paper Due**

**The Mediterranean in the Age of Global Contact**

Tuesday 11/15: New Kid on the Pond: The Ottomans

- MS The Fall of Constantinople (217-238)

Thursday 11/17: Isolation and Expulsion of the Jews

- MS. The Catholic Kings and the Italian Adventure (ONLY 239-244)  
AND ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:
- Benjamin Ravid. “The Venetian Government and the Jews” in *The Jews of Early Modern Venice*. Edited by R.C. Davis and B. Ravid. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001. (3-31)  
OR
- Henry Kamen. “The Mediterranean and the Expulsion of Spanish Jews in 1492.” *Past and Present*, No. 119 (1988): 30-55. (JStor)

Tuesday 11/22: The Changing Shape of the Mediterranean

- David Ringrose. *Expansion and Global Interaction, 1200-1700*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 2001. Ch 2: “The Struggle for the Mediterranean, 1300-1700. (29-62) Skip Boxes.

**Thursday 11/24: Thanksgiving (No Class)**

Tuesday 11/29: The Mediterranean to the Atlantic

- Abbas Hamdani. “Ottoman Response to the Discovery of America and the New Route to India.” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. Vol. 101, No. 3 (1981), 323-330. (JStor)

Thursday 12/1: Wrap Up

- No reading
- Media Analysis Due

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**Assignments:**

Research Paper	50%
Paper Proposal (9/13)	10%
Annotated Bibliography (10/11)	15%
Final Paper (11/13)	25%
Current Media Analysis (12/1)	20%
Participation	15%
Blog Posts	15%

**Research Paper:**

Over the course of the semester, we will be doing a very broad sweep of the history and historiography of an entire period over a period of over 1000 years. The research paper will provide you with an opportunity to examine one small aspect of Mediterranean contact during this broad sweep.

Your work on this research project will be spread across several steps over the course of the semester. These steps will help keep you on track to complete the project. You will also get feedback on each step. These steps and the feedback should give you the best chance of completing the project as successfully as possible.

**Paper Proposal Due 9/13:** Choose a question from the Paper Questions list on Blackboard. Do some research on the event or groups that the question focuses on. Consider how you will approach the topic. Write up:

- A one-two paragraph summary of the event(s) under question, demonstrating an understanding of the event as well as the historical and geographic context and the groups involved.
- Point to a few aspects that you think are particularly interesting. These should represent areas where you might focus your paper.
- Include a list of five scholarly secondary sources you can use to help you answer that question. These should not be sources listed on the syllabus. You do not have to have read these sources yet, but you need to have begun identifying them.

**Annotated Bibliography Due 10/11:** Assemble a bibliography of scholarly secondary sources. You will be unlikely to find secondary sources (or at least more than one source) specifically on [your theme] in [your text]. Instead, you will need to read a few secondary sources on your text and a larger number of secondary sources on your theme at the time and place that your text was written. Read these sources carefully. Then write your annotated bibliography as follows:

- Begin with a paragraph detailing how you approach your research question; that is, what is your topic, what is your question, and what do you think your thesis might be. Including your working thesis is important! It might change, but you should have developed one at this point.
- Summarize your reading to this point in an eight-item annotated bibliography. Each annotation should include
  - Accurate bibliography according to the Chicago Manual of Style (see the resources folder on blackboard)
  - The topic, question, and thesis of the piece.

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- The evidence that the author uses.
- How the piece relates to others on your bibliography.
- Your evaluation of the author's argument.

For more on writing an annotated bibliography and examples, see the handout in the resources folder on blackboard.

**Paper Due 11/13:** Write an argumentative 8-10 page paper with THESIS and EVIDENCE from your source and from a minimum of eight scholarly secondary sources (these do not have to be the same ones as on your annotated bibliography). The thesis must answer the question but will also focus it.

**Current Media Analysis Due 12/1:** Choose one current media depiction of events in the Medieval Middle East. This could include a news article, a Hollywood movie or a TV show, a documentary, a political speech, a blog, a book... and probably many other things I'm not currently thinking of. It must have been made/created in the last 10 years and it must at least mention the history of intercultural contact in the Mediterranean basin. Your paper (2-3 pages) describe the sources and address the historical accuracy of the events mentioned, but also consider the reason that the author/ creator of your source mentions the history. What point is the author/ creator making and how is the history helpful? If the history is distorted, why did the author choose to distort it?

Participation is not simply coming to class, although you certainly cannot participate if you are not there! Nor is participation only coming prepared, listening alertly or taking notes, while those are also very important. These things alone will earn you a participation grade around 50%. Participation means contributing to the discussion. This can mean answering a question that your TA asked, but it can also mean asking a question about something that confused you, responding to a comment made by a classmate, actively participating in group work, or bringing up something that particularly interested you. Your comments, questions, and responses to others make all of us better scholars

Blog Posts: When the drop-add period ends you will be divided into small groups. Each of these groups will have a separate blog on Blackboard to which all group members can post and in which you will be having conversations about the materials amongst yourself. Ten times during the semester, on days marked with an astrik (\*) I will ask you to post a response to a question I post to the blog on the reading. I will post the questions 5-7 days in advance and ask you to make the post by class time.

I will then ask you to make at least two shorter responses by the following class. You do not need to wait until after class to make the shorter posts. These posts should include responses to your peers' posts but can also include additional posts by you to your group blog tying this week's question and/or reading back to previous conversations that your group had on their blog.

Posts and responses should:

- Address the question or response posed.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the reading and be historically accurate.
- Includes reasoning and evidence.
- Demonstrate critical thought about the reading, moving beyond the obvious or surface meaning and working to pull together different texts that class or across classes.

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- Consider the reading in light of what we have previously learned and read in the course.
- Use good writing, including full sentences and correct spelling, and present a single, coherent response that makes logical sense.
- Responses of “I agree” are not acceptable. That isn’t a conversation. You must say WHY and present new or supporting evidence. Ask as question. Disagree. Offer an alternative interpretation.

**Support:**

**ME! I want to help you succeed in this class.**

Come see me. I am happy to talk with you about ways to approach the class, or at any stage of the paper-writing process, including brainstorming.

Once you have a draft (even a rough draft), I am also happy to offer suggestions on how to make the paper stronger. I do ask for 48 hours turn-around time to get it back to you.

**The History Tutors!** There are several history tutors working in the history department main office (DM 390). Their job is to tutor students in history classes. They are experienced upper-level history majors and graduate students who can help with papers, preparing for exams, or keeping on top of class in general. To set up an appointment, please visit their website:

**<http://history.fiu.edu/tutoring>**

**The Center for Excellence in Writing!** The Center for Excellence in Writing is freely available to you. The staff can help you with all aspects of writing, from approaching the question and brainstorming to techniques for editing. Their website is: **<http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/>**

**Class Policies:**

**Attendance and Participation:** Historians, at any level, cannot work in isolation; we depend on the insights, experience and knowledge of colleagues to help us. In order to achieve this dialogue, you must come to class and do so prepared (for more, see “participation” under Assignments).

I will take attendance each day. Excused absences may be granted in the event of serious medical issues (with a doctor’s note), religious holiday, the death of an immediate family member, military duty, a court date, and participation in some college events. In each of these cases, it is your responsibility to contact me in a timely manner and request that the absence be excused. I reserve the right to require documentation to excuse an absence.

If you are absent for any reason, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate.

**Classroom Behavior:** Arrive on time; stay until class ends. Failure to do so will affect your attendance. If you must arrive late or leave early, do so with as little disturbance as possible. No e-cigarettes in class. Turn cell phones OFF. If you cannot do this, let us know in advance.

In accordance with the Student Handbook (p. 11 and following), you have the right to agree, disagree, challenge, and question the opinions and comments of others, including the instructor. You do not have the right to be disrespectful to anyone else in the classroom or to act in a way that makes others uncomfortable. **Such behavior will not be tolerated.**

**Late Policy:** Assignments are due at Turnitin via the class’s Blackboard site at the beginning of class on the assigned day. The grade on any late written work is automatically reduced by one-

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third of a letter (B+ becomes a B; the number of points varies by assignment) for each day the paper is late, including Saturday and Sunday, unless an extension is granted by me. No quizzes will be accepted after the start of the class they are due. No regular-semester work will be accepted beyond 5pm on the last day of this class.

**Scholastic Dishonesty:** According to the FIU student handbook (p. 11) “In meeting one of the major objectives of higher education, which is to develop self-reliance, it is expected that students will be responsible for the completion of their own academic work.” Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarizing (representing someone else’s work as your own), cheating on assignments or examinations, or engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work. It will result in a penalty ranging from a zero on the assignment to failure in the course and reporting to the University. **If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism, see me.**

**Note to Students with Disabilities:** If you have or believe you might have a disability-related need for modification or reasonable accommodations in this course, contact the Disability Resources Center (drc.fiu.edu). I am very happy to work with you and with them to accommodate you in the best way possible. Even if you do not need accommodation, I highly advise you to let me know if you have a disability that might affect your performance in this class.

**Accommodations:** If you foresee any possible problem meeting any of the requirements of this course—including attendance and prompt submission of assignments—please see me as soon as possible. **It is easier for everyone to address an issue before it becomes a problem.**

**Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and to honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.** [This is a required statement, but it might be moved to a separate sheet and posted to ecampus]

Finally, I reserve the right to change the syllabus to facilitate better learning.