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EUH 4384: The Premodern Mediterranean

Fall 2018

2:00-2:50 Monday and Wednesday; Paul Cejas Architecture 150

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. We will consider political, economic, and religious trends, and how these factors, along with individual agency, shaped cross-cultural interactions. These interactions were friendly and tense, respectful and violent, charged and indifferent, destructive and profitable.

In the course of the semester, we will not only investigate these trends and interactions, but we will focus particularly on how historians have made sense of the often contradictory evidence from the past. How do their evidence, their perspectives, and modern events and debates shape their interpretations?

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:

- 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.
- Consider how historians make sense of the past; how evidence, perspectives, and contemporary debates shape their interpretations; and how interpretations evolve and conflict with one another.
- 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.

This is a Global Learning Discipline-specific course that counts towards your Global Learning graduation requirement. As such, we also have the following 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. (Global Awareness)
- 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. (Global Perspectives)
- Students will be able to apply knowledge of history to analyze a current media depiction of Mediterranean contact. (Global Engagement)

A note on the history of religion:

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Religion is not static; beliefs and practices are not the same over time, in different places, or even from individual to individual within a single community. As historians, we are interested in what people believed at certain periods and how religious belief and practiced shaped actions.

As historians, we are not interested in whether or not what they believed is (or was) correct. That is a doctrinal question for theologians or a personal question for individual believers.

Instructor:

Dr. Tovah Bender, Department of History
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DM 391C
Office Hours: noon-1:00 M; 2:00-5:00 T

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:

Monique O'Connell and Eric R Dusteler. *The Mediterranean World: From the fall of Rome to the rise of Napoleon*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014 (MW in the syllabus)
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 e-copy, or a laptop with access to the electronic copy are all acceptable options.

Introduction: What is the History of a Region?

In this module, we will:

- *develop a working definition of "historiography" and how we will approach that subject in this class.*
- *begin to consider the benefits and drawbacks of environmental, as apposed to national or political, geographic boundaries on areas of historical study.*
- *discuss ways to define the Mediterranean and its boundaries, as well as considering historical debates on this subject.*

Monday 8/20: Introduction

Wednesday 8/22: What is the Mediterranean

- M Introduction: The Idea of the Mediterranean (1-11)

Monday 8/27: Defining Historical Areas

Horden and Purcell. *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000. Introduction and Ch 1: "A Geographical Expression," 1-26

Coexistence: The Rise and Evolution of Religious Communities

In this module, we will:

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- *Develop a basic working understanding of each of the three major faiths in the Mediterranean, as well as their variety.*
- *Understand their spread and distribution in the early Middle Ages, and consider how and why they spread as they did.*
- *Consider how these religious groups interacted with and saw one another, both within and outside their realms, and how historians have understood these relationships.*

Wednesday 8/29: Mare Nostrum: The World Created by Romans*

- MW Ch 1: The Waning of the Roman Mediterranean (12-32)

Monday 9/3: No Class – Labor Day

Wednesday 9/4: Christianity and Judaism in 50 minutes or less

- No reading – get a jump on your proposal

Monday 9/10: Mohammed, the Caliphs, and Islam

- MW Chapter 2: Forging New Traditions: Islamic and Christian Societies (Excerpts: Intro and An Arabic Mediterranean, pp. 33-41)
- Pact of Umar, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/pactumar.html>

Wednesday 9/12: Jews in the Mediterranean: Under Christians and Muslims*

- MW Chapter 3: Early Medieval Economies and Cultures (excerpts: Intro, Cultural Capitals and Intellectual Exchange, and Religious Life: Conversion and Shared Sanctities, pp. 54-55, 61-71)
- Mark R. Cohen. *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. Intro and Ch 1: “Myth and Countermyth,” pp. XV-XXI and 3-14)

Friday 9/14 Proposal Due

Conflict: Crusade and Conquest

In this module, we will:

- *Consider the role of religion, and particularly the concept of holy warfare, in conflict in the Mediterranean.*
- *Consider how different perspectives and writing historical techniques influence the narrative of an event (in this case, the crusades).*
- *Apply our skills in identifying and evaluating historical arguments in scholarly works.*

Monday 9/17: Factionalism and Alliances circa 1000

- MW Chapter 2: Forging New Traditions: Islamic and Christian Societies (excerpt: Climate Change and Collapse, pp. 48-53)
- Chapter 3: Early Medieval Economies and Cultures (excerpt: Religious Institutions: Monasteries and Ribats and The Rise of Religious Orthodoxies, pp. 71-80)
- Chapter 4: Reshaping Political Communities: Christian and Muslim Holy Wars (excerpt: New Contenders for Power from the Peripheries, pp. 82-87)

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Wednesday 9/19: Crusades - Standard Narrative*

- John Julius Norwich. *The Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean*. Vintage Books: 2006. (112-140)

Monday 9/24: Crusades – Alternate Narratives

- Carole Hillenbrand. *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*. New York: Routledge, 2000. (excerpts: Chapter 2 The First Crusade and the Muslim's initial Reaction to the Coming of the Franks and Chapter 3L Jihad in the Period 569-690/1174-1291, pp 181-193.).

Wednesday 9/26: 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, 197-212.

Monday 10/1: Library Day*

- Meet in the library (regular class time, place TBA) to work on developing a reading list for the bibliography.
- GL280

Wednesday 10/3: After the Fighting

- Malcolm Barber. “The Social Context of the Templars.” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 34 (1984): 27-44. (Jstor)

Monday 10/8: How to Read a Divided Spain? 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)

Wednesday 10/10: No Class Finish Annotated Bibliographies

Friday 10/12 Annotated Bibliography Due

Commerce: Exchange Economic and Social

In this module we will:

- Consider different ways historians can study the history of trade.
- Consider the ways that the desire for trade and commerce ran against or overcame the disempowerment of certain groups or religious or political divides.

Monday 10/15: Mohammed, Charlemagne, and an Elephant*

- MW Chapter 3: Early Medieval Economies and Cultures (Excerpt: Shifting Economies and Merchant Networks, pp. 54-61)
- Henri Pirenne. *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1937. Introduction.
- Michael McCormick. *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, A.D. 300-900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 784-798.

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Wednesday 10/17: Shifting the Middlemen

- MW. Chapter 6: Commerce, Conquest, and Travel (130-154) and Ch 8: The Renaissance Bazaar (excerpt: Networks of Exchange and Material Culture pp. 178-184)

Monday 10/22: Women as Intercultural Merchants

- McKee, Sally. "Women under Venetian Colonial Rule in the Early Renaissance: Observations on Their Economic Activities." *Renaissance Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (1998): 34-67.

Wednesday 10/24: Trade and the Late Middle Ages*

- Freedman, Paul. "Spices and Late-Medieval European Ideas of Scarcity and Value." *Speculum* 80, no. 4 (2005): 1209-27.

Captivity: Slavery in the Mediterranean

In this module, we will:

- Consider the roles of slaves in both the economy and in military warfare.
- Explore the ways that slavery changed over the period from the slave society of the Roman Empire to that of the Atlantic World.
- Discuss and practice the elements of writing an argumentative paper.

Monday 10/29: 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." *Post and Present*, Volume 177, Number 1 (November 01, 2002), pp. 17-54

Wednesday 10/31: Captivity and Slavery in Iberia

- MW Chapter 5: Crossing Boundaries: Medieval Frontier Societies (excerpts Individual and Community Lives on the Frontier and Conversion Persuasion and Inquisition pp. 105-116)
- James William Brodwin. "Municipal Ransoming Law on the Medieval Spanish Frontier." *Speculum*, Vol. 30 (1985): 318-330. (Jstor)

Monday 11/5: Slavery and Slavery in Medieval Islam: The Curious Case of the Mamluks

Reuben Amit. "The Mamluk Institution, or One Thousand Years of Military Slavery in the Islamic World." In *Arming Slaves: From Classical Times to the Modern Age*, edited by Christopher Leslie Broan and Philip D. Morgan. 36-58. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Wednesday 11/7: 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.

Monday 11/12: No Class – Veteran's Day (observed)

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Wednesday 11/14: Writing Workshop

Friday 11/16: Research Paper Due

Epilogue: The Mediterranean in the Age of Global Contact

In this module, we will:

- Consider the ways that events in the Mediterranean shaped Europeans' push into the Atlantic.
- Explore how the Mediterranean served as a precursor to Atlantic Exploration.
- Discuss the ways that the media uses the history of the premodern Mediterranean for a variety of purposes and the effect of that on our historical understandings.

Monday 11/19: New Kid on the Pond: The Ottomans

- MW Chapter 9: Mediterranean Empires: Hapsburg, Venetian, and Ottoman (206-235)

Wednesday 11/21: The Changing Shape of the Mediterranean

- David Ringrose. *Expansion and Global Interaction, 1500-1700*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 2001. Ch 2: "The Struggle for the Mediterranean, 1300-1700. (29-62) Skip Boxes.

Monday 11/26: 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)

Wednesday 11/28: Wrap Up

- No reading

Wednesday 11/28 Media Analysis Due

Assignments:

Research Paper	50%
Paper Proposal (9/14)	10%
Annotated Bibliography (10/12)	15%
Final Paper (11/16)	25%
Current Media Analysis (11/28)	10%
Participation	20%
Blog Posts	20%

Research Paper

Over the course of the semester, we will be doing a very broad sweep of the history and historical geography 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.

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Paper Proposal Due 9/14:

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 the question. These should not be sources listed on the syllabus. You do not have to have read these sources yet, but you need to know they exist and are accessible to you.

The entire proposal should be 1-2 pages long.

Annotated Bibliography Due 10/12:

Assemble a bibliography of eight scholarly secondary sources. The sources should be a mix of monographs, chapters in edited volumes, and journal articles. Primary sources are not scholarly secondary sources (because they are not secondary).

You will be unlikely to find eight secondary sources on [exactly your topic]. Instead, you will need to read some on your specific topic, some that touch on your topic but cover more than that, and some that are related to your topic. 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 will 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.
 - The evidence that the author uses.
 - How the piece relates to others on your project.
 - 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 11/16:

Write an argumentative 7-9 page paper with THESIS and EVIDENCE 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 11/28:

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, a video game... and probably many other things I'm not 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.

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Your paper (2-3 pages) will:

- Briefly describe the source(s)
- Address the historical accuracy of the events mentioned
- Consider the goals of the author/ creator of your source. How is the history helpful in achieving this goal? If the history is distorted, why did the author choose to distort it?
- How does this presentation agree with/ correct/ shape common perceptions of the history? For example, does it confirm or create stereotypes? Does it lead to a misunderstanding of events? Does it help people understand the events in a way that agrees with historians' interpretations?

Due at Class time on Weds 11/28

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

Group Discussion (online): When the drop-add period ends you will be divided into small groups. Each of these groups will have a separate discussion forum on Canvas 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 asterisk (*) 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 in 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.
- Include 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.
- 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 you agree and present new or supporting evidence. Ask a question. Disagree. Offer an alternative interpretation.

Support:

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

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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 a 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 learn. 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 holidays, the death of an immediate family member, military duty, a court date, and participation in 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, 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-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.

Scholarship 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

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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.