

HIST 59D

***Histories of a Sea: Commerce, Culture and Material Conditions in the
Mediterranean World***

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Syllabus version 1.3

Course outline

“Histories of a Sea” aims to familiarize students with the long debates and different conceptualizations of the Mediterranean as a historical space. It traces the genealogy of the historiography of the Mediterranean by looking at the different explanations for the connecting factors behind the unity of the Mediterranean, or conversely what brought the end of that unity. Trade, culture, or the environment were the main explanations behind the movement of people, goods, and ideas. Each weekly seminar will thoroughly examine one approach, exploring the main trends in the different visions of the Mediterranean. The course will thus examine the key themes and processes that forged the Mediterranean world, whether one sees it as united, divided, or united-in-diversity.

By the end of the course students will: be able to think and work with big analytical categories; move between different scales of analytical thinking, e.g. local, regional, imperial, global; appreciate the shared and overlapping historical processes across or in parts of the Mediterranean; have the capacity to critically evaluate the political connotations of various conceptualizations of the Mediterranean; have synthesized between different approaches to the Mediterranean.

Course objectives

By the end of the course students will:

- be able to think and work with big analytical categories such as the Mediterranean, as well as move between the different scales of analytical thinking, e.g. local, regional, imperial, Mediterranean, global;
- appreciate the shared and overlapping historical processes between the Ottoman and the Mediterranean world;
- have the capacity to understand and critically evaluate the political connotations of different conceptualizations of the Mediterranean;
- have synthesized between the different approaches to the study of the Mediterranean;
- have acquired an in-depth understanding of different spatial and temporal contexts.

Classes: Fridays, 10:00-13:00 (Vangelis Kechriotis Seminar Room, Museum Building)

Office hours: Tuesdays, 12:00-13:00, or by appointment (Room 505)

Students are required to regularly attend the course and participate in class discussions.

I will be sending the course readings to you electronically.

Please note that this syllabus may change and any additional readings will be made available during the term. The instructor will inform you of any changes.

Course Assessment:

Attendance	10%
Participation	10%
Weekly Presentations	20%
Paper Presentation	20%
Final paper	40%

Essays: You will be provided with some sample questions, but you are encouraged to choose your own topic that fits the course in consultation with the instructor. Essays should be **3,000 words, +/- 10%, double spaced**. Deadline to be announced **Papers submitted late without a valid excuse will be penalized.**

Policy on academic dishonesty:

All the written work you submit in the course including the response papers and the exams is expected to reflect your own work. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and students are expected to familiarize themselves with university policies regarding cheating and plagiarism.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying from a classmate or providing answers or information, either written or oral to others, in an examination or in the preparation of material subject to academic evaluation. Plagiarism is using someone else's writing or ideas without giving written acknowledgement to the author. This includes both verbatim copies of excerpts or whole works, as well as rephrasing one's ideas but not acknowledging the original source. Or, it may mean copying from a fellow student's paper or from a text or internet site without properly citing the source. Boğaziçi University uses Turnitin to check all forms of plagiarism.

Dishonesty in all its forms will result in an "F" for the course as well as in disciplinary action.

Course Programme and Reading List

Week 1 (21 September)

Introduction to the course

Week 2 (28 September)

In search of the barbarians: Rostovtzeff, Pirenne and the prehistory of Mediterranean unity

Mikhail Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Second Edition 1957), pp. vii-xix, 130-91, 502-541

Henri Pirenne, *Mohammed and Charlemagne* (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), pp. 9-16, 75-117, 140-185, 236-286.

Alfred F. Havighurst, (ed.) *The Pirene Thesis: Analysis, Criticism, and Revision*. 3rd Edition (Lexington, Mass: Heath, 1976)

Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell. *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000, pp. 31-34

Week 3 (5 October)

Braudel and the *longue durée*

Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. Siân Reynolds, trans., 2 Vols. London-New York: Fontana, 1972

Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, 36-39

John Strachan, "The colonial cosmology of Fernand Braudel," in Martin Thomas, ed., *The French colonial mind* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), pp. 72-95

Optional Reading

Gabriel Piterberg, Teofilo F. Ruiz, and Geoffrey Symcox (eds), *Braudel revisited : the Mediterranean world, 1600–1800* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010)

Week 4 (12 October)

Trade as the great unifier: Goitein and the mercantile networks of the Geniza

S.D. Goitein Goitein, *A Mediterranean society : the Jewish communities of the Arab world as portrayed in the documents of the Cairo Geniza* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999)

Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, 34-36

Steven M. Wasserstrom, "Apology for S. D. Goitein: an essay," in Adnan A. Husayn and K.E. Fleming, eds, *A Faithful Sea: The Religious Cultures of the Mediterranean, 1200–1700* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007), 173-198

Peter N. Miller, "Two Men in a Boat: The Braudel-Goitein "Correspondence" and the Beginning of Thalassography," in Peter N. Miller, ed. *The Sea: Thalassography and Historiography*, p. 27-59

Week 5 (19 October)

Environment reloaded: McNeill and the Mountains of the Mediterranean

J. R. McNeill, *The Mountains of the Mediterranean World: An Environmental History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)

Karl W. Butzer (2003) Review of The Nature of Mediterranean Europe: An Ecological History, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 93:2, 494-498

Butzer, K. W. 1996b. Review of J. R. McNeill, The mountains of the Mediterranean world. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 86: 780–82

Week 6 (26 October) **NOTE: I WILL BE AWAY ON THAT WEEK. NEW DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED**

Connectivity and unity-in-diversity: Horden and Purcell

Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*

Week 7 (2 November)

The Geohistorical Approach: Faruk Tabak and *The Waning of the Mediterranean*

Faruk Tabak, *The waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geohistorical Approach* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008)

Week 8 (9 November)

Histoire événementielle* strikes back: David Abulafia's *The Great Sea

David Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011)

Week 9 (16 November)

Meso-regional links: Goldberg's *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean*

Jessica L. Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Geniza Merchants and their Business World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Week 10 (23 November)

Human mobility and intellectual history: Clancy-Smith's *Mediterraneans* and Isabella and Zanou's *Mediterranean Diasporas*

Julia A. Clancy-Smith, *Mediterraneans North Africa and Europe in an Age of Migration, c. 1800–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012)

Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou (eds), *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015)

Week 11-13 (30 November, 7 December, 14 December)

Paper Presentations

Key texts

Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. Siân Reynolds, trans., 2 Vols. London-New York: Fontana, 1972.

Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell. *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.

Faruk Tabak, *The Waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geohistorical Approach*.
Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007.

David Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean* London: Allen Lane.