

Indian Ocean Travel & Trade, 1000-1700

Spring 2011, MW 3:30-5 pm
HIS 350L (39655)/ ANS 361 (31855)

Cynthia Talbot
CBA 4.340

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This undergraduate seminar examines long-distance travel and trade in the Indian Ocean region from approximately 1000 to 1700 AD. It looks both at the experiences of individual travelers as recorded in narratives about their journeys, as well as at larger patterns of trade, migration, exploration, and conquest within this extensive region extending from the shores of East Africa to Japan. Although the course explores the significance of travel narratives as a genre of literature, it also surveys the historical developments that led to growing travel from one world region to another and the cultural differences reflected in the travel accounts. The greatest attention is paid to the Indian subcontinent, due to its focal point in the region, but other sectors of the Indian Ocean are also considered. A comparative perspective is fostered through analysis of travel accounts written by people from the Middle East and China, in addition to the more abundant travel literature produced by Europeans.

Students will be exposed to a variety of traders and travelers in the first part of the course, as well as to ideas about travel literature as a whole. Toward the end of the semester, students will engage in individual research on a topic of their own choice. Possible topics for research include an in-depth analysis of a specific traveler, a comparison of writings on a particular region by different types of travelers such as traders and missionaries, an analysis of differing attitudes towards different regions by the same type of traveler, or a study of changes in trade routes to a region.

Note: This course carries the Global Cultures flag and the Writing Flag.

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

<u>Office Hours</u>	Wednesdays 1-3 pm & by appointment
<u>Office</u>	GAR 3.106; tel. 475-9303
<u>E-Mail Address</u>	<ctalbot@mail.utexas.edu>

READINGS:

The required readings are listed by week on the schedule below. All readings are either available online or on the course Blackboard site; none need be purchased.

REQUIREMENTS:

In the first part of the semester, students will be required to submit five short reading responses (400-500 words in length). Each student will also write two drafts of an analytical

paper (1500 words) relating to the course readings; the first draft of the paper will be revised on the basis of an anonymous peer review carried out by class members. Subsequently, students will embark on individual research on a topic of their own choosing, beginning with a research proposal (abstract and bibliography) and culminating in two drafts of a research paper (3000 words). Each student will make an oral presentation to the class, reporting on progress made in his/her research project. Class attendance and participation in discussion and class activities will also be assessed.

Various aspects of student performance will be weighted as listed below in determining the final grade for the course:

5 reading responses	25%
2 drafts of analytical paper	20%
research paper proposal	5%
oral presentation of research	5%
2 drafts of research paper	30%
attendance & participation	15%

Please note that pluses and minuses to the final letter grade will be applied in this course.

COURSE POLICIES:

-- I will use the course web site on Blackboard to post readings and make announcements relating to the course – check the site regularly for new information. It is your responsibility to maintain a functioning email account linked to Blackboard.

-- Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class schedules. It is the policy of UT-Austin that you must notify each of your instructors at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day.

-- Because this course is a seminar, student attendance and participation is critical. Students will therefore be allowed no more than two absences without documented proof of good reason (such as severe illness or death in the family). However, please note that attendance is mandatory on March 21st & 23rd, when we will conduct peer critiques of paper drafts. Any additional absences will adversely affect the final grade for the course.

-- There are numerous written assignments spaced throughout the semester and it is vital that you do not fall behind. Late assignments will be subject to a grade penalty, to be applied at the instructor's discretion.

-- Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Please be aware that I will refer all instances of plagiarism (even a paragraph long!) to the Dean of Students.

-- Students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by

presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY.

Schedule of Class Meetings & Assignments

WK 1 – INTRODUCTION

Wed. 1/19 Introduction to Course

WK 2 – INDIAN OCEAN REGION: AN OVERVIEW

Mon. 1/24 Physical & Cultural Geography

Wed. 1/26 discussion: Indian Ocean Unity & Disunity

reading: Michael Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*, pp. 1-45

reading response 1 due 10 pm Tues. 1/25

- Q. Is the Indian Ocean region a coherent physical or cultural unit?
In what ways is it unified and how is it not unified?

WK 3 – THE CIRCULATION OF PEOPLE, 1000-1500

Mon. 1/31 Merchant Communities & Trade Diasporas

Wed. 2/2 discussion: Mobility of Coastal Peoples

reading: Amitav Ghosh, “Slave of MS. H.6,” in *Subaltern Studies 7*;
& selection from *India Traders of the Middle Ages: Documents from the Cairo Geniza*, by S.D. Goitein and M. A. Friedman

reading response 2 due 10 pm Tues. 2/1

- Q. In what ways did Indian Ocean trade lead to physical or social mobility,
based on your understanding of the 12th century situation?

WK 4 – TRADE GOODS & MARKETS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

Mon. 2/7 video: *Sultan’s Lost Treasure*

Wed. 2/9 discussion: Commodities & Port Cities

reading: K.N. Chaudhuri, *Trade & Civilization in the Indian Ocean*,
chaps. 5 & 9

reading response 3 due 10 pm Tues. 2/8

- Q. What was an important commodity OR port city before 1750? Discuss only a
single item or place; you may do additional research but must cite your sources!

WK 5 – EXPLORATION & TRAVEL WITHIN THE INDIAN OCEAN

Mon. 2/14 Travel & Travelers within the Indian Ocean
 Wed. 2/16 discussion: Accounts of Ma Huan & Sidi Ali Reis

reading: EITHER Ma Huan, *Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores* [1433 CE],
 OR Sidi Ali Reis, *Mirat ul Memalik*, 1557 CE at:
 <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/16CSidi1.html>>

reading response 4 due 10 pm Tues. 2/15

- Q. What are the traveler's attitudes toward the places & peoples he visits?
 How do his occupation, nationality, or religion shape his travel account?

WK 6 – EUROPEAN EXPANSIONISM & CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

Mon. 2/21 The Coming of Europeans: An Overview
 Wed. 2/23 discussion: Portuguese Encounters with South Asians

reading: Chandra Richard de Silva, "Beyond the Cape: The Portuguese
 Encounter with the Peoples of South Asia," in *Implicit Understandings*,
 edited by Stuart B. Schwartz
 & "Vasco da Gama: Round Africa to India, 1497-1498 CE,"
 <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1497degama.html>>

note: East Asianists can substitute readings by Matteo Ricci or Francis Xavier

optional: Michael Pearson, "Europeans in the Indian Ocean World,"
 in *The Indian Ocean* [electronic book]

reading response 5 due 10 pm Tues. 2/22

- Q. How did the Portuguese act or react in their first encounters with South Asians?

WK 7 – EARLY MODERN TRAVEL NARRATIVES

Mon. 2/28 "Travel Narratives" website (read online, no class)
 Wed. 3/2 Cosmopolitanism of Mughal India

reading: "Travel Narratives," *World History Sources*, at
 <<http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/unpacking/travelscholar.html>>
 & Michael Fisher ed., *Visions of Mughal India: An Anthology of
 European Travel Writing* (skim)

WK 8 – COMPARING TRAVELERS IN MUGHAL INDIA

Mon. 3/7 discussion: Varieties of Travelers & Travelogues
 Wed. 3/9 India & Early Modern International Trade/
draft paper 1 due (electronic)

reading: Michael Fisher ed., *Visions of Mughal India: An Anthology of
 European Travel Writing* (read 2 accounts closely)

-- SPRING BREAK--

WK 9 – PEER CRITIQUE OF FIRST PAPER

Mon. 3/21 Group Peer Critique, Session 1
Wed. 3/23 Group Peer Critique, Session 2

WK 10 – CONDUCTING LIBRARY RESEARCH AT PCL

Mon. 3/28 PCL Session with Bibliographer Merry Burlingham/
revised paper 1 due (hard copy)
Wed. 3/30 Individual Library Research (no class)

WK 11 – DEVELOPING A RESEARCH TOPIC & QUESTION

Mon. 4/4 Individual Meetings with Instructor
Wed. 4/6 Individual Meetings with Instructor
paper proposal due by 2 pm Fri. 4/8 (electronic)

WK 12 – WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER, WEEK ONE

Mon. 4/11 Aspects of Paper Writing
Wed. 4/13 Individual Work (or consult instructor)

WK 13 – WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER, WEEK TWO

Mon. 4/18 Individual Work (or consult instructor)
Wed. 4/20 Individual Work/ **draft paper 2 due 5 pm** (electronic)

WK 14 – PRESENTATIONS OF RESEARCH

Mon. 4/25 Student Research Presentations
Wed. 4/27 Student Research Presentations

WK 15 – SUMMING UP

Mon. 5/2 The Indian Ocean Today
Wed. 5/4 **revised paper 2 due 3:30 pm (hard copy)**