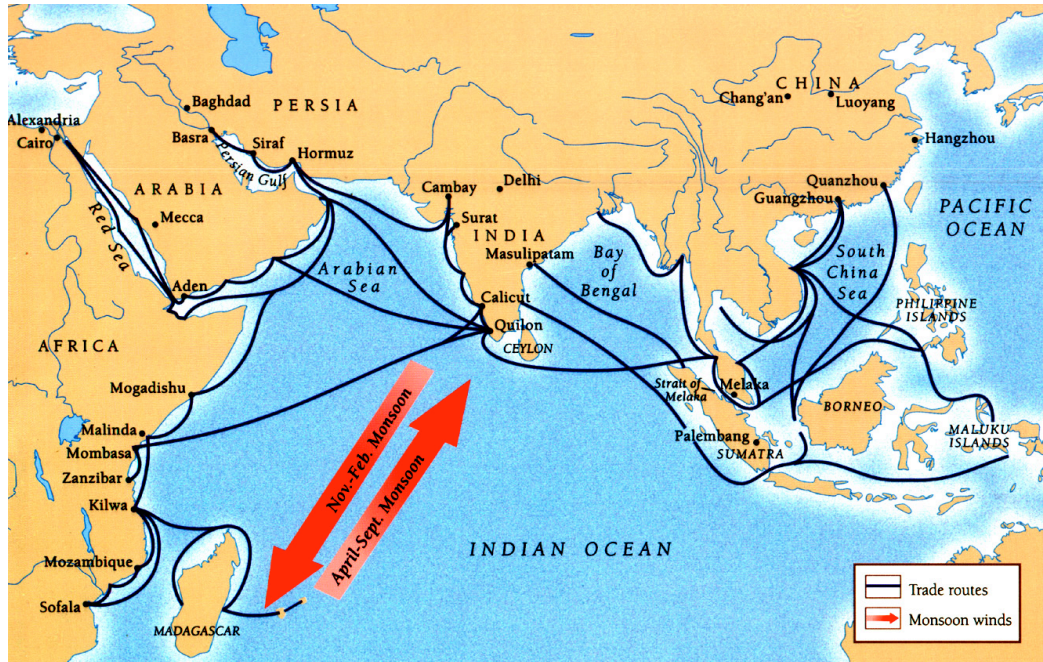


Africa/Indian Ocean World

HIS 350L

Venue and Time: T 3:30 pm-6:30 pm, MEZ 2.122

Instructor: Toyin Falola, Email: toyinfalola@austin.utexas.edu



Course Description:

This course explores the connected histories of the geographical regions and economic communities that share the littoral space of the Indian Ocean. Historians have described the Indian Ocean World in relation to varied conceptions of time, space, and cultural location. Economic historians have identified it as a sophisticated and durable system of long-distance exchange that connects Africa and China and all points in between. Historical scholarship set in the intersection between economic and cultural history looks at this vast oceanic region as an area of social and cultural diversity rooted in civilizations such as the 'Irano-Arabic,' 'Hindu,' and 'Chinese.' But such definitions based on rise and fall of civilizations marginalize the significant role of East African societies in the making of the Indian Ocean World. Therefore, recent historiography describes the Indian Ocean as an interregional arena of economy and culture, which

stands somewhere between the generalities of the ‘world system’ and the specificities of particular regions. Through an engagement with such historiographical shifts, this course explores the connected histories of Africa in the Indian Ocean World from the early modern to the modern period. Focusing on the histories of trade, labor, and ideas, it will explore the multiple connections that pre-colonial African societies shared with the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. It further looks at how European intervention in the commercial networks of the Indian Ocean World from the last decade of the fifteenth century transformed the trade relations between the littoral societies of East Africa and South Asia. However, old trading communities not only survived but found new ways of engaging with commercial activities. This course explores such changes in the Indian Ocean World through thematic discussions on trading communities, labor migration, and shared cultural heritage. Finally, it explores how Africa’s interactions with the Indian Ocean communities changed due to European colonial impositions and during the struggles for decolonization.

Course Objectives:

- 1) Oceanic histories, by default, are transnational in nature. One of the primary objectives of this course is to help the students think beyond the national models of historical writing and explore the historical connections between different world regions. It will help students to think about mobility, borders, and spatial imagination associated with the ideas of space and place.
- 2) The course will also encourage students to engage with transnational and global histories moving beyond the agendas of area studies. Students will identify key themes in African and South Asian history, which demands an examination of the transregional economic, political, social, and cultural agents. The selected readings will encourage students to explore the imbricated nature of the economic, social, and cultural histories of the field.
- 3) As the course explores the history of connected geographies, rise and fall of economic communities, making and unmaking of boundaries, and the mobility of people and disseminations of ideas in the *longue durée* of historical formation in the Indian Ocean World, students will become familiar with multiple forms

historical writing. In doing so, the course will introduce the intersections between different categories of historical analysis.

- 4) Students will learn how to analyze primary source documents and apply this to their written work. Students will learn how to analyze secondary sources, including films and literature, and apply this to their written work.

Course Materials:

All will be provided by the Instructor

Grading Components:

Attendance: 15%

Community project: 10%

Bibliographical project: 15%

Primary source analysis: 20%

Final paper: 40%

Attendance Policy:

The class attendance will be counted based on a total of 12 weeks. 15 points of the final grade will come from class attendance. For each absence, students will lose 1.25 points out of the total 15 points.

Community Project:

As part of the community project, students will research on cuisines, clothes, music, and works of literature that tell us a story of historical connection between different regions across the Indian Ocean. Students will write an essay (word limit 500) based on their research. It's due on the third week of class. The assignment should be typed in Times New Roman, double space.

Bibliographical project:

As the course progresses, each student will prepare a thematic bibliography on a topic of their own choice. This bibliography of secondary readings is meant to help the students develop their final essay. Students are welcome to discuss the bibliography in class or with the instructors during office hours. The bibliography should be prepared

according to Chicago Style Sheet. Students will submit the bibliography on **October 30** in class.

Primary Source Analysis:

Students will find five primary sources that fit a particular topic/theme discussed in the class. They can be acquired from digital archives or from a local archive/museum/library, etc. First, students must pick a theme to address. Then, students should narrow their topic through a process of secondary and primary research. Details of this process will be discussed in class. The final product will be an analytical essay, which uses the primary and secondary sources to support a student-generated thesis. All submissions should be at least 5 pages long (double-spaced, size 12, and Times New Roman font). Students will submit this essay on **November 20** in class.

Final Paper:

Students will submit the final long-essay (10-12 pages, double-spaced, size 12, and Times New Roman font) on **December 10**. The essay should be a continuation of the primary source analysis essay. The essay should have a clearly stated thesis and a synthetic analysis of the secondary literature on the chosen topic. The bibliographical project and the primary source analysis essay will help the students towards this end. The final essay should exhibit students' understanding of historiography as well as their critical thinking. Students are encouraged to draw ideas from the class discussions.

Course Schedule:

Introduction to the Indian Ocean World

September 4: Introduction

Reading:

Edward A. Alpers, *The Indian Ocean in World History*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. (Chapter 1 & 2) (Available on canvas)

Film Screening: *Caravans of Gold*

September 11: Community Project

Part I: Connected Histories and the Material World of the Indian Ocean

September 18: Economic Communities of the Indian Ocean World (1)

Reading:

Edward A. Alpers, *The Indian Ocean in World History*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. (Chapter 3, 4, & 5) (Available on canvas)

Film screening: *Lost Kingdoms of Africa: Great Zimbabwe*

Community Project due (submission in class)

September 25: Economic Communities of the Indian Ocean World (2)

Reading:

Edward A. Alpers. "Gujarat and the Trade of East Africa, c. 1500-1800." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 9, no. 1 (1976): 22-44.

Thomas Vernet, "East African Travelers and Traders in the Indian Ocean: Swahili Ships, Swahili Mobilities ca. 1500–1800." in *Trade, Circulation, and Flow in the Indian Ocean World*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2015.

Film screening: *Maritime History of India*

October 2: Commodities and Interaction: Stories of Cotton (1)

Reading:

Pedro Machado and Sarah Fee, "Introduction: The Ocean's Many Cloth Pathways," in Pedro Machado, Sarah Fee, and Gwyn Campbell, eds. *Textile Trades, Consumer Cultures, and the Material Worlds of the Indian Ocean: An Ocean of Cloth*. Springer, 2018. (Available on canvas)

MacKenzie Moon Ryan, "Converging Trade and New Technologies: The Emergence of Kanga Textiles on the Swahili Coast in the Late Nineteenth Century," in Pedro Machado, Sarah Fee, and Gwyn Campbell, eds. *Textile Trades, Consumer Cultures, and the Material Worlds of the Indian Ocean: An Ocean of Cloth*. Springer, 2018. (Available on canvas)

Film screening: *The Story of India-Spice Routes and Silk Roads*

October 9: Commodities and Interaction: Stories of Cotton (2)

Reading:

Gwyn Campbell, "The Decline of the Malagasy Textile Industry, c.1800-1895," in Pedro

Machado, Sarah Fee, and Gwyn Campbell, eds. *Textile Trades, Consumer Cultures, and the Material Worlds of the Indian Ocean: An Ocean of Cloth*. Springer, 2018. (Available on canvas)

Julia Verne, "Contemporary Geographies of Zanzibari Fashion." in Pedro Machado, Sarah Fee, and Gwyn Campbell, eds. *Textile Trades, Consumer Cultures, and the Material Worlds of the Indian Ocean: An Ocean of Cloth*. Springer, 2018. (Available on canvas)

Part II: Labor and Migration in the Indian Ocean World

October 16: African Slaves in the Indian Ocean World (1)

Reading:

Gwyn Campbell ed. *The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia*, London: Frank Cass, 2004. (Introduction and page 16-51) (Available through Canvas)

October 23: African Slaves in the Indian Ocean World (2)

Reading:

Robert Harms, Bernard K. Freamon, David W. Blight ed. *Indian Ocean Slavery in the Age of Abolition*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013. (Chapter 2 and 3) (Available through Canvas)

Film screening: *The Untold Story of Arab Slave Trade of Africans*

Discussion on how to prepare a bibliography

October 30: Indian Indentured Experience: East Africa and African Islands

Reading:

Marina Carter. "Strategies of Labor Mobilization in Colonial India: The Recruitment of Indentured Workers for Mauritius," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 19, no. 3-4 (1992): 229-245.

Radhika Vyas Mongia, "Race, Nationality, Mobility: A History of the Passport," *Public Culture* 11, no. 3 (1999): 527-555.

Film screening: *Coolies: How Britain Re-Invented Slavery*

Bibliographic project due in class.

November 6: Indian Indentured Experiences: South Africa

Reading:

Ashwin Desai and Goolam Vahed. *Inside Indian Indenture: A South African Story*. Cape

Town: HSRC Press, 2010. (Chapter 1 and 2) (Available on Canvas)

Goolam Vahed and Ashwin Desai. "Indian Indenture: Speaking Across the Oceans," *Man In India* 92, no. 2 (2012): 195-213. (Available on Canvas)

Film Screening: *Stealing a Nation*

Discussion on how to select primary source

Part III: Cultures of the Indian Ocean

November 13: Islam Across the Ocean

Reading:

Goolam Vahed, "Constructions of Community and Identity Among Indians in Colonial Natal, 1860–1910: The Role of the Muharram festival," *The Journal of African History* 43, no. 1 (2002): 77-93. (Available online)

Green, Nile. "Islam for the indentured Indian: a Muslim missionary in colonial South Africa," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 71, no. 3 (2008): 529-553. (Available online)

Film screening: *From Africa to India: Sidi Music in the Indian Ocean Diaspora*

November 20: Dissemination of Culture: India in Africa

Reading:

John C. Hawley, *India in Africa, Africa in India: Indian Ocean Cosmopolitanism*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008. (Chapter 4 and 5) (Available through Canvas)

Film screening: *Queen of Katwe*

Primary source analysis paper due (submission in class)

November 27: Dissemination of Culture: Africa and India

Reading:

John C. Hawley, *India in Africa, Africa in India: Indian Ocean Cosmopolitanism*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008. (Chapter 8 and 9) (Available through Canvas)

Film screening: *Idi Amin Asian Expulsion*

December 4: Literary Histories of the Indian Ocean World

Reading:

Gaurav Desai, *Commerce with the Universe: Africa, India, and the Afrasian Imagination*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2013. (Chapter 1 and 2)
(Available online on UT library)

Film screening: *The Indian Ocean - Retrieving History To Build A Future*

Discussion of research drafts

December 10:

The final paper is due by 12:00 noon December 10.
(Submission via email to the instructor)