



This is an abridged sample syllabus. Information is subject to change. Full syllabus will be distributed to registered students when term begins.

ASIA_V 390 - History of the Indian Ocean World

Sebastian Prange

This course examines the history of the societies and empires that were shaped by voyages of exploration, religious pilgrimages, trading diasporas, and forced migration across the world of the Indian Ocean. Throughout human history, the Indian Ocean has served as a key arena of connections, exchanges, and conflicts and became the site of the first “global” economy. This course aims to highlight different aspects of this history and to offer an alternative vision of the past from conventional, land-based narratives.

The Indian Ocean world witnessed the early emergence of cosmopolitan centres of commercial and cultural exchange that resulted from a sophisticated and durable system of long-distance exchange of commodities, technology, ideas and people. A study of this region allows students to engage with a range of different approaches (such as political, economic, cultural, and religious studies), different periods (from the ancient to the present day), and different regions of Asia.

Mode of Delivery: Online

Sample Readings

Bishara, F.A. (2025), *Monsoon Voyagers An Indian Ocean History* (University of California Press)

Sheriff, A (2010), *Dhow Cultures of the Indian Ocean: Cosmopolitanism, Commerce, and Islam* (Hurst)

Pearson, M (2003), *The Indian Ocean* (Pearson)

Assignments

Online Participation (discussion forums and other asynchronous activities) | 30%

Short Response Papers (4 total) | 20%

Essays (2 total) | 50%