

Bodies of Water, Bodies of Knowledge: Between the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean

How do oceanic epistemologies from the Mediterranean shape the ways in which knowledge is produced on the Indian Ocean? Indian Ocean historiography has been influenced deeply by historical and anthropological work on the Mediterranean since Braudel. Yet the two oceans have very different histories of sovereignty, colonialism and forms of commercial capitalism. What emerges from putting these histories in conversation with one another? My work focuses on dhows - wooden sailing vessels that have long connected the Indian Ocean littoral and navigated multiple regulatory regimes and forms of sovereignty, some of which were introduced in the region from the Mediterranean. What would a "connected history" of these two oceans produce when looked at from the deck of a dhow?