

Mediterranean World, 1450-1750



Course Description

Welcome to Mediterranean World, 1450-1750! The Mediterranean Sea has been a dynamic crossroad for people, goods, and ideas for thousands of years. In this course, we will explore the Mediterranean world in the early modern period. Beginning with the late medieval commercial revolution and the Black Death, we will examine the historical patterns of state development, economic growth, cultural change, and imperial conflict that shaped Mediterranean societies during the Renaissance. Highlights will include discussions of Braudel's influential conception of the Mediterranean, *Annales* history, national historiographies, maritime societies, cultural history, material culture, Mediterranean identities, and religious conflict. Students will consider key aspects of Mediterranean history that are vital for understanding the Mediterranean today, such as urbanization, commercial expansion, historical geography, Renaissance knowledge, migration, Muslim-Christian relations, Mediterranean Jews, Reformation religious change, Counterreformation religiosity, scientific 'revolution', navigation, maritime empires, plantation complex, biological exchange, and gendered honor conceptions.

Finding Me

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Required Books

- David Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada: Society and Religious Culture in an Old-World Frontier City, 1492-1600* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2003). ISBN: 0801441110
- Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim Between Worlds* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006). ISBN: 0809094355
- Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006). ISBN: 978-0801886232
- Eric R. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006). ISBN: 978-0-8018-9105-2
- Robert C. Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, The Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500-1800* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). ISBN 1403945519
- Molly Greene, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants: A Maritime History of the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Princeton University Press, 2010). ISBN 978-0691141978

Mediterranean World Website

Be sure to visit the course website. The Mediterranean World website will provide you with specific information on readings, assignments, internet resources, and a bibliography, and advice on doing historical research and writing.

History 458 Assignments and Grades

Participation and Readings Responses	30%
Document Analysis	20%
Book Review (García-Arenal or Coleman) (4-5 pages)	10%
Mediterranean Historiographical Paper (12-15 pages)	40%

Course Goals

Students will be challenged to engage with the dynamic processes of Mediterranean history and the varying conceptual approaches to studying the Mediterranean. Students will learn to analyze historical events and sources by confronting the interpretive nature of history. They will be challenged to develop their own opinions, analyses, and interpretations through rigorous engagement with historical sources. Critical reading and debating skills will be developed in discussions. Through argumentative and analytical writing assignments, students will work to develop writing skills that can be applied to their future lives and careers. This course will both familiarize you with historical practice and ask you to engage in that practice.

Practical Goals

History is a vital subject that provides student with a framework for understanding the complexities of human societies and cultures. The historical discipline also provides valuable skills that are essential for managing and evaluating information. I have structured this course to accomplish several goals which will make this course applicable to your future life—before and after graduation. Those practical goals are:

- to develop techniques of organization and presentation of information
- to develop critical thinking and textual analysis skills
- to improve expository and argumentative writing processes
- to develop archival research skills necessary for historical research
- to learn how to apply language skills in historical research
- to develop an appreciation of how Mediterranean history shapes the modern societies, cultures, and human geography
- to learn aspects of Mediterranean world history vital for studying or working abroad
- to become aware of the usages of Mediterranean history in today's society in America

Attendance and Absences

Attendance is vital for comprehension of the material and for discussion of the issues in this course. I will take attendance at the beginning of class. No points will be deducted for missing class, but attendance will obviously figure into students' participation grades.

Participation

History courses depend on active student participation to develop analysis, criticism, and debate of important ideas and issues. Your participation is therefore assessed on the basis of your oral communication with the instructor and with fellow students, and your written Reading Responses (short analytic responses to each reading assignment). I will use the following guidelines to assess participation grades based on 4 criteria: *attendance*, *willingness to participate*, *reading comprehension*, and *perceptiveness of comments*:

- A Student is attending class every time, volunteering information frequently, and willingly joining in the discussion. Student shows full comprehension of the readings and makes perceptive comments every class meeting.
- B Student is attending class every time, volunteering regularly, and joining the discussion if called upon. Student shows some comprehension of the readings and makes perceptive comments most class meetings.
- C Student is attending class most of the time and joins the discussion occasionally, but rarely volunteers. Student does not always show comprehension of the readings, but does make some comments.
- D Student is attending class some of the time, but refuses to join the discussion. Student rarely shows comprehension of the readings and makes few comments.
- F Student is attending class rarely and refuses to join the discussion. Student does not show comprehension of the readings and does not actively participate.

Reading Responses

Students will write a short 1-page single-spaced typed Reading Response for certain reading assignments. Bring 2 copies of your Reading Response to class (one to turn in and one to use during discussions). Reading Responses will be collected at the beginning of class and will not be accepted late. Use the following format for each main reading (there will be 1-3 separate documents and/or readings for each Reading Response):

Argument: State briefly the main argument(s) of the assigned reading.

Issues and Analysis: Identify key issues and discuss the themes developed in the work.

Criticism: Pose 2-3 critical questions about the author's approach and/or conclusions.

Written Work

You will have a number of papers and writing assignments during the course of the semester. Some papers may involve multiple drafts and revisions. Please note the due dates in the Lecture/Discussion Topics and Assignments section, below. **Late papers are accepted, but will incur a penalty.** Further guidelines on the papers and paper topics will be handed out later and posted on the Assignments page of the Blackboard website for the course. **Any work submitted electronically must use .DOC or .PDF format and should be given a file name in this form: LASTNAME-HIST458.DOC or LASTNAME-HIST458.PDF.**

Classroom Guidelines

- Come to class! I will conduct class as a freeflowing mixture of lecture and discussion most days. Discussions of readings and peer reviews of writing can only work if you attend class regularly. All of your participation grades are based on in-class work.
- Read each assignment *before* the class period listed and prepare to discuss the assigned readings.
- Take notes on the readings and type up your one-page Reading Response. Print out two copies of the Reading Response, one to turn in at the beginning of class and one to refer to during discussions.
- Bring paper, your study questions, and relevant readings to class in addition to your normal materials.
- Think about the lectures and readings. Raise questions and issues during discussions so that your peers can benefit from your ideas.
- All major written assignments must be turned in to receive a grade in the course.
- Show consideration for your professor, TA, and fellow students in the classroom space. Shut off and put away any cell phones, iPhones, iPods, MP3s, or other electronic devices. Also, put away newspapers, magazines, and reading materials unrelated to the course. Always demonstrate respect for class members in discussions, even if you strongly disagree with their ideas.

General Information

I will follow Northern Illinois University's policies on plagiarism and cheating as indicated in the NIU Undergraduate Catalog. Cheating amounts to copying or stealing answers or information. Plagiarism involves a person using another author's or student's written work and ideas without proper credit and citation. The penalty for academic dishonesty at Northern Illinois University is an F grade for the course, and the professor may seek an even more severe punishment.

Note that this syllabus may be altered later if necessary.

Also, note that this class is a 400-level class, a designation which means that it is a specialized upper-division undergraduate lecture course. The 400-level history courses cover specific periods or issues in great detail, so you will have to confront unfamiliar material and learn many unfamiliar names, places, and events. Upper-division history courses require students to learn terminology, theory, and methodology related to the subject. Be prepared for these difficulties.

Finally, come see me in office hours if you have problems or if you just want to talk about the history of the Mediterranean. If you cannot see me during my office hours, talk to me after class to set up a time to meet.

Lecture/Discussion Topics and Assignments

Section I: Mediterranean Cultures

- Week 1**
- 17 January** **What is the Mediterranean?**
Introduction: The Unity of the Mediterranean
We will begin with an overview of the syllabus and course organization, followed by a discussion of the conception of the Mediterranean as historical space. Is the concept of a Mediterranean world meaningful?
Articles: Matvejevic, *Mediterranean*, 7-12 (in class)
- 19 January** **Mediterranean Space**
Does the Mediterranean Sea, its coastline, and the people living it constitute a cultural area? We will delve into the historical geography of the early modern Mediterranean and debate Braudel's conception of Mediterranean history and its influence on *Annales* school historiography and Mediterranean studies.
Articles: Braudel, *The Mediterranean*, 17-22; Caygill, "Braudel's Prison Notebooks"
- Week 2**
- 24 January** **Ottoman Empire and the Islamic Mediterranean, 1450s-1520s**
From *Mare Nostrum* to Medieval Mediterraneans
Today, we will provide an overview of ancient and medieval Mediterranean history. Consider the unity and disunity of the Mediterranean in ancient and medieval societies.
Articles: Morris, "Mediterraneanization"; Horden/Purcell, "Mediterranean"
- 26 January** **Renaissance Mediterranean and Ottoman Expansion**
We will discuss the growth of Ottoman power in the eastern Mediterranean and consider in particular the impact of the collapse of the Byzantine Empire on Greece and the rest of the Mediterranean area. How did Ottoman expansion affect the spice trade and religious situation in the Eastern Mediterranean?
Articles: Flemming, "Constantinople"; Manners, "Constantinople"
- Week 3**
- 31 January** **Everyday Life in the Mediterranean, 1450s-1500s**
Olive, Vine, and Wheat: Mediterranean Agriculture
We will explore the realities of everyday life in the early modern Mediterranean by focusing on staple food crops and agricultural techniques. How did the combination of olive, grape vine, and wheat influence Mediterranean societies? Did agriculture really unite the societies rimming the Mediterranean?
Articles: Loumou and Giourga, "Olive Groves"; Davis, "Fountain of Wine"
- 2 February** **Maritime Mediterranean Society and Environment**
Today, we will examine the maritime society of pilots, mariners, and fishers. How did fishing intersect with agriculture? How important was agricultural trade with non-Mediterranean zones? Consider: environmental history, aquatic space.
Articles: Pitcher, "Fisheries"
- Writing Assignment: Mediterranean Historiographical Proposal due**

Section II: Mediterranean Crossings

Week 4 Mediterranean Travel and Renaissance Culture, 1490s-1530s

7 February Voyages of al-Hasan al-Wazzan

Students will explore the travels of al-Hasan al-Wazzan, or Leo Africanus, through Natalie Zemon Davis's analysis of early modern Mediterranean travel.

Readings: Davis, *Trickster Travels*, Introduction, chapters 1-4

9 February Descriptions of Leo Africanus

We will discuss Natalie Zemon Davis's complex interpretation of al-Hasan al-Wazzan's accounts of Africa, Islam, and the Mediterranean.

Readings: Davis, *Trickster Travels*, chapters 5-9, Epilogue

Week 5 Navigating the Mediterranean, 1490s-1590s

14 February Negotiating Cultures

Today, we will examine European merchants and residents in Islamic Societies, as well as Ottoman travelers to Europe.

Articles: Wunder, "Western Travelers"; Rothman, "Becoming Venetian"

16 February Mapping the Mediterranean: Navigation, Cartography, and Maritime Space

We will discuss the technical and technological changes in navigation, shipbuilding, and cartography in the early modern period that allowed increased European maritime imperialism and expanded long-distance trade. We will consider cartographic practices, ship design, African circumnavigation, Portuguese state development, and the Columbian voyages.

Articles: Cosgrove, "Mapping New Worlds"; Padrón, "Mapping Plus Ultra"

Section III: Mediterranean Identities

Week 6 Reconquista and Catholic Renewal in Spain, 1490s-1590s

21 February The Conquest of Granada and Spanish Imperialism

Today, we will examine the pivotal transformations of the emergence of the Castilian 'New Monarchy' in Spain the completion of the Spanish Reconquista with the fall of Granada in 1492. Consider: borderlands, frontiers, ethnicity, ethnic boundaries, neighborhoods.

Readings: Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, Introduction, chapters 1-4

23 February Creating Christian Granada

We will examine the profound religious and cultural transformations in Granada following the Spanish conquest. How did the Spanish monarchy establish political domination throughout the former Islamic state of Granada and promoted

Christianization of Granada society? Consider: Jews, moriscos, confraternities, Catholic reformation.

Readings: Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, chapters 5-8

Articles: Kamen, "Mediterranean and Expulsion of Spanish Jews"

Writing Assignment: **Book Review Option 1 (Coleman) due**

Week 7 Interchanges between Rivals, 1550s-1610s

28 February Creating Community in Early Modern Istanbul

We will examine the forging of communities and identities in early modern Istanbul.

Readings: Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, Introduction and chapters 1-3

1 March Coexistence under Ottoman Imperial Rule

Today, we will examine government, society, and identities under Ottoman imperial rule.

Readings: Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, chapters 4-6

Week 8 Between Societies: Merchants and Diasporas, 1550s-1650s

6 March Jewish Merchants and Mediterranean Migration

Today, we will explore the experiences of people who lived between Mediterranean societies. We will focus on Jewish merchants in the Mediterranean, Muslim merchants in Europe, Northern Europeans' communities in the Mediterranean, and other migrants.

Readings: García-Arenal and Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds*, Introduction and chapters 1-3

8 March Jewish Identity and Diasporic Communities

We will discuss how Jewish identity was forged and reproduced amidst the diasporic communities of the Mediterranean. We will compare the Jewish diasporic experience with that of other exiles in the Mediterranean. Key examples will include the English community in Livorno, Muslim artisans in Granada, Moriscos, religious expulsions in Spain, exiles, and pilgrims.

Readings: García-Arenal and Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds*, chapters 4-5 and Conclusion

Articles: Lehmann, "A Livornese Port Jew"

Writing Assignment: **Book Review Option 2 (García-Arenal) due**

Week 9 Spring Break!

13 March Hit the Beach!

Methodological Goals: Surfing form

Readings: *How to surf a pipeline and live*

15 March Grilled Shrimp and Blackened Redfish

Methodological Goals: Beachcombing and relaxation skills

Readings: *Texas Mesquite Grilling*

Section IV: The Contested Mediterranean

- Week 10**
20 March **Religious Conflict in Mediterranean Societies, 1540s-1580s**
Catholic Militancy and Ottoman Expansionism
Sixteenth-century Mediterranean societies experienced serious religious divisions and conflicts. We will examine the ongoing Muslim-Christian conflicts, which intensified during the Ottoman-Habsburg wars. Meanwhile, Christianity's relative religious unity fractured hopelessly as the Reformation and Counter-Reformation movements swept through Europe. We will focus on Mediterranean contexts of these religious transformations, including religious warfare in southern France, Italy's Counter-Reformation, the Knights of Saint Stephen, the Spanish Inquisition, and the Ottoman golden age.
Articles: Racine "Service and Honor"; Rodriguez-Salgado, "Christians"
- 22 March** **Renaissance Society of America Conference: No Class**
- Week 11**
27 March **Imperial Conflict in Mediterranean Societies, 1540s-1580s**
Interpreting Malta and Lepanto: 'Civilization' and Orientalism
Today, we will examine the categories of East / West through the lens of Christian and Islamic propaganda. How did interpretations of the siege of Malta and the battle of Lepanto contribute to the development of the notions of 'civilization' and what Said calls Orientalism? Consider the conquest of Cyprus.
Articles: Said, *Orientalism* (excerpt); Hess, "The Battle of Lepanto"; Bonavita, "Key to Christiandom"
Writing Assignment: Mediterranean Historiographical Paper Outline due
- 29 March** **Maritime Conflict and Enslavement**
We will explore the institutions of slavery in the Mediterranean world. Consider the scale of Mediterranean slavery, the modes of enslavement.
Readings: Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters*, introduction, chapters 1-2
- Week 12**
3 April **Mediterranean Slavery, 1550s-1700s**
Everyday Life on the Barbary Coast
We will examine the uses of slave labor and the experience of slavery on the Barbary Coast. Consider the possibilities of ransom and manumission for slaves in North Africa.
Readings: Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters*, chapters 3-4
- 5 April** **Slavery and Racism in the Mediterranean**
Today we will examine the possibilities of ransom and manumission. We will also consider the ways in which Mediterranean slavery shaped global patterns of slavery and racism.
Readings: Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters*, chapters 5-6

Week 13
10 April **Mediterranean Piracy, 1600s-1720s**
Malta, Counter-Reformation Catholicism and Mediterranean Piracy
Today, we will examine piracy in the Mediterranean world, focusing on Maltese and North African pirates and their challenge to the Ottoman and Venetian empires.
Readings: Greene, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants*, introduction, chapters 1-3

12 April **Greek Merchants, Catholic Courts, and Maritime Justice**
We will discuss the plight of Greek merchants operating in the Mediterranean Sea as Ottoman subjects. Consider the role of the Catholic Reformation in religion and justice in the Mediterranean.
Readings: Greene, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants*, chapters 4-7

Section V: Transformations of Mediterranean Societies

Week 14
17 April **Gender Relations between Mediterranean Societies, 1560s-1680s**
Women's Status in Mediterranean Societies
While we have already discussed female historical subjects and gender contexts in numerous other discussions, I want us to focus on gender history this week and compare gender relations in different Mediterranean societies, especially between Christian and Islamic societies. How did gender relations change during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries?

Articles: Cohen, "Honor and Gender"; Ortega, "Pleading for Help"
19 April **Gender and the Honor-Shame Paradigm**
Today, we will explore the concept of Mediterranean honor in the early modern period. Do you find the notion of a widespread Mediterranean honor-shame culture credible?
Articles: Taylor, "Credit and Debt"

Week 15
24 April **Ethnic Identities and Racism in the Mediterranean, 1600s-1700s**
Africans in the Mediterranean
We will examine Africans in Mediterranean societies. What roles did Africans play in European, North African, and Ottoman societies? Consider African identities and ethnicities.

Articles: Neill, "Mulattos, Blacks"; Lowe, "Representing Africa"
26 April **Sugar, Slavery, and the Plantation Complex in the Mediterranean**
Today, we will explore the rise of sugar cultivation and the 'plantation complex' in the early modern Mediterranean. We will explore the varieties of early modern

slavery and question why sugar production transformed slave definitions and practices. We will examine the significance of the changing forms of slavery associated with the plantation complex, as African slavery became increasingly utilized. We will examine new ports and urban development in Livorno and Izmir, as well as connections between the Mediterranean and Atlantic slavery.

Articles: Daniels, "Sugar Cane Mill"; Blackburn, "Old World Slavery"

Week 16
1 May

Toward a Modern Mediterranean, 1750s and Beyond

Decline of the Mediterranean? Competition with Atlantic World

We will examine the 'decline' of the Mediterranean societies and the creation of the Atlantic World. Since the 'decline' of Spain thesis is so linked with the supposed stagnation of the Mediterranean economic system, we will compare Iberian cities and Spanish culture with Ottoman culture this week.

Articles: Mazzotti, "Enlightened Mills"; Grehan, "Smoking and 'Early Modern' Sociability"

Writing Assignment: Historiographical Paper due

3 May

The Mediterranean and the Modern World

For our final discussion, we will consider how early modern Mediterranean contexts and historical developments shaped modern Mediterranean societies in lasting ways. Assess arguments for the emergence of Orientalism and modernity in the early modern Mediterranean. What continuities and ruptures can you see in modern Mediterranean history?

Articles: Arkoun, "Thinking Mediterranean"; Matvejevic, *Mediterranean*, 212-218; Applied Mediterranean History Readings

Finals Week