

## **HIST 250: Societies and Cultures Across the Indian Ocean**

Tuesday / Thursday 11:00am-12:15pm

Professor Sarah Waheed

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Office Hours: M/W: 2-3:30pm or by appointment



### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

For many centuries, the peoples living on the rim of the Indian Ocean had established a vast maritime network that linked India, China, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and East Africa. The wealth and trade that crossed the Indian Ocean surpassed that of any other region. It was in the hope of accessing this commercial zone that Europeans embarked on voyages of ‘discovery.’ We will study select cultures and societies brought into contact through interregional migration and travel across the Indian Ocean over a broad arc of history. Different kinds of people – nobles, merchants, soldiers, statesmen, sailors, scholars, slaves – experienced mobility in different ways. What kinds of cooperation, accommodation, or conflict did different Indian Ocean encounters engender? Using various different primary sources, we look at particular case studies and their broader social and cultural contexts. At the heart of the

course is attention to the ways in which primary sources provide access to the historical meanings of their contexts of production. Close reading will be an important aspect of both class discussions and writing assignments.

The goal of the course is for students to gain a basic sense of how the Indian Ocean was interconnected from medieval to modern times. We begin in the medieval period to get a firm sense of what the Indian Ocean was like before the arrival of Europeans. In the early sixteenth century, the rise of early modern land-based empires across Asia, on the one hand, and the arrival of European maritime powers, on the other, globalized and politicized the Indian Ocean in new ways. We consider how these changes impacted the societies and cultures of the Ocean. The dominance of European empire from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century enabled new modes of travel, types of encounters and textual representations.

Rather than a comprehensive overview, this course provides a general set of conceptual and analytic tools for examining societies and cultures across temporal and spatial bounds, through the specific lens of particular texts and contexts. Texts and readings will draw upon recent secondary research as well as historical and literary primary source materials.

## COURSE WEBSITE AND READINGS

**Make sure you print out the readings and bring them to class with you. I urge you to pair up with someone in the class to share the burden of printing.**

### **BOOKS FOR PURCHASE: Available in the Oberlin Bookstore, Powell's, and Amazon**

Michael Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*

Abdul Sherrif, *Dhow Cultures of the Indian Ocean*

Amitav Ghosh, *In An Antique Land*

Thomas Metcalf, *Imperial Connections: India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860-1920*

Sikandar Begum, *A Princess's Pilgrimage: Nawab Sikandar Begum's A pilgrimage to Mecca*, ed.

Siobhan Lambert-Hurley. Indiana University Press, c2008.

Stewart Gordon, *When Asia Was the World*

### **BOOKS ON RESERVE: Available in the Library**

Venetia Porter Ed. Hajj: *A journey to the heart of Islam*

Javed Majeed, *Autobiography, travel and postnational identity: Gandhi, Nehru and Iqbal*

Muhammad Asad, *The road to Mecca*

Ross E. Dunn, *The adventures of Ibn Battuta: a Muslim traveler of the 14th century*

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE BREAKDOWN

You will be expected to complete the reading assigned for each class on, or before, the day that it is listed on the syllabus. Completing the reading means that you have not only literally read the assignment, but that you have spent time putting together your thoughts and questions about the texts and how all of these relate to the themes of the course. The participation portion of your final grade will take in to account your attendance and active participation in class. The \* denotes optional reading. Asterisk readings may prove useful for your final paper.

- 15% Short paper (900-1000 words, 4 pages)
- 20% Open book take-home midterm exam (4 pages)
- 15% Final paper topic proposal (2 pages)
- 30% Final paper (2200-2800 words, 8-10 pages)
- 20% Class participation

## GRADE SYSTEM

The grading is as follows: A+ 100-97; A 96-93; A- 92-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-83; B- 82-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-73; C- 72-70; D 65-69, F below 65.

## PARTICIPATION: CLASS DISCUSSION

Active class participation means that you are not just physically present, but that you are mentally engaged in class. Students are expected to attend all classes; complete all reading; and participate in discussion (please always bring texts to class and be prepared to reference them). To prepare for class discussions, students should mark passages in readings that excite, inspire, disturb, or puzzle so that they can ask questions, articulate confusions and to engage in lively but open-minded and respectful debate. Quality of participation is more important than quantity.

## **PAPERS / FINAL ESSAY**

Essays should be double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, with 1” margins and page numbers and must be submitted in hard copy. All writing assignments must adhere to word limits. The purpose of these limits is for students to learn to formulate appropriate answers to a given question with concise arguments and economical use of prose. Points will be taken off for not following this format.

You will be evaluated based on your grasp of the readings in this course. You must use the Chicago-MLA style of citation for either in-text citations or footnotes. A citation guide is here: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/> Wikipedia will **not** be accepted as a source citation, and points will be taken off, if it is used. For additional writing guidelines, you may also seek the assistance of Oberlin’s Writing Center: <http://new.oberlin.edu/arts-and-sciences/departments/rhetoric/writing-associates-program/writing-center.dot>

For your short paper, you must choose a topic that we have covered in the course from September 5-September 25, and write a response paper. For your mid-term, I will be handing out a question and you will be required to submit a response to the question of up to 3 pages. For your final paper, you must choose a topic we have covered in the course from November 5-December 5. You must submit your final paper topic proposal, with thesis statement by November 26, before Thanksgiving. Your paper proposal is a pass/fail assignment, and it will negatively affect your grade if it is not handed in on time.

I only accept paper copies (**NO electronic submissions**) of your work unless otherwise stated. Please bring a **printed, stapled copy** of your paper to class to turn in. I will not read papers that are not stapled, or that do not have a name. Drop off your papers in class or in the box next to my office door in the History Department (room 314) by 5:00pm. There will be a penalty for papers handed in via e-mail unless otherwise stated.

## **POWER POINT LECTURES**

I will not be posting the power-point presentations online regularly. If you miss class, be sure to obtain the relevant lecture notes from a classmate, or come see me during office hours. It is your responsibility to come to class regularly, do the readings, and take notes on the material.

## **SOURCES**

We will be using several primary sources in this class. What is a primary source? Here is a useful definition: [http://www.yale.edu/collections\\_collaborative/primarysources/primarysources.html](http://www.yale.edu/collections_collaborative/primarysources/primarysources.html). While reading works by historians and others, it is often useful to ask, ‘What sources is the author using?’, ‘How does a narrative change depending upon the sources used?’

## **IN-CLASS GUIDELINES: Please...**

Switch off all cell phones for the duration of the class

Laptop / Tablets / I-Pads Policy: No.

Avoid eating or sleeping in class.

Do not saunter in late or leave early without speaking/e-mailing me beforehand.

## **ATTENDANCE and EXTENSION POLICY**

You will be expected to attend class regularly. Attending class regularly will go a long way in being able to earn an A in this course. If you are **absent for three or more class days in a row** without a reasonable explanation presented before your absences, your class dean will be contacted before appropriate action is taken. In the event of illness or family **emergency**, please let me know **via e-mail**. If you need an extension, you must **e-mail me** at least **36 hours prior to the due-date** of the paper. Students will **not be granted more than two extensions** per semester. If an extension is granted and the **paper is not handed in by the agreed upon deadline, the paper will receive an F**. Barring extensions, all assignments must be handed in on the date they are due **by 5pm** that day. Assignments turned in after class will be considered late. The grades for all assignments turned in late will be reduced by a 1/3 of a letter grade (ie. an A to an A-) for each day that they are late.

## **RE-DOING ASSIGNMENTS / REVISIONS**

I have a no revisions policy. If you wish to discuss a draft of the paper, you are welcome to discuss it with me in my office hours prior to submission. In the rare event that I do allow re-writes, do note that I have higher expectations the second time around: so, you may wind up with a lower grade if the re-written paper is not up to par.

## **INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY**

In addition to my office hours, I am available via e-mail for any questions you may have related to the course. If you cannot make my office hours, please e-mail me to schedule an appointment. Please note: **I do not respond to e-mails sent after 6pm M-F, until the middle of the next day, and typically do not respond to e-mails over the weekend.**

## **OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES**

Appropriate accommodations will always be granted to students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability please see me early in the semester. Any additional questions should be addressed to Jane Boomer, Coordinator of Disability Services:

<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/disability-services/>

## **HONOR CODE AND PLAGIARISM**

The Honor Code applies to all assignments in this course. This means that any student found cheating, plagiarizing, turning in another person's work as his/her own or otherwise violating the instructor's instructions will be subject to a hearing before the Student Honor Committee. See the Rules and Regulations Section VI A and B in the Student Handbook. If you have any doubt about citations, see the guidelines here: <http://new.oberlin.edu/arts-and-sciences/departments/gender/writing-research/citations.dot>

## **GRADE APPEALS**

You are always welcome to discuss a paper, but if you want the grade reconsidered, you must first submit a four-paragraph written appeal in which you evaluate your paper in each of the four criteria: thesis, organization, evidence, and style. Remember that a grade does not reflect process (it does not measure whether you worked hard) and it certainly does not reflect a value judgment about you as a person. A grade constitutes an evaluation of the quality and analytical rigor of the thesis, organization, evidence, and style of a single piece of work, so ensure that your written

appeal addresses your finished paper in terms of those criteria rather than time and effort expended on it. Appeals must be submitted in hard copy no later than one week after graded papers are returned in class.

### **READINGS AVAILABLE ON BLACKBOARD**

Unless otherwise indicated, all the readings for this course will be from the books or from Blackboard. The Blackboard readings will be available in the subheading, **Course Documents**, on the left-hand bar of the screen. Make sure you **register for the course**.

### **Syllabus / Readings Subject to Change**

\*denotes optional / recommended reading

### **WEEK 1**

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#### **Tues, 9/3: Introductions and Orientations**

Introducing ourselves

Review of syllabus

Brief intro

World Travelers

Our limitations, Our Texts

#### **Thurs, 9/5: Seas & Oceans as Units of Analysis**

Jerry Bentley, "Sea and Ocean Basins as Frameworks of Historical Analysis (pp. 215-224).

Isabel Hofmeyer, "The Complicating Sea: The Indian Ocean as Method" (pp. 584-590)

Recommended: Start reading Amitav Ghosh, *In An Antique Land* (Prologue, p. 13-19)

### **WEEK 2 : Sailing the Seas**

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#### **Tues, 9/10:**

Abdul Sheriff, Chapter 6, (p. 79-105)

Recommended: Continue reading Amitav Ghosh, *In An Antique Land* (p. 23-44)

\*Michael Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*, Chapter 1 and 2 (p. 13-45)

#### **Thurs, 9/12:**

PRIMARY SOURCE: Buzurg Ibn Shahriyar al-Ramhormuzi, *The Book of the Wonders of India: Mainland, Sea and Islands* (selections) 10 pages

Abdul Sheriff, *Dhow Cultures*, Chapter 7 "Navigational Methods" (p. 107-130)

Continue reading Amitav Ghosh's *In An Antique Land* (p. 45-80)

### **WEEK 3 : Medieval Trade and Travel**

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**Tues, 9/17**

*Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, Trans. S. D. Goitein. Princeton University Press 1974. Letters 37-38 (181-92), 41 (201-06), 43-45 (212-26).

*India Traders of the Middle Ages: Documents from the Cairo Geniza*, ed. S.D. Goitein and Mordechai Akiva Friedman. Brill, 2008. Documents 28-30 (pp 359-68) and Document 37 (pp. 401-03).

Stewart Gordon, "Pepper and partnerships: Abraham bin Yiju, 1120-1160 CE" in *When Asia was the World: Traveling Merchants, Scholars, Warriors, and Monks Who Created the "Riches of the East."* Da Capo Press, 2008. pp. 75-96.

\*Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: the world system A.D. 1250-1350*. Oxford University Press, 1989. pp. 251-290.

**Thurs, 9/19:**

Come prepared to discuss the following:

Amitav Ghosh, "The Imam and the Indian" (p. 1-13)

Amitav Ghosh, *In An Antique Land: History in the Guise of a Traveler's Tale* (From beginning through p. 105; 241-288)

\*\*\*\*\*Reading Questions Due Today, Thurs, September 19 (Pass / Fail)\*\*\*\*\*

### **WEEK 4 : Travel, Knowledge, and Self-Transformation**

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**Tues, 9/24:**

Roxanne L. Euben, *Journeys to the Other Shore: Muslim and Western Travelers in Search of Knowledge*. Princeton University Press, 2006. Chapter 2, pp. 20-45.

Gordon, "Nobles and Notables: Ibn Battuta, 1325-1356 CE," in *When Asia was the World*, pp. 97-116.

**Thurs, 9/26:**

Engseng Ho, "The Two Arms of Cambay: Diasporic Texts of Ecumenical Islam in the Indian Ocean," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 50 (2-3) 2007: 347-361.

Dunn, Ross E. *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta, a Muslim Traveler of the Fourteenth Century*. University of California Press, 2008. (selections) **Electronic Avail Online Mudd LIBRARY**

\*\*\*\*\*SHORT PAPER DUE 9/30/2013\*\*\*\*\*

## **WEEK 5: Travel, Treasure, and Treaties**

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### **Tues 10/1:**

John E. Wills, "Journeys Mostly to the West: Chinese Perspectives on Travel Writing," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (March 2007), pp. 191-201.

Gordon, "Treasure and Treaty: Ma Huan, 1413-1431 CE," in *When Asia was the World*, pp. 117-36.

PRIMARY SOURCE: Ma Huan, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lang: Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores* [1433], trans. Feng Ch'eng-Chün; ed. J. V. G. Mills (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). White Lotus, 1996. (selections) [ORDER FOR OBERLIN LIBRARY] 10 pages

### **Thurs 10/3:**

Geneviève Bouchon and Denys Lombard, "The Indian Ocean in the Fifteenth Century," in *India and the Indian Ocean, 1500-1800* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), ed. Ashin Das Gupta and Michael Pearson, Oxford University Press, 1999. pp. 46-70.

~~K.N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750*. Cambridge University Press, 1984. Chapter 2, pp. 34-51.~~

## **HAND OUT EXAM QUESTION IN CLASS TODAY 10/3**

## **WEEK 6: Early Modern Encounters: Arrival of the Portugese**

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### **Tues 10/8:**

Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*, Chapter 5, pp. 113-158.

*Travel Narratives from the Age of Discovery: An Anthology*, ed. Peter C. Mancall. Oxford University Press, 2006, "Magellan's Voyage," (138-145); and "A Journal of the first Voyage of Vasco Da Gama," (61-65).

~~A.R. Disney, "First encounters in early Portuguese travel literature," in *The Portuguese in India and other studies, 1500-1700*. Ashgate, c2009. [ORDER FOR OBERLIN]~~

Elizabeth Mancke, "Early Modern Expansion and the Politicization of Oceanic Space," *Geographical Review*, 89, 2 (April 1999): 225-236.

### **Tues 10/10:**

PRIMARY SOURCE: Tomé Pires, *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires*. Trans. Francisco Rodrigues and Armando Cortesão. Asian Educational Services, 2005. (selections) [ORDER FOR OBERLIN]

Gordon, "Medicines and Misunderstandings: Tome Pires, 1511-1521," in *When Asia Was the World*, 157-176.

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## **WEEK 7: Early Modern Encounters: The Ottomans**

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### **Tues 10/15:**

Giancarlo Casale, "The Ottoman 'Discovery' of the Indian Ocean in the 16th Century," in *Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Global Cultures, and Trans-Oceanic Exchanges*, ed. Jerry H. Bentley et al. University of Hawai'i Press, 2007, pp. 87-104.

Giancarlo Casale, "The Ethnic Composition of Ottoman Ship Crews and the 'Rumi Challenge' to Portuguese Identity," *Medieval Encounters* 13, 1 (2007): 122-144.

PRIMARY SOURCE: Sidi Ali Reis, *The travels and adventures of the Turkish Admiral Sidi Ali Reis in India, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Persia, during the years 1553-1556*, Trans. A. Vambéry. Luzac, 1899. (selections) [ORDER FOR OBERLIN?]

\*\*\*\*\***Open book take-home exam due DATE: 10/17/2013**\_\_\_\_\_

### **Thurs 10/17: Open-book take-home exam DUE**

#### **\*Explore the following:**

<http://www.ottomansoutheastasia.org/resources/BritishAcademyReviewSEAsia.pdf>

<http://muftah.org/makhtab-muftah-the-ottoman-age-of-exploration/>

<http://www.ottomansoutheastasia.org/>

Continue reading Amitav Ghosh – we will discuss chapter 3: FILM IN CLASS Ibn Battuta

\_\_\_\_\_ **FALL BREAK NO CLASSES ON 10/22 and 10/24** \_\_\_\_\_

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## **WEEK 8: Southeast Asia, Islam, and Dutch Empire**

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### **Tues 10/29:**

PRIMARY SOURCE: Muhammad Rabi' ibn Muhammad Ibrahim, *The Ship of Sulaiman*, Trans. John O'Kane. Columbia University Press, 1972. (selections) [Available, put on RESERVE]

~~Anthony Reid, *Charting the Shape of Early Modern Southeast Asia*. Silkworm Books, 2000. Chapter 2, pp. 15-38. [NOT AVAILABLE AT OBERLIN]~~

Markus Vink, "The World's Oldest Trade: Dutch Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of World History*, 14, 2 (2003): 131-77.

### **Thurs 10/31:**



Eric Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States on the South-East Asian Frontier, 1865-1915*, "Imagining the Frontier: State Visions of Danger Along the Frontier", Yale University Press, 2005. [selections introduction, chapter on drugs and bodies]

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## **WEEK 9: Global Empire in the Indian Ocean**

### **Tues 11/5:**

Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*, Chapter 7, pp. 190-248.

~~H. V. Bowen, "Britain in the Indian Ocean region and beyond: contours, connections, and the creation of a global maritime empire," in *Britain's Oceanic Empire: Atlantic and Indian Ocean Worlds, c. 1550-1850*, ed. H.V. Bowen et al. Cambridge University Press, 2012. pp. 45-66. scan~~

### **Thurs 11/7:**

Thomas Metcalf, *Imperial Connections: India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860-1920* (Introduction)

Seema Alavi, "Fugitive Mullahs and Outlawed Fanatics": Indian Muslims in nineteenth century Trans-Asiatic Imperial Rivalries," *Modern Asian Studies* 45, 6 (2011): 1337-1382.

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## **WEEK 10: The Hajj in Modern Times**

### **Tues 11/12:**

PRIMARY SOURCE: Sikandar Begum, *A Princess's Pilgrimage: Nawab Sikandar Begum's A pilgrimage to Mecca*, ed. Siobhan Lambert-Hurley. Indiana University Press, c2008. (selections)

*Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam*, ed. Venetia Porter. Harvard University Press, 2012. (short selections) [ON RESERVE]

### **Thurs 11/14:**

PRIMARY SOURCE: Muhammad Asad, *Road to Mecca* (selections) - RESERVE

\*Martin Kramer, "The Road from Mecca: Muhammad Asad (born Leopold Weiss)," in *The Jewish Discovery of Islam: Studies in Honor of Bernard Lewis*, ed. Martin Kramer (Tel Aviv: The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, 1999), pp. 225-47.  
<http://www.martinkramer.org/sandbox/reader/archives/the-road-from-mecca-muhammad-asad/>

Michael Christopher Low, "Empire And The Hajj: Pilgrims, Plagues, And Pan-Islam Under British Surveillance, 1865–1908," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, 02 (May 2008): 269-290

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## **WEEK 11: Slavery and Indenture**

### **Tues 11/19:**

Thomas Metcalf, *Imperial Connections: India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860-1920* Chapter 5, “Hard Hands and Sound Healthy Bodies” (p. 136-164)

PRIMARY SOURCE: *Documents of indentured labour: Natal 1851-1917*, ed. Y.S. Meer [et al.] (Durban: Institute of Black Research, 1980). (Selections). [ORDER BOOK FOR OBERLIN]

Devarakshanam Govinden, “The Indentured Experience: Indian Women in Colonial Natal,” in *India in Africa, Africa in India: Indian Ocean Cosmopolitanisms*, ed. John C. Hawley. Indiana University Press, 2008, pp. 55-76.

**Thurs 11/21:**

Gwyn Campbell, “Slave Trades and the Indian Ocean World,” in *India in Africa, Africa in India*, pp. 17-51.

Rahul C. Oka and Chapurukha M. Kusimba, “Siddi as Mercenary or as African Success Story on the West Coast of India,” in *India in Africa, Africa in India*, pp. 203-229.

Richard Eaton, “The Rise and Fall of Military Slavery in the Deccan, 1450-1560” (p. 115 – 135)

**WEEK 12: Travel and Nationalism**

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**Tues 11/26:**

~~Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa* (selections)~~  
<http://www.gandhiserve.org/cwmg/VOL034.PDF>

Documentary on Gandhi (BBC) – The Making of the Mahatma Parts 1-8  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBCqkX\\_afA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBCqkX_afA)

Javed Majeed, *Autobiography, travel and post-national identity: Gandhi, Nehru and Iqbal* (introduction and selections on Gandhi)

\*\*\*\*\*HAND IN FINAL PAPER TOPIC \*2 page proposal) today 11/26\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*THANSGIVING BREAK NO CLASSES 11/28\*\*\*\*\*

**WEEK 13: Travel and Internationalism**

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**Tues 12/3:**

Pankaj Mishra, *The Ruins of Empire*, Chapter 5, “Rabindranath Tagore in East Asia” (p. 216-242)

Mark Ravinder Frost, “That Great Ocean of Idealism”: Calcutta, the Tagore Circle, and the Idea of Asia, 1900–1920,” in *Indian Ocean Studies: Cultural, Social, and Political Perspectives*, ed. Shanti Moorthy and Ashraf Jamal. Routledge, 2010, pp. 251-79.

**Thurs 12/5:**

PRIMARY SOURCE: Rabindranath Tagore, *Journey to Persia and Iraq, 1932*. Visva-Bharati, 2003. (selections).

Afshin Marashi, "Imagining Hafez: Rabindranath Tagore in Iran, 1932," *Journal of Persianate Studies* 3 (2010) 46-77.

**WEEK 14: Transnationalism and Diaspora**

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**12/10:**

Engseng Ho, "Empire Through Diasporic Eyes: A View from the Other Boat" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 46, pp 210-246.

\*Roland Marchal, "Dubai: Global City and Transnational Hub" in M. Al-Rasheed (ed). *Transnational Connections and the Arab Gulf*

**12/12**

**FINAL CLASS Wrap-Up**

Complete Amitav Ghosh (selections)

12/16/2013 – FINAL PAPER DUE

**In class, we will watch "Empire of Faith" Documentary**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C\\_OIIM8H5tI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_OIIM8H5tI)