“Merchants, Pirates, Missionaries, and the State in Maritime Asia”

Professor Eugenio Menegon

Time: Wednesdays, 2:30-5:15 pm
Location: HIS 504

Professor's Office: Department of History,
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Office Hours: Mondays 12:30 - 2 pm; and Wednesdays 12:30 - 2pm
and by appointment.

Website for this course is available at: learn.bu.edu

Course Overview:

This seminar will provide an overview of crucial themes in the history of maritime Asia (Indian Ocean; South China Sea; Pacific Ocean), tracing continuities as well as changes in political, institutional, religious, cultural and social processes centering on the oceans and seas of Asia, with more in-depth coverage for the period 1500 to the present. Starting in the 7th century, Asian merchants and governments became involved in an ever-growing network of commerce and cultural exchanges spanning from Japan to the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. After the 15th century, a series of new phenomena further connected the oceanic world of maritime Asia: European presence in Asian waters, coastal piracy, the establishment of overseas Chinese colonies in South-East Asia, new Asian and European state policies, and ultimately, the contemporary state tensions over sea lanes and energy, and the rise of a new kind of piracy.
Completion of ALL readings and writing of a one-page response prior to each class meeting is crucial for a smooth working of the seminar. Schedules, topics, readings and films may be revised at times, in which case announcements will be made in class as appropriate.

**Grading and Requirements:**

**Attendance and Participation (15%):** This portion of the grade will be based on regular attendance (see below) and on the general level of engagement and participation in class.

**Weekly responses (30%):** Each week, students will prepare a one-page-long response ( STRICTLY 1.5 spacing; 12 point; 1-inch margin) on that week’s readings, and formulate two questions for discussion, both to be e-mailed to the instructor and the student discussion leader(s) a day in advance of class (by each Tuesday, at noon). The response should not simply summarize the readings; rather it should make a comprehensive, yet concise critical analysis of their arguments, and offer a comparison of them. Instructions with prompts will be posted weekly.

**Oral Presentations (15%):** Seminar members will alternate in leading discussion. The leader(s) will offer a brief oral presentation of the main points of the readings, and then use select questions sent by all seminar’s members (including her/his own questions) to structure the discussion. Each seminar member will also make a final presentation of their own research paper.

**Paper proposal and annotated bibliography (10%):** due by Friday March 3rd, 5 pm. Instructions will be posted online.

**Paper (30%):** Students are required to write one final paper during the semester. Paper is due on Friday May 5th, by 5 pm (both paper copy and e-mail).

The final paper is to be 10-15 pages long (double spacing; 12 points; 1-inch margin; excluding bibliography). 1) The topic will be chosen by students after preliminary consultation with the instructor, and a topic/hypothesis will be submitted by Friday February 17th, 5 pm. 2) After further consultation with instructor, a one-page written paper proposal, plus an annotated bibliography, have to be turned in by Friday March 3rd, 5 pm. For grading percentage, see above.

**Additional research other than course readings is required for the writing of the paper.**

**Penalties for late work:** all written assignments must be turned in on the dates specified below. ½ grade will be deducted for each day of delay.

**Attendance** in all classes (including film screenings and educational visits) is expected and will be recorded. If you cannot attend a specific class you must make all efforts to notify the professor beforehand or to explain your absence later.
Plagiarism in any form is never acceptable. You are advised to review the college's definitions of and policies regarding plagiarism and cheating which are available online and in print. See the CAS Student Conduct Code: http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/

BIBLIOGRAPHIC AND WEB RESOURCES

- For web resources, please visit the EXTERNAL LINKS section of our Blackboard website.

EXTRA CREDIT EVENTS:

During the semester the Instructor will inform students about selected on-campus events organized by the BU Center for the Study of Asia, the Pardee School, and other BU units. Students who attend such events and send a short analytical paragraph on them can earn extra credit.

SYLLABUS OF READINGS

All readings will be available on the Blackboard course website as PDF files or on the Mugar Library's Electronic Books platforms.

- Week I (January 25): Introduction to the historiography of Maritime Asia

Self-introduction; expectations and requirements; instructor’s introductory comments on historiography; screening of documentary Sultan’s Lost Treasure (NOVA production on undersea archeology, about an ancient Chinese shipwreck in the waters of the sultanate of Brunei); discussion of documentary and readings; assignment of semester’s discussion tasks.

Please in preparation for this meeting read:

Companion website to the documentary at: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/sultan/ (also under EXTERNAL LINKS)

• Week II (February 1): Connections through long distance trade in Asia

**Documentary:** “The Story of India,” section on “Spices”


• Week III (February 8): Asian states, religion, and the maritime world, 600-1500

**Documentary:** “1421, The Year China Discovered America” (part 1; selections on Zheng He)


• Week IV (February 15): European sea-based imperialisms in Asia (1500-1800)


*By Friday February 17th send a paragraph with topic/hypothesis.*
SET UP AN APPOINTMENT WITH PROFESSOR TO DISCUSS YOUR PROPOSED TOPIC AND BIBLIOGRAPHY on MARCH 1st

• Week V (February 22): The Selden Map: connecting Asia to Europe

Timothy Brook, Mr. Selden’s Map of China: Decoding the Secrets of a Vanished Cartographer, chapt 1, pp. 1-18; chapt 2, pp. 19-44; chapt. 8, pp. 149-174. (Blackboard)

• Wednesday MARCH 1: Individual Appointment with Professor

Completed topic, abstract and annotated bibliography for final paper: DUE on Friday MARCH 3rd, by 5 pm

Spring Break: March 4-12

• Week VI (March 15): Pirate, Warlord, or King? Koxinga in Taiwan


• Week VII (March 22): New England and Asia

➤ This seminar session will be conducted at the Peabody Essex Museum, Marine Hall, in Salem, with visit to Pingree House, US Old Custom House and ship, Salem Harbor. Departure from BU around noon; return in the evening.


James R. Fichter, So Great a Profit: How the East Indies Trade Transformed Anglo-American Capitalism (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010), 1-6, 82-110, 278-288. (Online @ Mugar)
**Week VIII (March 29): Piracy in Asian seas**


**Guest speaker:** Professor Sanjay Krishnan, Department of English, Boston University

***CLASS EVENT***

**Friday April 7, 4:30- 6:00 pm, BU CASTLE:**

“China and Britain: War and Commerce in the Age of Opium”

Chairs: Profs. Eugenio Menegon & Arianne Chernock, Boston University

Prof. Chen Song-chuan, Nanyang Technological University (Singapore), “Merchants of War and Peace: British Knowledge of China in the Making of the Opium War”

Dr. Rachel Silberstein, Rhode Island School of Design (Providence, RI): “‘A Vent for our English Woollen Manufacture’: Marketing Foreign Fabrics in Nineteenth-Century China”

Discussant, Dr. Frederic Grant Jr.
• Week X (April 12): US naval history and Asia

This seminar session will be conducted in conjunction with a visit of the USS Constitution Ship and Museum (Charlestown, Boston)


• Week XI (April 19): Cultural readings of the ocean in contemporary China

Video Clips: 1) “Heshang” (selection on “Blueness”); 2) “Rise of the Great Powers” (selection); 3) Opening of Beijing Olympics (on Zheng He and oceans)


• Week XII (April 26): State power in Maritime Asia today: the South China Sea disputes


**• Week XIII (May 3): Presentations of final projects**

**FINAL PAPER due on Friday May 5th, by 5 pm**
in instructor's mailbox at History Department AND by e-mail.

**MAIN TASKS & DEADLINES**

- **Response 1**: Tuesday, January 31, 12 noon
- **Response 2**: Tuesday, February 7, 12 noon
- **Response 3**: Tuesday, February 14, 12 noon
- **Topic & hypothesis**: Friday, February 17, 5:00 pm
- **Response 4**: Tuesday, February 21, 12 noon
- **Meeting Professor**: Wednesday March 1, during class time (slots to be assigned)
- **Final paper proposal and annotated bibliography**: Friday March 3, 5:00 pm.
- **Response 5**: Tuesday, March 14, 12 noon
- **Response 6**: Tuesday, March 21, 12 noon
- **Response 7**: Tuesday, March 28, 12 noon
- **Response 8**: Tuesday, April 4, 12 noon
- **Course Event “China and Britain”**: Friday April 7, 4:30-6:30 pm, BU Castle
- **Response 9**: Tuesday, April 11, 12 noon
- **Response 10**: Tuesday, April 18, 12 noon
- **Response 11**: Tuesday, April 25, 12 noon
- **Presentations in class**: Wednesday, May 3
- **Paper**: Friday, May 5, 5:00 pm