

A24 The Medieval Globe

Archaeology Tripos

Coordinators:

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"Globalization is one of the most potent theoretical frameworks of the moment, for it provides a means by which we can make sense of our socio-cultural connectivities, and the networks through which those connections are developed and maintained." (Hodos 2017)

If you are interested in the place of medieval Europe in what was an increasingly connected world then this is the paper for you.

This paper explores the place of medieval Europe in what was an increasingly yet variably connected world. It spans a complex period extending from the highly globalised later Roman empire to the demographic crises of the fourteenth century – the Great Famine and the Black Death – prior to the European colonisation of the Americas. The module aims to 'decolonise' the traditional curriculum by highlighting the diverse experiences of people during this time. We will explore how globalisation theory may be applicable to medieval archaeology, and how material and ideological factors both shaped socio-economic change. We will consider the interaction between natural and anthropogenic environmental change, in the context of fluctuating demographic and settlement histories.

Equal weight will be given to archaeological, environmental and historical evidence. Key themes will include inter-regional communication, mobility, trade and cultural influence. Case studies from Europe will be considered alongside examples drawn from the Arctic, the Asian Steppe, East and West Africa and the Indian Ocean.

Upon successful completion of paper A24, you should display familiarity with the archaeological and historical evidence for the global complexities and interactions of societies within and beyond Europe between the late Roman period and the later Middle Ages. Your written work should display an informed and critical understanding of both theoretical enquiry and a wide range of relevant evidence, deployed in support of clearly articulated arguments.



Structure

The paper is taught using a combination of lectures, seminars and practical classes. You will engage with specialists in various fields, both from within the Department of Archaeology and with academics from other institutions who are invited to contribute their specialist expertise.

- **Lectures:** One hour each week (Michaelmas and Lent), Tuesday, 9-10 am, South Lecture Room, Archaeology
- **Practicals and fieldtrip:** four one- or two-hour sessions, Friday, 3-4 pm with minor variations; fieldtrip to British Museum
- **Supervisions:** three supervisions per term (Michaelmas and Lent), one revision supervision (Easter)

Assessment

Unseen written examination: 80% of the final mark
Artefact project: 20% of the final mark

Lectures

Michaelmas Term

- Introduction: medieval Europe on a global canvas
- Globalisation in the late Roman empire
- Rome and the north
- Connections with the steppes
- After the empire: migrations and decentralisation
- The Late Antique Little Ice Age
- Byzantium and the Eastern Empire
- The long eighth century: trade networks and urbanism in Italy

Lent Term

- Byzantium and the Sasanian empire, and their neighbours in East and West
- Islam around the Mediterranean
- East Africa and Indian Ocean trade
- Early Medieval India
- The medieval Arctic: ecological globalisation and indigenous agency
- The 'High Middle Ages': demographic and economic expansion
- The long fourteenth century: famine, plague and the Little Ice Age

Practicals

- Medieval human diversity
- Studying parchment
- Currency connections: medieval money and coinage
- Commodities: ivory, fish & furs
- Making and trading glass beads

Teaching content may be subject to change



Essential reading list

- Abu-Lughod, J L. 1989. *Before European Hegemony: The World System AD 1250-1350*.
- Barrett, J H and Anderson, A. 2010. 'Histories of global seafaring: A discussion', in Anderson et al. (eds), *The Global Origins and Development of Seafaring*, 305-314.
- Campbell, B M S. 2016. *The Great Transition: Climate, Disease and Society in the Late-Medieval World*.
- Hansen, L I and Olsen, B. 2014. *Hunters in Transition: An Outline of Early Sámi History*.
- Haour, A. (2007). *Rulers, warriors, traders, clerics: the central Sahel and the North Sea, 800-1500*.
- Hodos, T. (ed.) *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*.
- Hoffmann, R C. 2014. *An Environmental History of Medieval Europe*.
- Lieberman, V. 2009 *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800-1830, Volume 2: Mainland Mirrors: Europe, Japan, China, South Asia, and the Islands*.
- Pitts, M., & Versluys, M. (2014). *Globalisation and the Roman World: World History, Connectivity and Material Culture*.
- Sindbæk, S M and Trakadas, A, (eds) 2014. *The World*

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