

## Archaeology Tripos A24 The Medieval Globe

### Coordinators:

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### Structure

*Lectures:* One hour each week (Michaelmas and Lent), Tuesday, 11-12

*Practicals and fieldtrip:* four one- or two-hour sessions, Friday, 2-3; 3-4 pm; fieldtrip to British Museum

*Supervisions:* three to four supervisions per term (Michaelmas and Lent), two revision supervisions (Easter)

### Mode of examination

Final written paper: 80% of the final mark

Practical project: 20% of the final mark

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 Africa and the Indian Ocean.

## Lectures

### *Michaelmas Term*

1. Introduction: medieval Europe on a global canvas (SEH & JHB)
2. Globalisation in the late Roman empire (SEH)
3. Rome and the north (JHB)
4. Connections with the steppes (SEH)
5. After the empire: migrations and decentralisation (SEH)
6. Environmental and social change: the Late Antique Little Ice Age (JHB)
7. The spread of Christianity (SEH)
8. The long eighth century: trade networks and urbanism in Italy (SEH)

### *Lent Term*

1. Constantinople and the Eastern Empire (SEH)
2. Islam around the Mediterranean (SEH)
3. East Africa and Indian Ocean trade (Paul Lane)
4. Early Medieval India (Jason Hawkes)
5. The long eighth century in northern seas: trade, towns and the first Viking Age (JHB)
6. The long eleventh century: boom-time economics on a Eurasian scale? (JHB)
7. The medieval Arctic: ecological globalisation and indigenous agency (JHB)
8. The long fourteenth century: famine, plague and the Little Ice Age (JHB)

## Practicals

1. Trading connections: medieval coinage (Rory Naismith, KCL)
2. Medieval human diversity (Sarah Inskip, McDonald Institute)
3. Ecological globalisation: ivory, fish and furs (JHB)
4. Making and trading glass beads (Sue Heaser, bead specialist)

## Key readings:

- Abu-Lughod, J L. 1989. *Before European Hegemony: The World System AD 1250-1350*. Oxford: OUP.
- Hansen, L I and Olsen, B. 2014. *Hunters in Transition: An Outline of Early Sámi History*. Leiden: Brill.
- Harris, A. 2003. *Byzantium, Britain and the West*. Stroud: Tempus.
- Ward-Perkins, B. 2005. *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization*. Oxford: OUP.
- Pitts, M., & Versluys, M. (2014). *Globalisation and the Roman World: World History, Connectivity and Material Culture*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Sindbæk, S M and Trakadas, A, (eds) 2014. *The World in the Viking Age*. Roskilde: The Viking Ship Museum.