



Smithsonian Associates

Mediterranean Exchanges: 3-part Series

by Alice Hunsberger, PhD

Smithsonian Associates online lectures, examining connections between and among cities in the Mediterranean Basin, over approximately 2,000 years (500 BCE-1500 CE).

July 6, 2022: Rome, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Constantinople

July 20, 2022: Cordoba, Venice, Cairo

August 3, 2022: Toledo, Palermo, Granada, Istanbul

Further Reading Suggestions

The Hellenistic Age, by Peter Thonemann. Oxford University Press 2016. [“short, but brilliant”]

Islam: A Short History, by Karen Armstrong. Modern Library Paperback 2002.

Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain, by Maria Rosa Menocal. Back Bay Books, New York 2002.

Venice and the Islamic World, 828-1797, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Yale Univ. Press 2007.

Byzantium and Islam, Age of Transition 7th- 9th Century, edited by Helen C. Evans with Brandie Ratliff. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York/Yale University Press 2012.

The Map of Knowledge: A Thousand-Year History of How Classical Ideas were Lost and Found, by Violet Moller. Anchor Books, New York 2020.

The House of Wisdom: How Arabic Science Saved Ancient Knowledge and Gave Us the Renaissance, by Jim al-Khalili. Penguin Books, New York 2012.

The Crusades Through Arab Eyes, by Amin Maalouf. Schocken Books, New York 1984.

Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths, by Karen Armstrong. Ballantine Books, New York 1996/2005.

Islamic Civilization in Thirty Lives: The First 1000 Years, by Chase F. Robinson. Thames & Hudson, 2017.

Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination, by John V. Tolan. Columbia Univ. Press 2002.

That Most Precious Merchandise: The Mediterranean Trade in Black Sea Slaves, 1260-1500, by Hannah Barker. Univ. of Pennsylvania Press 2019.

Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire, by Judith Herrin. Princeton Univ. Press 2009.

Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen Through Contemporary Eyes (original source texts with explanations), by Deno John Geanakoplos. Univ. of Chicago Press 1986.

Nasir Khusraw, The Ruby of Badakhshan: A Portrait of the Persian Poet, Traveller and Philosopher, by Alice C. Hunsberger. I.B. Tauris/Institute of Ismaili Studies, London 2002.

A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza, by S.D. Goitein. 6 Volumes. Univ. of California Press, 2000.

Sacred Trash: The Lost and Found World of the Cairo Geniza, by Adina Hoffman and Peter Cole. Nextbook/Schocken, New York 2011.

Muslim and Christian Contact in the Middle Ages, A Reader, by Jarbel Rodriguez. Univ. of Toronto Press 2015.

Living in Historic Cairo: Past and Present in an Islamic City, edited by Farhad Daftary et. al. Azimuth Editions/Institute of Ismaili Studies/University of Washington Press 2010.

Ritual, Politics, and the City in Fatimid Cairo, by Paula Sanders. State University of New York Press, Albany 1994.

Jerusalem: The Biography, by Simon Sebag Montefiore. Vintage Books 2012.

Diplomatic Gifts: A History in Fifty Presents, by Paul Brummell. Hurst & Company, London 2022. [Fun...4-5 page vignettes, excellent for exploring and teaching object-based history]

Sicily: An Island at the Crossroads of History, by John Julius Norwich 2015. “suavely readable”

Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West, by Hubert Houben. Trans. G. A. Loud and Diane Milbourne. Cambridge University Press 2002.

Arabic Script on Christian Kings : Textile Inscriptions on Royal Garments from Norman Sicily, by Isabelle Dolezalek. De Gruyter 2017. [detailed scholarly analysis]

Other Material

(Website) *Teaching Medieval Slavery and Captivity*: Prof. Hannah Barker leads an ongoing project, “to provide English translations of interesting primary sources and selected bibliographies to illustrate what kind of scholarship is already available on the topic of medieval slavery and captivity. The primary audience is teachers, but it’s also set up for browsing by the curious.”

(Novels) see all titles in 5-part series “Islam Quintet,” stretching from Spain to Pakistan, by Tariq Ali: *Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree* (1992); *The Book of Saladin* (1998); *The Stone Woman* (1999); *A Sultan in Palermo* (2005); *Night of the Golden Butterfly* (2010). Verso, London and New York