

The PHI BETA KAPPA Society

VISITING



SCHOLAR

PROGRAM

KRISTINA
RICHARDSON

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

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South Asian Languages and Cultures

PUBLIC LECTURE
OFFERINGS

**MEDIEVAL ROMANI PRINTERS: THE MISSING LINK BETWEEN
EUROPEAN AND CHINESE PRINT**

Historians have long wondered whether the early Chinese print tradition had any influence on the rise of print in 15th-century Europe. The medieval Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) print tradition has been overlooked in service of narratives that isolate Gutenberg as uniquely inspired. But when we integrate MENA print history into the larger Afro-Eurasian history of print, we come away with startling evidence that Romani and Romani-like traveling groups had been blockprinting since the 10th century, centuries before printing on paper arrived in central Europe. When Roma tribes migrated from Ottoman territories into Bavaria and Bohemia in the 1410s, they had the means and the motive to carry this printing technology into the Holy Roman Empire.

**A HISTORY OF SLAVERY AND RACIAL CAPITALISM IN
THE ISLAMIC INDIAN OCEAN**

Cedric Robinson defined racial capitalism as the process of deriving value from the racial identity of others, and it is generally thought to have begun with the advent of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. But what happens when we consider the development of racial capitalism as a much older phenomenon, dating from the 7th-century in the Middle East. The Indian Ocean slave trade funneled millions of people from eastern Africa, western India, and the southern Indian Ocean into the Middle East, where they worked mostly as

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(CONT...)

common laborers. Known collectively as “blacks,” the shift from ethnic to racial classifications of these African and Asian slaves was evident in language, maps, and in their erasure from cultural landscapes where genealogy was the basis of status.

SLAVERY IN TWO WORLDS: EAST AFRICANS IN THE ATLANTIC AND INDIAN OCEAN

In 1645 Iberian authorities issued the first license to trade slaves from Mozambique to Brazil. But the story doesn't start there. Muslim traders had been bringing slaves from Mozambique into Iraq since at least the 800s. What historical dynamics come to the fore when we tell these histories together and consider the *longue durée* of the East African slave trade? We will approach these histories in Brazil and Iraq through three lenses: plantation slavery, organized rebellions, and processes of creolization.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION TOPICS



- 1. INDIAN OCEAN SLAVE TRADE**
- 2. GLOBAL ASTROLOGY**
- 3. ROMANI PEOPLE IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST, AND NORTH AFRICA**
- 4. INTRODUCTION TO MEDIEVAL ARABIC MANUSCRIPTS, BUT FOR MORE ADVANCED STUDENTS, I COULD DO A MORE TAILORED LESSON.**