

Expansion and Interconnection: A World of Interdependence Exploration of World History, 1500 to the Present



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The University of Michigan’s “Center for Middle Eastern, North African, and Southeast Asian (MENA-SEA) Studies” launched an initiative for the 2019-2020 academic year, a “Teacher Program,” to introduce and present an array of topics for secondary teachers, in support of their instruction within their schools and districts.

Topics, all connecting to geographical regions of the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia, were wide ranging: general histories of the regions; ethnic and religious minorities; narratives and diasporas; “the Arts”; genocide, historical memory, and justice; anthropology of religion; gender; literature, graphic novels, and film documentary.

These topics may align comfortably with the academic objectives for most disciplines, such as Language Arts or other fields connected to the Humanities. The material, though, meets with unique challenges for teachers of History, both in terms of content and skills. For them, the MENA-SEA Program provides content material that supports the aims of state and national academic standards; however, teachers will need to harness this important content with the “reigns” of new skill applications that appear in both state and national frameworks.

Students in secondary education today (grades 6-12) have specific targets, both content and skill, highlighted in academic standards. Content includes World Geography, Ancient World Societies and Civilizations, US History, Modern World History, US Government and Politics (Civics), and Economics. These categories appear all-encompassing, but case studies that connect to the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia number few. In fact, the term “Southeast Asia” may appear only three times in Michigan’s standards and benchmarks for high school social studies, as it relates to Muslim expansion into the region and decolonization of the twentieth century.

Guidance in “skill” applications has received greater definition during recent years. Both the state of Michigan and the College Board’s Advanced Placement Program share impressive identification of authentic skills, the actual work of historians, within their respective frameworks of academic standards and benchmarks. These frameworks reveal themselves essentially as a process of “Historical Inquiry,” which is ordered as posing a question (“How/Why” questions appear most useful); conducting research; formulating a position statement (argument or thesis); and supporting the position with specific evidence. Within the state standards, this process is delineated in the “Arc of Inquiry” instruction approach. This process of inquiry is also supported in the Common Core

Standards for Reading and Writing (<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/R/>; <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/W/>).

Evidence is not merely applied as support, but it is analyzed through an array of criteria. The analysis of evidence is also directed to connect with various “historical thinking skills” that Historians employ in the work: contextualization, causation, compare/contrast, change/continuity over time. With the identification process and tools reflective of the actual work of Historians, it seems that teachers are positioned to explore topics with students in a manner employed by Historians, rather than merely provide worksheets that are detachments from authentic practice. Furthermore, the application of “Historical Inquiry” and “Historical Thinking Skills” bridges a chasm for young learners, allowing them to learn outside of their frame of reference, to grow as students, budding scholars, and young people, and to discover creative pursuits beyond secondary education.

With this reappraisal of skills, *how should a history teacher align activities and explorations of content material and authentic skills?*

Connect Distant or Otherwise “Abstract” Material to a Personal Frame of Reference.

Most Michigan students have no personal connection to regions of Southeast Asia, and even fewer may ever travel there. How are students in Michigan connected with the history and culture of Southeast Asia?

As an opening “vocabulary builder,” introduce the following map and see if your students can label locations and identify their presence within your local community (20 min.):

	<p>Southeast Asia; label Vietnam, Laos, Thailand. Also label China, Myanmar, Cambodia, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines</p> <p>Can you identify cultures and influences from Southeast Asia within Holland? Create a list:</p>
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The fact that young learners may be able to locate these cultures within their local community is a testament to the voyages of Christopher Columbus, over five hundred years ago. With the Columbian Exchange, the planet’s two hemispheres would be forever connected. Human societies transitioned from **interaction** with other regions to **interdependence** with these regions.

Rationale

In order to understand the complexities of distant and “abstract” physical locations, this lesson combines material that is familiar to young learners (localities) with other target locations, in this case Indonesia. As it turns out, a useful “connector” between Michigan and Indonesia is the Netherlands, the birthplace of modern liberalism, the first international trading company, colonial and imperial power to both the infant US and islands of Indonesia.

Exploration of Material

Consider the following two vocabulary terms and questions with your students (20 min.):

What does “**Interdependence**” mean?

How is “**Interdependence**” different from “**Interaction**”?

This lesson explores three **World Zones**: **Afro-Eurasia** (Africa and the Eurasian landmass, including offshore islands like Britain and Japan); **Australasia** (Australia and the island of Papua New Guinea, plus neighboring islands in the Pacific Ocean); and **The Americas** (North, Central, and South America, plus offshore islands like the Caribbean Islands). For most of human history, our species remained isolated within one World Zone. Only five hundred years ago would humans establish connections among the World Zones, transforming human experience from one that was region-specific to one interdependent of other zones.

Driving Question: *How do the World Zones of Afro-Eurasia, Australasia, and The Americas display the features of Global Interdependence?*

Case Study Question: *How do the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Indonesia, and The United States of America (New York, Michigan) demonstrate the dynamics of Global Interdependence?*

Introduction to Material: Stimuli (Sources)

The opening serves to introduce students to the “analysis” of documents. The focus on “point-of-view” is useful for students to understand. The questions after the passages direct students to consider the intent of the author (“Why do these authors write what they write?”).

Read these two passages, one by Eduard Douwes Dekker and one by Pramoedya Ananta Toer (30 min.):

“The government obliges the farmer to grow particular crops on his own land on pain of punishment if he sells the yield to anyone other than the government, while it is up to the government to decide how much he will be paid. The cost of transport to Europe, carried out by privileged trading companies, is high. The money given to the chiefs as encouragement further inflates the purchasing price, and . . . since the business as a whole must necessarily make a profit, the only solution is to pay the Javanese farmer just enough to keep him from starving . . .

“*Famine?* In the rich, fertile, blessed land of Java—famine? Indeed, reader. Only a few years ago entire districts died of starvation. Mothers offered their children for sale to obtain food. Mothers even ate their own children . . .”

Eduard Douwes Dekker (1820-1887), former employee of the Dutch Indies government and later author of *Max Havelaar* (1860)

“...at the end of Dutch hegemony over Indonesia in 1943, no more than 3.5 percent of the country’s population could read or write.”

Pramoedya Ananta Toer, 1999

What information is shared in both passages?

How do the passages present images of “class” and “equality”?

What appears to be the “point-of-view” of each of the authors?

Why do you think they hold this “point-of-view”?

We explore next individual topics to connect to the history of these regions, along to that of The United States.

Topics to Profile

Kingdom of the Netherlands	The Republic of Indonesia	The United States of America (New York, Michigan)
VOC tulips “Golden Age” Rembrandt Jan Vermeer The Eighty Years War Phillip II of Spain Antonie van Leeuwenhoek House of Orange Anne Frank	clove, nutmeg, pepper Nathaniel Courthope Island of Run Java The Banda Islands Jan Pieterszoon Coen Fort Victoria, Amboyna The Diponegoro War Eduard Douwes Dekker (Multatuli) sugar, coffee, tea, indigo Johannes van den Bosch War for Independence, 1945-1949	Hudson River Washington Irving, <i>The Legend of Sleepy Hollow</i> New Amsterdam Peter Stuyvesant Albertus Van Raalte RCA, CRC Chief Waukazoo and the Odawa maple syrup first African slaves to New Amsterdam Hope College https://indo.rest/ Rasa Ria (Kalamazoo)

Each student selects one topic to profile. The “profile” is a one-page organizer with four sections: a driving question (How/Why); a sophisticated argument statement (claim, counterclaim, specific evidence); 3-5 useful illustrations or visuals; a listing of 5-10 statements that support the argument

statement (our classes meet 90 min., three days each week; I allow students one week to complete the profile; I do not give them the full in-class sessions to complete the profile).

In the Interim: Background Information and Themes of History

After topics are assigned and students begin their research, interrupt their work to share a “geographic/demographic” comparison of the three case studies (students may wish to help research information to use in the comparison)



<p>Michigan (1837): 10 million people; largest Muslim population in the US</p> <p>New York (1788): 19 million people; NYC largest in US, site of 9/11</p>	<p>Kingdom of the Netherlands (1648): “birth place of modern liberalism”; 17.5 million people</p>	<p>Republic of Indonesia (1945): with over 267 million people, it is the world's 4th most populous country; most populous Muslim-majority country; sovereign state (presidential, constitutional republic with an elected legislature); country's capital, Jakarta, is the second-most populous urban area in the world</p>
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After the “geographic/demographic” background information is shared, transition to share some ideas about how historians work with **themes**.

Evident themes: **Themes** serve as the connective tissue of the course and enable students to create meaningful connections across units. They are often broader ideas that become threads that run throughout the course. Revisiting them and applying them in a variety of contexts helps students to develop deeper conceptual understanding.

1. Humans and the Environment (The environment shapes human societies, and as populations grow and change, these populations in turn shape their environments)
2. Cultural Developments and Interactions (The development of ideas, beliefs, and religions illustrates how groups in society view themselves, and the interactions of societies and their beliefs often have political, social, and cultural implications)
3. Governance (A variety of internal and external factors contribute to state formation, expansion, and decline. Governments maintain order through a variety of administrative institutions, policies, and procedures, and governments obtain, retain, and exercise power in different ways and for different purposes)

4. Economic Systems (As societies develop, they affect and are affected by the ways that they produce, exchange, and consume goods and services)
5. Social Interactions and Organizations (The process by which societies group their members and the norms that govern the interactions between these groups and between individuals influence political, economic, and cultural institutions and organization)
6. Technology and Innovation (Human adaptation and innovation have resulted in increased efficiency, comfort, and security, and technological advances have shaped human development and interactions with both intended and unintended consequences)

Teachers may write “Insights into History” on the board, then connect each theme with a “spoke” to “Insights into History”; themes illumine aspects of historical experience, so this visual organizer may be an effective way to introduce specific themes of history.

Back to the Profiles

Collect and arrange each individual profile on a large wall so students may read their peers work and make observations. As they consider the work of their peers, they collect information on a worksheet. After students complete their observations and respond to questions on the worksheet (see “Other Material”), return to the class room and discuss work (1 hour). The discussion is important, allowing students to share their observations, and allowing the teacher to embed thematic connections among the three regions. It is important to pose questions such as: “How do The Netherlands, Indonesia, and The United States of America connect economically?”; “How are ‘power and privilege’ evident within this experience?”; “How do humans utilize natural resources and the environment?”; among similar inquiries. Collect the “Profile Observation Question Sheet” at the beginning of next class.

Assign an extended written response. Based on your observations, provide a response to the following question: “To what extent is the ‘World of Global Interdependence’ a positive or negative development within human history?” (to be completed at home)

Read the following article with students in class; break the class into small groups and have each group focus on a section and report back to the class on the section (1 hour):

“COMMENTARY: How bad, how cruel were Dutch to us?” Endy M. Bayuni, *The Jakarta Post* (August 23, 2018), <https://www.thejakartapost.com/academia/2018/08/23/commentary-how-bad-how-cruel-were-dutch-to-us.html>

After discussion of the article, have students complete the following questions:

1. What seems to be the main idea or argument from the article?
2. Select three passages from the article that you think are particularly well-written; what do these passages communicate to the reader?
3. What is the “tone” of the article?
4. What is the author’s “point-of-view”?
5. Who is the intended audience for this article?
6. Bonus: What should people know about Indonesia that they might not have known before you explored this material?

Desired Outcomes

1. Students identify dynamics of “power and privilege” (or another theme) within several historical frames (theme: Social Interactions and Organizations)
2. Students connect the regions of The Netherlands, Indonesia, and The United States of America, during the period of “Global Interdependence”
3. Students identify contradictions within the experiences of human history (liberalism and subjugation; trade and exploitation; tribalism and globalization; among others)
4. Students respond to the target material in many ways (discussion, research of individual topics, writing a short essay, reading critical texts)
5. Students practice the work of “analysis” of documents (“point-of-view”; tone; intended audience)
6. Students design a profile, displaying “quality work”
7. Instructors demonstrate the process of “Arc of Inquiry,” as outlined in Michigan’s State Standards for Social Studies, using this material

Other Materials

“Profile Observation Question Sheet”

1. Record two good examples of “Driving Questions” (How/Why) that your peers wrote. What makes these questions good examples of “Driving Questions”?
2. Record two strong argument statements. Why did you find these examples to be particularly strong?
3. Record three details that you did not know.
4. Record two important facts from each region: The Netherlands, Indonesia, The United States of America
5. What “theme” do you see when you consider the profiles; how is the theme evident within the histories of these regions?
6. T or F “Power and privilege” played no role in the shared in the these profiles (explain your response)
7. What is “quality work”? Select one profile and share how it reflects quality work.
8. After considering the work of your peers, how do you respond to the following question: *How do the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Indonesia, and The United States of America (New York, Michigan) demonstrate the dynamics of Global Interdependence?* (a strong statement within one paragraph)

“Assessment”

Assignment: Based on your observations, provide a response to the following question: *“To what extent is the ‘World of Global Interdependence’ a positive or negative development within human history?”*

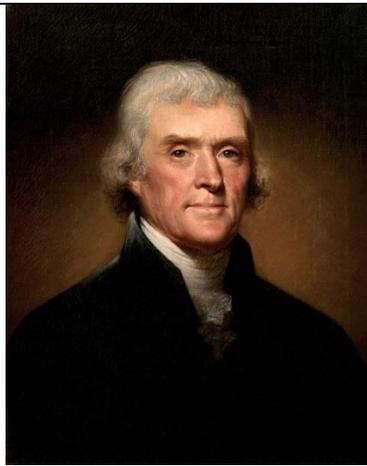
The response is a short essay (multiple paragraphs). Include an opening (with a strong argument/thesis statement); a middle section (several paragraphs, with three or more strong examples of evidence that supports the argument); and a conclusion (how does this story compare or contrast to another story from history).

“Template for Profile (model)”

Thomas Jefferson as US President

Why is Thomas Jefferson the greatest US President?

“Although he personally owned slaves throughout his lifetime, Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States, demonstrated outstanding leadership through writing the *Declaration of Independence* (1776) declaring the freedom of religion to be a natural right in the *Virginia Statue for Religious Freedom* (1777), and promoting education through the foundation of the University of Virginia (1819).”



Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)

Served as Third President to the United States (1801-1809)

Served as Second Vice President to the United States, under President John Adams (1797-1801)

Constructed his home, Monticello (“little mountain”), 1768-1809, outside Charlottesville, VA

Louisiana Purchase, 1803, 830,000 square miles, \$15 million, doubling the size of the US

Authored a trove of letter exchanges with John Adams; both men died 4 July 1826

Works Consulted

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