

Department of Political Science
Center for Middle Eastern Studies
Rutgers University

The US as an Emerging Naval Power: The Barbary Wars, 1798-1816

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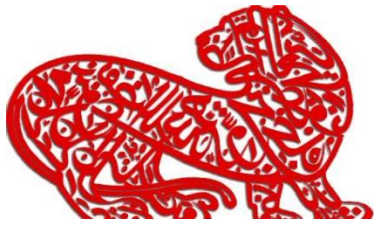
<http://new-middle-east.blogspot.com/>

The Blast IU 17 Fellowship

2011 Summer Institute

American Institute for History Education

June 16, 2011



What are this module's learning objectives?

- ☐ How did the US become involved in Middle East affairs?
 - ☐ What do the Barbary Wars tell us about the development of early American foreign policy?
 - ☐ Why did the US follow an aggressive policy towards the Barbary states?
 - ☐ How did US become naval power in late 18th century?
 - ☐ What are the similarities between early 19th century piracy in the Barbary Coast and piracy today?
 - ☐ How did Barbary Wars affect US understandings of the Islamic Middle East and North Africa?
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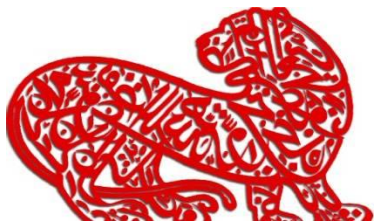
This is a detailed map of Africa and the Middle East, showing country borders, major cities, and geographical features. The map includes labels for countries like Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and others. It also shows the Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, and Indian Ocean. A scale bar and a note about boundary representation are included.

Scale: 1:42,300,000
 Azimuthal Equal-Area Projection
 0 250 500 Kilometers
 0 250 500 Miles

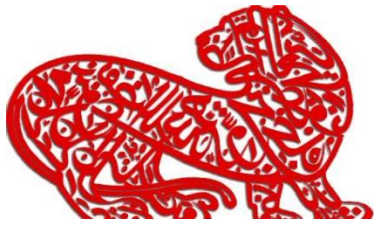
Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.

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Modern North Africa

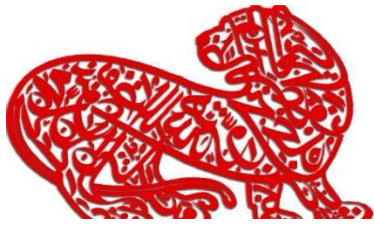


Barbary States – North Africa (early 19th century)



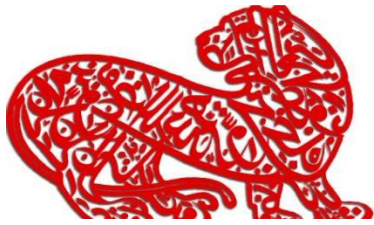
What are origins of term “Barbary”?

- ❑ *Barbaros* comes from ancient Greek and refers to someone who didn't speak Greek
 - ❑ To Greeks, it was antithesis of being civilized and referred to people who babble and incomprehensible
 - ❑ In ancient Greece, *barbaros* came to refer to a slave
 - ❑ Term “Berber” comes from Roman reference to North Africans and comes from the Arabic *barbari*
 - ❑ Barbarian is origin of term “Berber”
 - ❑ Berbers are a large Muslim ethnic group in present day North Africa, especially in Atlas mountains
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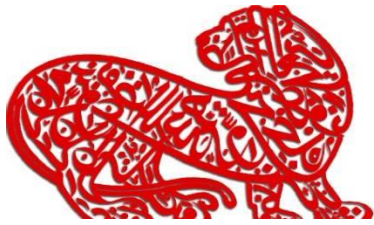
Piracy, violence and stereotypes

- ❑ Does focus on violent behavior in non-Western undermine our ability to teach global cultures
 - ❑ Without valorizing violence in form of piracy and terrorism, how do we offer an informed view of non-Western societies?
 - ❑ What types of pedagogies can we use to avoid having students think violence is the dominant form of behavior in non-Western societies?
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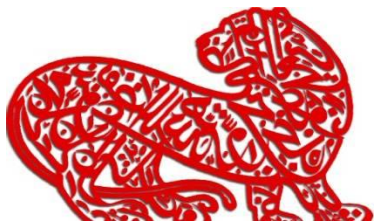
The Barbary Wars and “Orientalism”

- ❑ How did the Barbary Wars shape American understandings of the Middle East?
 - ❑ The notion of the Barbary Pirates evokes the notion of *Orientalism*
 - ❑ Orientalism is notion of the “never changing” and “exotic” Orient where untrustworthiness, irrationality and violence are dominant norms
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The Barbary Wars and Orientalism

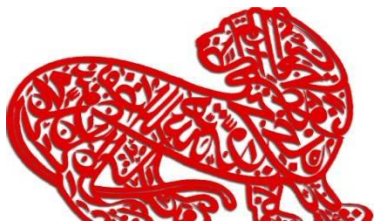
- ❑ Barbary Wars reinforced ideas of Middle East and North Africa (MENA) as area characterized by negative norms and “different” from West
 - ❑ People in MENA are inherently violence prone, irrational, and untrustworthiness
 - ❑ Barbary Wars contributed to existing idea that the West and the “Orient” involved in a never ending conflict based in religious differences
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Painting by
Jean-Baptiste



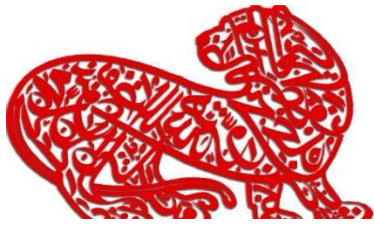
The Barbary Pirates as a form of the “Exotic”



Barbary states as represented in Western painting



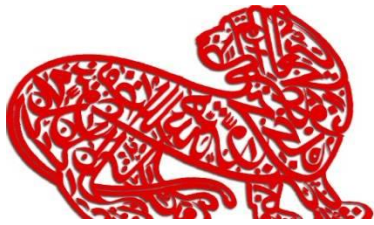
Lieve Pietrsz Verschuier – “Dutch ships bomb Tripoli in punitive expedition against the Barbary Pirates” (1670)



Europeans also fought the Barbary states

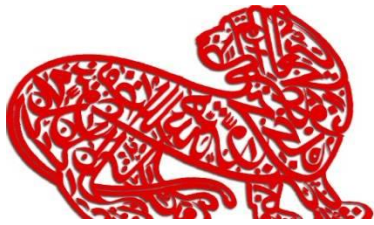


The bombardment of Algiers by Lord Exmouth,
August 1816, painted by Thomas Luny



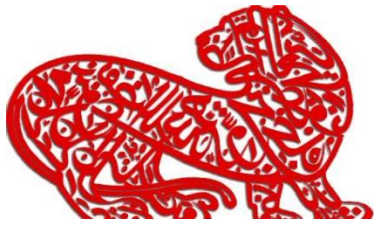
US naval development and Barbary wars

- ❑ US had been plying Mediterranean Sea since 1740 in search of spices and luxury goods
 - ❑ “Damasq” (from Damascus) was a high quality cloth from the Levant (Syria/Lebanon)
 - ❑ Nathaniel Hawthorne’s writings on Orient were influenced by seeing these ships return from Mediterranean to Salem harbor
 - ❑ Before Revolution, American ships protected by British who paid *tribute* to Barbary states
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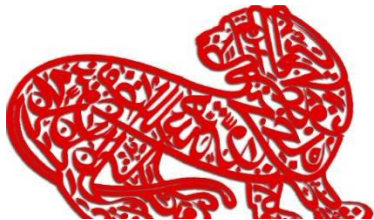
US commerce and naval development

- ❑ US long distance trade with Mediterranean enhanced ship building technology
 - ❑ Many naval commanders who distinguished themselves during Barbary Wars and War of 1812 had commanded trading schooners
 - ❑ Example is Commodore William Bainbridge (b. Princeton, NJ) who went to sea at 14 and traded with British West Indies
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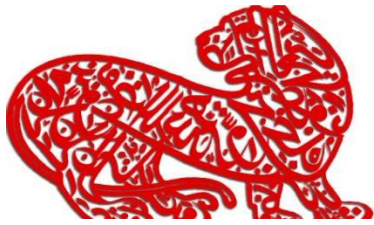
Origins of US navy

- ❑ French were no longer allied with US after Revolutionary War
 - ❑ New French Republic (1789) angry that US didn't repay debts contracted with monarchy
 - ❑ French also resented US trading with its British enemy after it achieved independence
 - ❑ French began attacking US commercial ships
 - ❑ In 1794, US felt need to develop a navy
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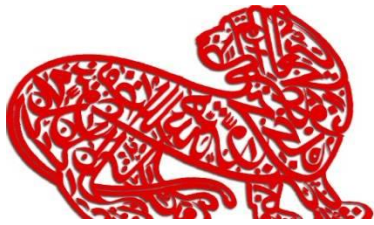
Fighting the French

- ❑ Wm. Bainbridge give command of USS *Retaliation* which captured by French in 1798
 - ❑ First ship in US navy to be captured by a foreign power
 - ❑ In 1798, Stephen Decatur, the youngest person ever to become a navy captain, captured French schooner, *La Croyable*
 - ❑ This conflict of late 1790s referred to as the “Quasi War”
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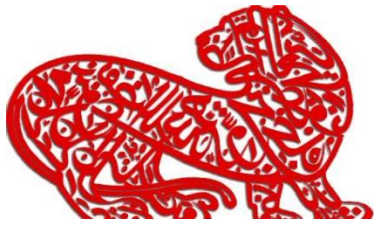
Origins of the Barbary states

- ❑ After Spanish conquest of Andalusia in 1492, Muslims/Jews pushed out of Iberian Peninsula
 - ❑ Some Muslim military elements retaliated by attacking Spanish coast and engaging in piracy
 - ❑ Ottoman Empire asserted control over North Africa from 1587 to 1659
 - ❑ After 1659, Ottoman pashas were powerless and Morocco, Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli became autonomous military republics
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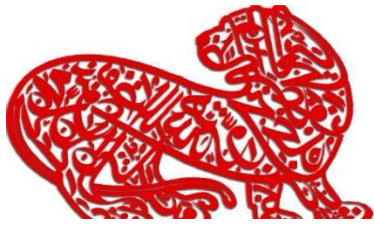
Who ruled the Barbary Coast?

- ❑ Barbary states nominally part of Ottoman Empire and paid Ottoman sultan yearly taxes
 - ❑ Barbary rulers known as pirates, privateers (private parties authorized by a government to attack ships of an enemy state), corsairs, and Ottoman corsairs
 - ❑ Operated primarily out of ports of Algiers, Tripoli and Tunis and Tangiers
 - ❑ Some Barbary leaders were European outcasts such as John Ward, Zyman Danseker and Henry Mainwaring or ex-Ottoman offices such as Hayreddin Barbarossa and Oruç Reis
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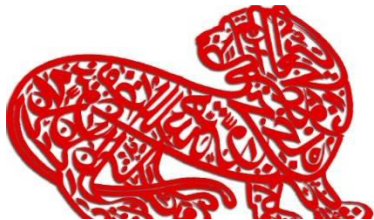
What was the economy of Barbary states?

- ❑ The Barbary pirates sought all types of goods but their primary concern was slaves
 - ❑ Between 1530 and 1780, est. 1 ¼ million Europeans captured and forced into slavery
 - ❑ Barbary corsairs traveled as far north as Iceland (1627) in search of European slaves
 - ❑ Barbary states most active in first half of 17th century
 - ❑ Frightened Europeans to extent that hundreds miles of northern Mediterranean coast from Venice to Malaga uninhabited for lengthy period of time
-

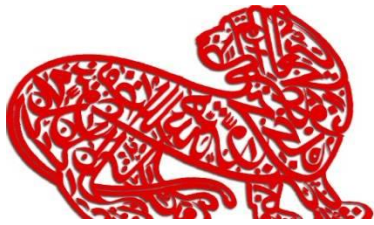


European slaves in the Barbary states

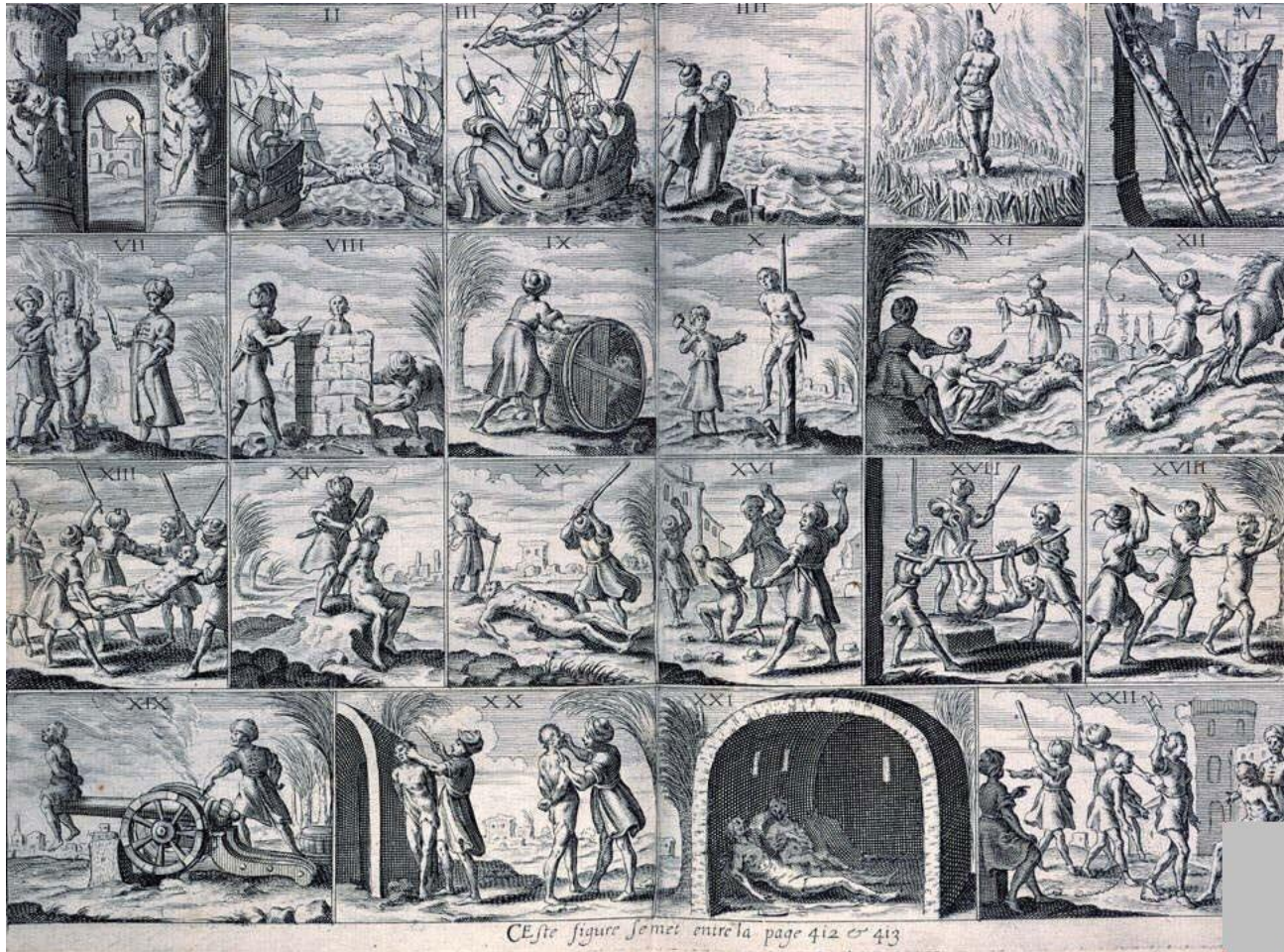
- ❑ Slaves were divided into 2 types – public and those belonging to “private parties”
 - ❑ Public slaves rowed galley ships and often remained tied to oars all their lives
 - ❑ Public slaves worked on state construction and other projects during winter
 - ❑ Private slaves could become “house slaves” and do well or work on hard menial projects
 - ❑ Religious organizations constantly worked to ransom European slaves from the Barbary states
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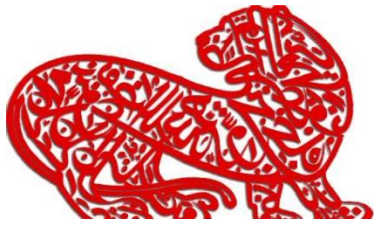
Roman Catholic monks purchasing
European slaves



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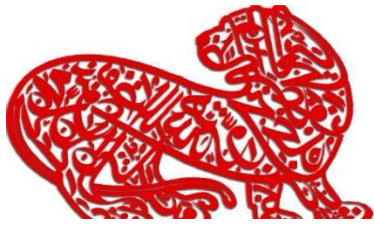


Lithograph on Barbary torture



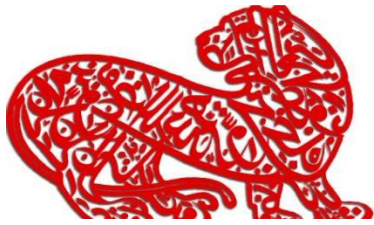
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The First Barbary War 1800-1805



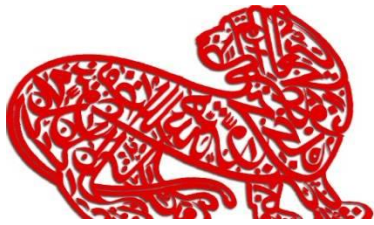
What was US' first contact with Barbary states?

- ❑ In 1785, Algiers captured 2 US ships, *Maria* of Boston and *Dauphin* of Philadelphia and made 22 Americans captured slaves
 - ❑ Sailors stripped naked and taken to Algiers as slaves
 - ❑ Americans remained there for a decade as US Congress refused to pay ransom
 - ❑ Many died of cholera before being freed in 1796
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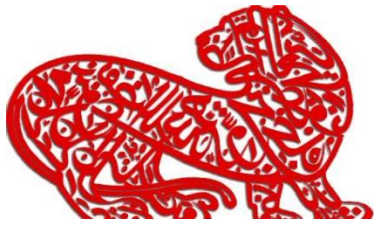
Initial dealings with the Barbary states

- ❑ After US lost its protection of the British, Barbary states began attacking US ships
 - ❑ Initial policy was to try and pay “protection money” (tribute) to the Barbary states
 - ❑ When policy failed, President Jefferson decided to use force to protect US shipping
 - ❑ During era of conflict with Barbary states, US sailors, merchants and military taken captive
-



What were the Barbary Wars' origins?

- ❑ First Barbary War: 1801-1805; the second: 1812-1816
 - ❑ Barbary states: Sultanate of Morocco, regencies of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli (latter 3 were nominal provinces of Ottoman Empire)
 - ❑ Morocco signed treaty with US in 1777 and did not attack US ships; thus not part of Barbary Wars
 - ❑ Barbary states offered to protect ships in Mediterranean Sea in exchange for protection money
 - ❑ 1801 Jefferson refused to pay protection money and 3 states – Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli - declared war on US
-

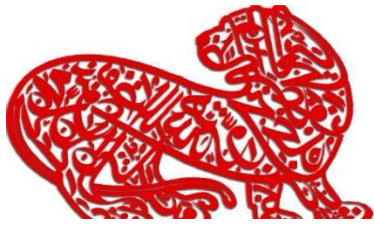


British caricature
of Barbary pirates



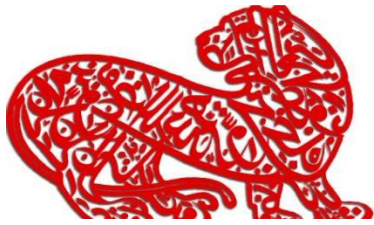
Tunisian
Barbary corsair

Images of Barbary pirates



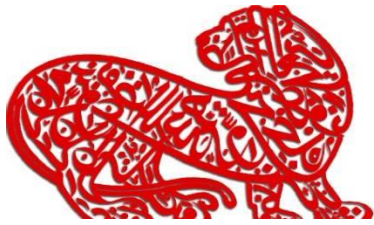
US and the Tripolitanian War

- ❑ The US had been trying to come to terms with the Barbary states during the 1790s
 - ❑ The Dey of Algiers humiliated the US in 1800
 - ❑ Forced USS *George Washington* to fly the Algiers flag and take animals and slaves and Algiers ambassador to the Ottoman sultan in Istanbul
 - ❑ Jefferson decided that military action needed and ordered a blockade of the Tripoli harbor
 - ❑ US commander was Commodore Wm. Bainbridge
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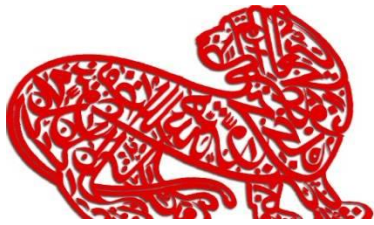
What was the first Barbary War's outcome?

- ☐ Despite being an anti-Federalist and advocate of smaller government, Jefferson was forced to build larger navy to protect US commercial expansion
 - ☐ This demonstrates how the requisites of a political office often override a leader's personal preferences
 - ☐ Barbary Wars led to many American sailors and merchant sailors being held hostage by Barbary states
 - ☐ US Congress didn't pay ransoms and some died in prison
 - ☐ Not just that Congress didn't want to pay ransom but it has also been argued that it didn't have the needed funds
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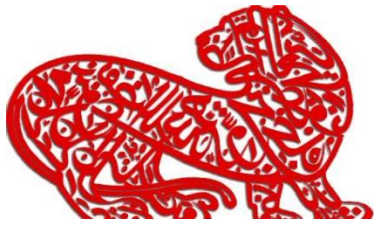
Capture of USS Philadelphia, Oct. 31, 1803

- ❑ The most spectacular development in the Barbary Wars was the capture of the USS *Philadelphia* in Tripoli (Libya) harbor after blockade by Commodore Richard Dale failed
 - ❑ Ship ran aground, abandoned by Wm. Bainbridge, and 307 man crew taken prisoner
 - ❑ Failure of the *Philadelphia* was considered a major national disaster since it challenged US navy's ability to combat Barbary states
-



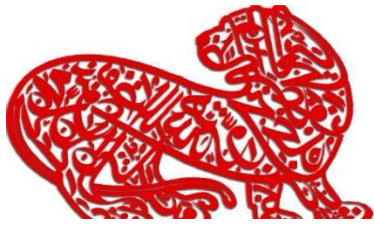
US's response to capture of Philadelphia

- ❑ Captain Stephen Decatur assigned to destroy *Philadelphia* so it couldn't be refitted for use
 - ❑ Decatur executed a daring raid on Feb. 14, 1804 to destroy *Philadelphia*
 - ❑ His ship, *Intrepid*, was built by French 1783 for Napoleon's expedition to Egypt
 - ❑ Later sold to Tripoli and renamed *Mastico*
 - ❑ Decatur seized *Mastico* Dec. 1803 and renamed it *Intrepid*
-



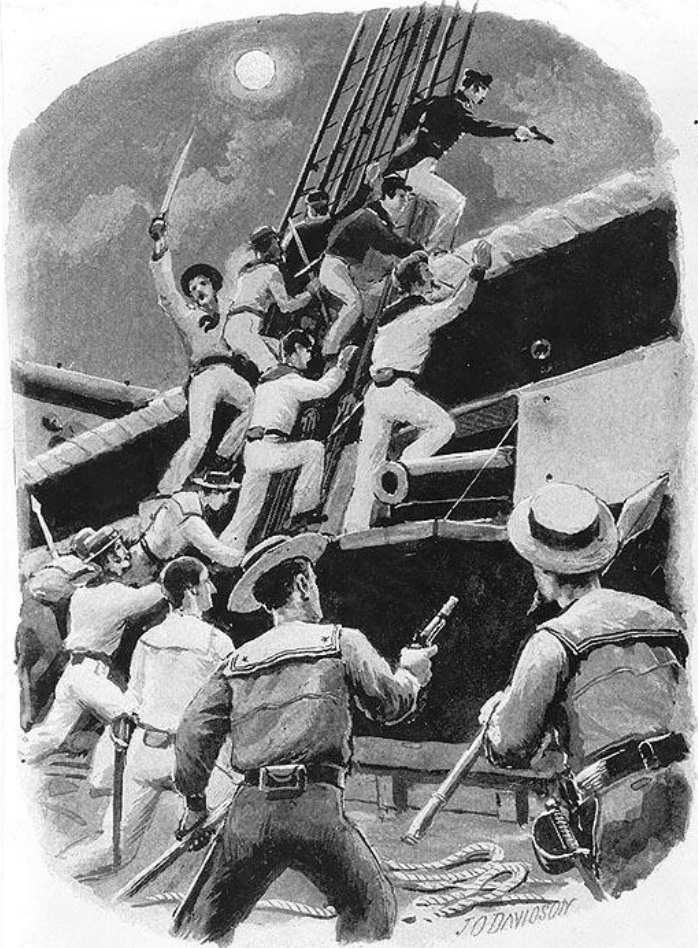
Decatur's destruction of the *Philadelphia*

- ❑ Decatur disguised *Intrepid* as British merchant ship to sneak alongside *Philadelphia* on evening of Feb. 16, 1804
 - ❑ Leading 60 men, Decatur stormed *Philadelphia* and set it ablaze after overpowering guards on the ship
 - ❑ Decatur was the last to leave the ship until he was sure it would be destroyed by the fire
 - ❑ Admiral Horatio Hornblower called Decatur's raid "the most bold and daring act of the Age."
 - ❑ Decatur later came to be known as "conqueror of the Barbary Pirates."
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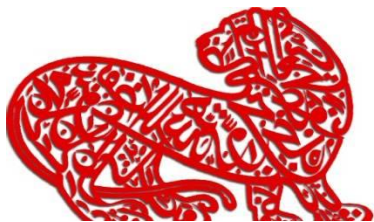
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Photo # NH 1340 "Boarding the Philadelphia"

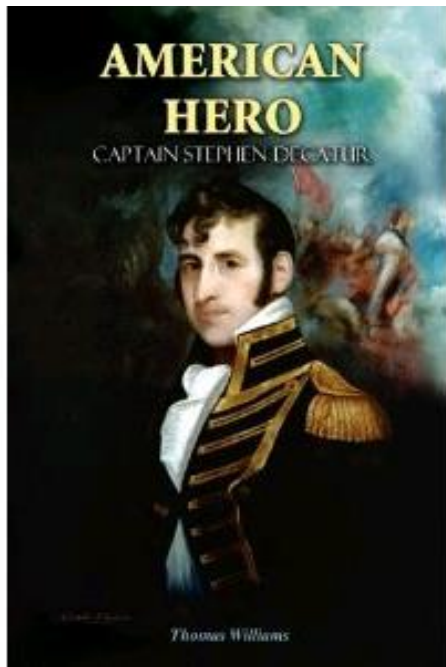


Boarding the Philadelphia.

A lithograph from the era
showing the boarding of
the *Philadelphia*



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Captain Stephen
Decatur

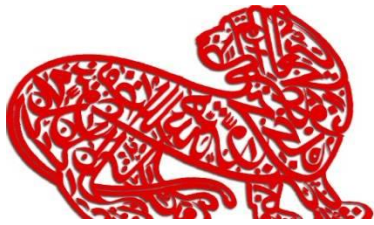


Commodore Wm.
Bainbridge



Captain W. Eaton

Heroes of the Barbary Wars



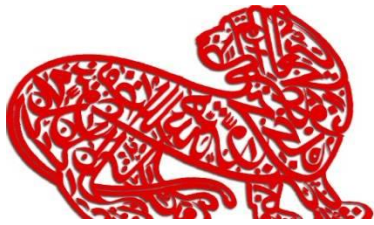
Military conflict during first Barbary War



The burning of
the USS Philadelphia
(1803)

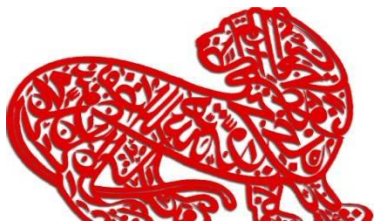


Battle of Derna, Tripoli – first battle US
forces fought on foreign soil (1805)

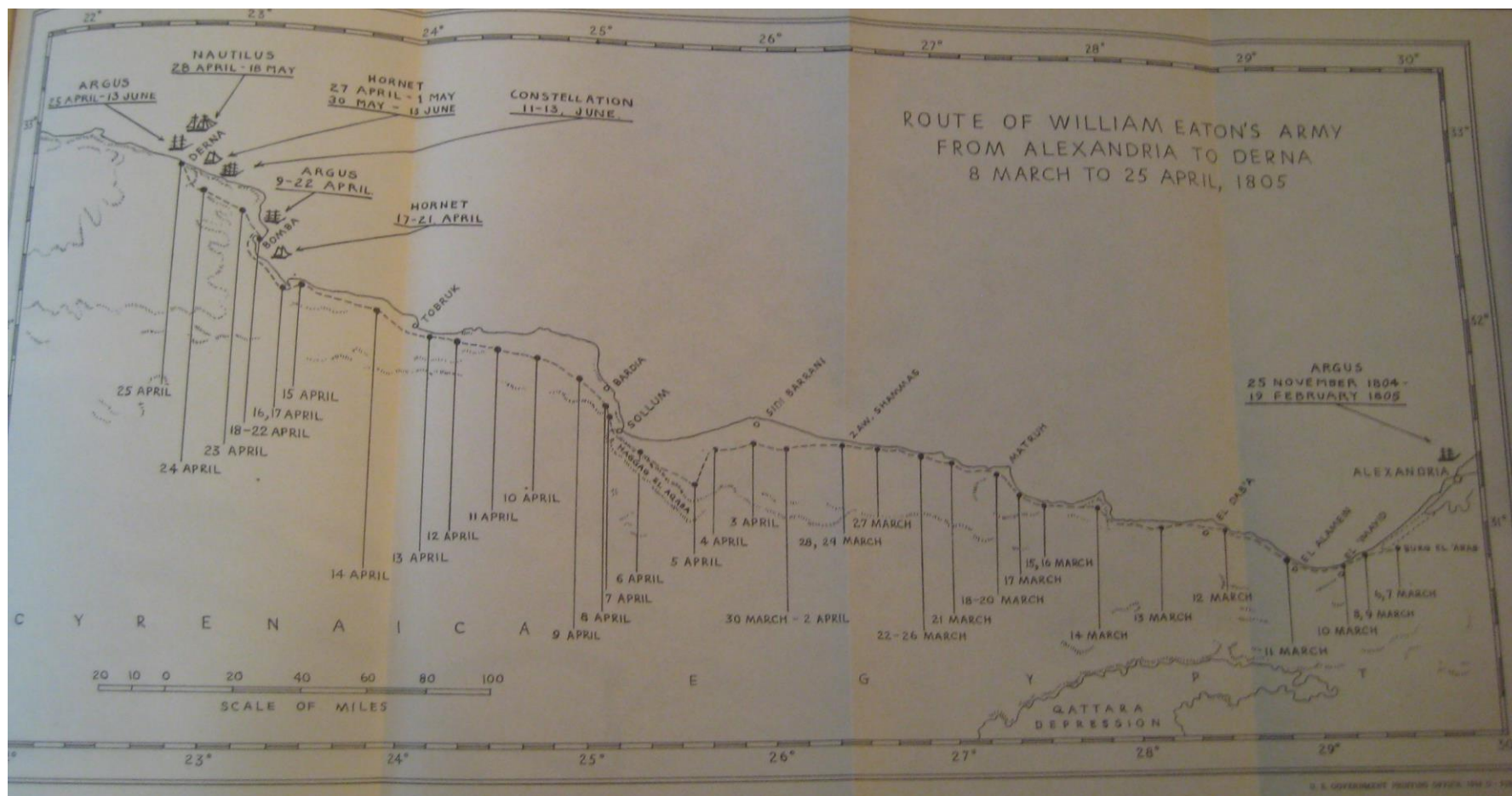


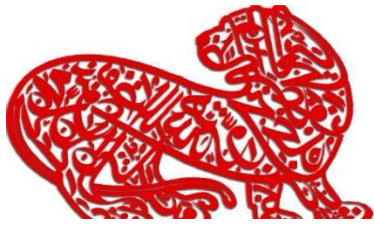
“To the shores of Tripoli...”

- ❑ Soon after Eaton’s victory, Pasha of Tripoli signed peace treaty with US and American hostages were released
 - ❑ Tripoli promised to no longer attack US ships in return for \$60,000 in ransom and \$6000 in gifts to win freedom of captured Americans
 - ❑ Eaton’s efforts to place Hamet on throne failed and US hostages snuck out of Tripoli on USS *Constellation* in June 1805
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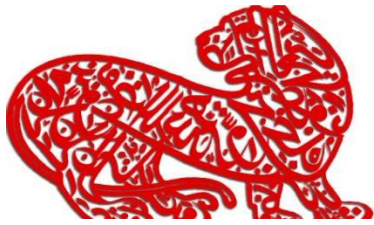
Eaton's route to Derna



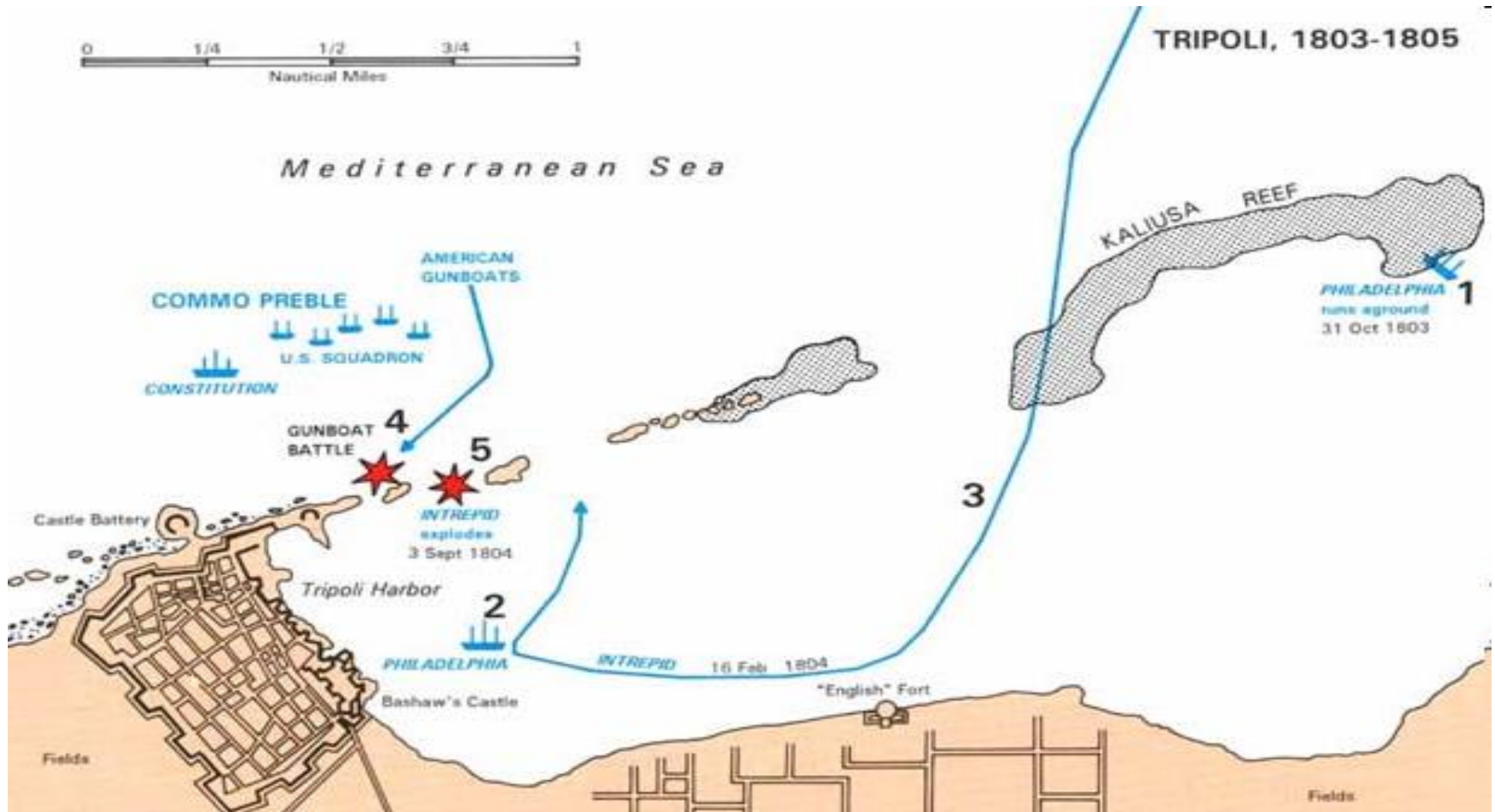


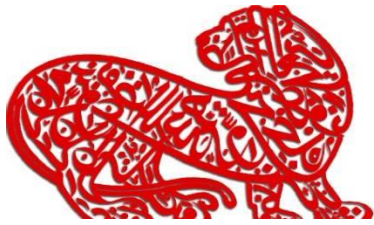
“To the shores of Tripoli...”

- ❑ Most famous battle led to rescue of sailors from USS *Philadelphia*
 - ❑ Under Wm. Eaton’s command, 8 US marines and 500 Egyptian mercenaries marched along Egyptian desert and seized Tripoli port of Derna
 - ❑ Eaton sought to place rightful leader, Hamet Karamanli, on throne as Pasha (Bashaw)
 - ❑ Marines and mercenaries defeated Tripoli forces on April 27, 1805
-



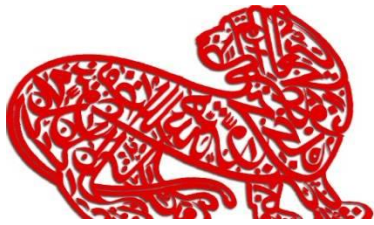
Barbary campaign: Tripoli (Libya)





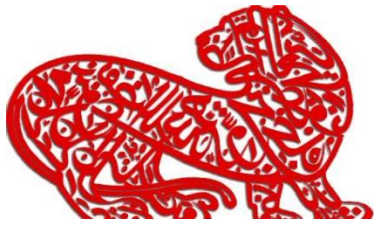
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The Second Barbary War, 1815



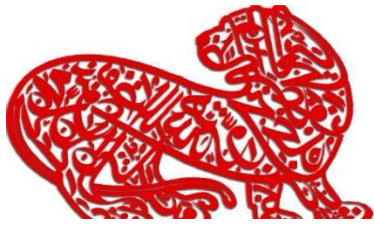
Reassertion of Barbary states

- ❑ Second Barbary War also known as Algerine or Algerian War
 - ❑ Rising tensions developed between British and French, after Napoleonic Wars
 - ❑ Tensions also increased between Britain and US after first Barbary War which led to War of 1812
 - ❑ Tensions prevented both British, French and US from enforcing terms of earlier treaties with Barbary states
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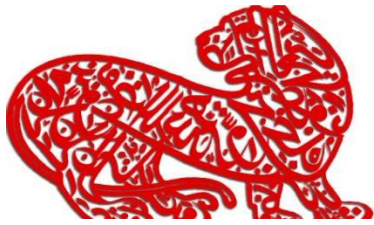
War of 1812 and Second Barbary War

- ❑ War of 1812 was “book ended” between first and second Barbary wars
 - ❑ GB expelling of US navy from Mediterranean during War of 1812 made it easy for Barbary states to once again attack US merchant ships
 - ❑ Omar Muhammad, the Dey of Regency of Algiers, much more combative than rulers of Morocco, Tunis and Tripoli
 - ❑ 1815 he declared war on US for failure to pay tribute
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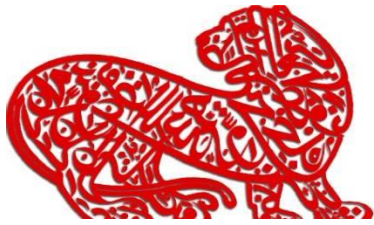
US mobilizes to defeat Algiers

- ❑ March 1815, US Congress sends 10 ships to Mediterranean to attack Barbary states
 - ❑ Stephen Decatur and Wm. Bainbridge main US naval commanders in Second Barbary War
 - ❑ Decatur quickly captured *Meshida* and *Estedio* which belonged to Algiers
 - ❑ By July, Decatur negotiating treaty with Algiers
 - ❑ 10 US captives (and Danish and Italian) released and US returns 500 captives and \$10,000 ransom
-



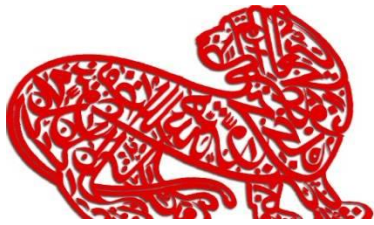
Britain's follow-up to US treaty

- ❑ While Decatur moving on to Tunis to negotiate same treaty, Dey of Algiers reneges on treaty
 - ❑ When Algerian troops massacred 200 Corsican, Sicilian and Sardinian fishermen, British sent fleet under Viscount Exmouth
 - ❑ Exmouth bombarded Algiers port and forced Dey to capitulate
 - ❑ On Sept. 1816, 1083 European slaves and British Consul freed and US ransom money repaid
-



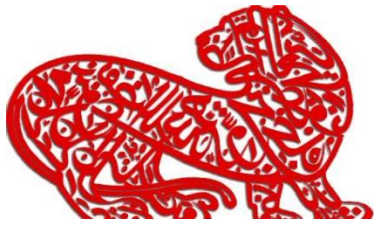
Aftermath of Second Barbary War

- ❑ Because no European wars after 1816, Britain and France could force Barbary states to respect the treaties they had signed and end piracy
 - ❑ France invaded Algiers in 1803 and made it a colony and seized Tunis in 1881
 - ❑ Ottomans reasserted control over Tripoli (Libya)
 - ❑ Barbary states could not keep up with Western naval and military technology, esp. iron clad ships
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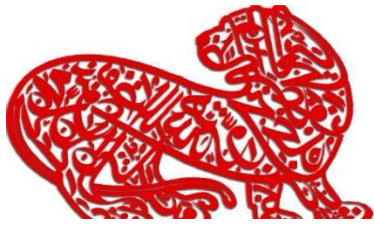
Impact of wars on US public

- ❑ Barbary Wars became point of contention between dominant political parties, the Federalist and the Democratic-Republicans
 - ❑ Each accused the other of “being soft” on the Barbary states and not supporting the US navy
 - ❑ Barbary Wars contributed to debate on slavery
 - ❑ How could Americans accuse Barbary states of “savagery” when US practiced slavery
 - ❑ Dark skinned peoples became associated in American mind with violence
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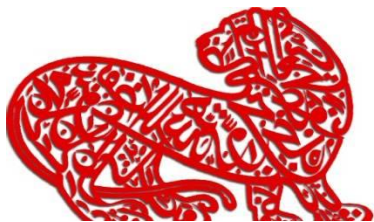
Barbary Wars and the US public

- ❑ Despite the Internet, Americans probably knew more about Barbary Wars than Americans know about Iraq and Afghanistan wars today
 - ❑ Peskin in *Captives and Countrymen* lists 114 letters and diary entries on the Barbary Wars
 - ❑ Via oral communications, letters, newspaper reports, diaries and diplomatic correspondence, Americans knew many details of the wars
 - ❑ Challenges idea that *globalization* recent development
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Why are Barbary wars relevant today?

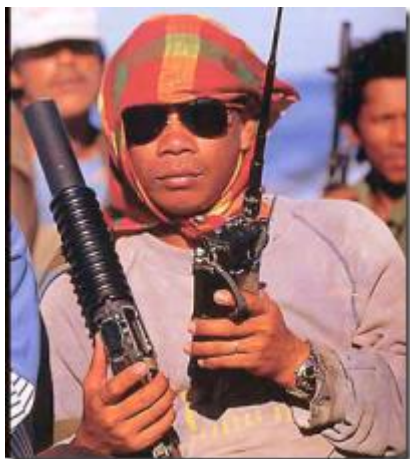
- ❑ Piracy still exists today, in Arabian Sea, South China Sea and Straits of Malacca
 - ❑ Raise question of why piracy persists and how can it be eradicated
 - ❑ Juxtaposing Barbary Wars to contemporary piracy has a pedagogic benefit: provides a useful comparative analytic perspective
 - ❑ Such a comparison allows students to see that many historical events still relevant today
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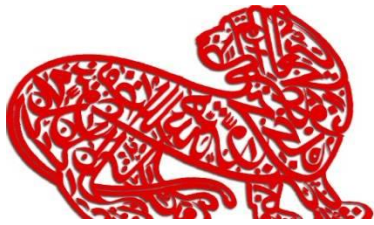


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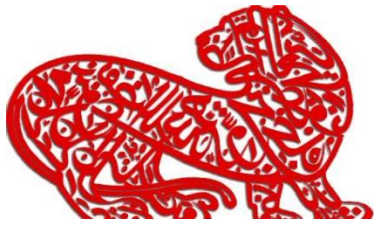
Piracy in Somalia, Indonesia and the South China Sea





Summary comments

- ❑ Barbary Wars have been mythologized in US history
 - ❑ US did not win decisive battles against Barbary states on its own, but needed European help
 - ❑ Barbary Wars shows that MENA in American consciousness even before Revolutionary War
 - ❑ Barbary Wars a good example how early views of MENA have affected US attitudes today
 - ❑ Wars show difficulty of teaching non-Western cultures
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