History 1110/27: Introduction to World History

Instructor: Roy J. McClymont
Time: Friday, 11.00 – 13:45
Place: SS 3029
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Introduction

The modern world is increasingly global and the methodology for exploring it must expand accordingly. Study must therefore become inclusive rather than exclusive. History must become more than just the history of particular nations or particular cultures; it must eventually become the history of human beings. Even more than that, it must become the history of the world we inhabit. In attempting to delineate such a history, we must look for global patterns as we consider what has drawn humanity together, and at the same time we must also account for the numerous human differences through time. The study of World History offers a way of grasping the “Bigger Picture” — seeing the history of the world not as separate elements but as an integrated whole. By taking an interdisciplinary approach, by paying attention to space, scale, and time, and by using appropriate units of analysis, World History can be made meaningful in many ways to many people.

Although the study of World History explores a wider range of places and a longer timeframe than other disciplines, it is not simply the study of the entire world at once. Instead, world historians prioritize the activities and ideas that have increasingly connected human communities across time and space. The primary goal is to identify how, and under what circumstances, individual societies have been able to interact with and influence each other. Specifically, study can avoid the overwhelming (and unrealistic) notion of an all-encompassing world history by focusing on key cross-cultural processes – Migration, Trade, Warfare, Religious and Cultural Conversion, and the Creation and Maintenance of Empires to name a few. These processes not only shaped daily life around the world in the past, but, as will become apparent during the course of the semester, continue to do so today.

*Please note that this syllabus is subject to change*
Course Overview

This course offers a broad overview of some of the major political, social, cultural, ideological, economic, and technological patterns that have shaped the world in which we live. In particular it explores if, when, and how diverse peoples from all corners of the globe encountered each other and to what result. The aim is to walk away from the course having a deeper sense about how the relationship between the local and the global have changed over time, and why understanding that relationship matters for your life…in the present. You should also learn how to analyze primary source materials and discuss and write about social and political questions using clear arguments and historical evidence. Furthermore, you should acquire an expanded knowledge of world geography. This course is less about memorizing “facts” than it is about exploring events and ideas thoughtfully, reflectively and with the aim of broadening your horizons. It is my hope that by looking at the world’s past throughout the semester, you will acquire a deeper understanding of and an enduring curiosity about the diverse experiences that human beings everywhere have faced, are facing and will continue to face.

Texts


Assignments & Grading

There are 500 regular points and a variety of extra credit points possible in this course.

- Four Exams (drop the lowest score) = 300 points (100 points each)
- Four Exam Review Exercises = 80 points (20 points each)
- Three Map Quizzes = 60 points (20 points each)
- Attendance = 60 points

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Explanation of Assignments

**Exams:** These will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions. They will cover a variety of information from both your readings and our lectures, but there is an emphasis on the material presented in the lectures. The lowest score of the 4 exams will be dropped, which means if you are happy with your grade come the last exam, you can choose not to take it.

**Exam Review Exercises:** A review sheet will be posted online a week prior to each exam, which you should complete and hand in before the exam itself. Regardless of whether you are taking the last exam or not, this exercise is compulsory.

**Map Quizzes:** They will be used to evaluate your geographic knowledge of a particular region. If you should miss a quiz there will be no opportunity for a makeup.

**Attendance:** As the emphasis of examinations is on material covered in class, it is in your best interests to attend class regularly. Class discussions and in-class group activities are a significant portion of this course; as such, participation commands a high importance in the grading rubric. While attendance is at the student’s discretion, habitual absences will negatively affect their final grade. Students whose grade is “on-the-bubble” at the end of the term will be rewarded for their attendance.

**Extra Credit:** You will be able to earn 10 extra credit points for writing a short review of a historical movie we will be watching in class, and one other movie or book for another 10 extra points that you may watch or read in your own time. You must confirm with me that the additional film or book is applicable to the course. I will be post a list of movies and books that I feel will help you grow as students and humans. Each movie/book review should be no less than 2 and no more than 4 typed, double-spaced pages in 12-point font. A final opportunity for extra credit will be in the form of a short paper. This assignment “My Life in History” should be no less than 3 and no more than 5 typed, double-spaced pages in 12-point font. Some possible research sources for this assignment will be provided for you online. This opportunity will be worth an extra 15 points. All extra credit will be due on our final class meeting.

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KSU’s Academic Integrity Statement

Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities addresses the University’s policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an “informal” resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct’s minimum one semester suspension requirement.

Class Schedule

08/19: Introduction to World History

08/26: The Neolithic Revolution; What is Civilization?

- Read Chapters 1 & 2 before coming to class

09/02: Nomads, Territorial States, and Micro-Societies

- Read Chapter 3
- Map Quiz 1 (Asia & The Middle East)

09/09: First Empires; Worlds Turned Inside Out

- Read Chapters 4 & 5

09/16: Exam 1; Shrinking the Known World

- Exam Review Exercise 1 (Due by Start of Class)
- Skim Chapter 6

09/23: Movie

- Bring some popcorn.

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09/30: Two Empires: Han and Roman; World Religions and Their Consequences
  • Read Chapters 7 & 8

10/07: New Empires and Common Cultures; The World” of 1300
  • Read Chapters 9 & 10
  • Please Note that 10/12 is the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty

10/14: Exam 2; Plagues and Peoples, Crisis and Recovery
  • Exam Review Exercise 2 (Due by Start of Class)
  • Skim Chapter 11

10/21: Conquest, Colonization and the Columbian Exchange; Mercantilism and Its Vices
  • Read Chapters 12 & 13
  • Map Quiz 2 (Europe & The Americas)

10/28: Cultures & Splendor of Power; Re-Ordering the World
  • Read Chapters 14 & 15

11/04: Exam 3; Industrialization and Alternative Visions
  • Exam Review Exercise 3 (Due by Start of Class)
  • Skim Chapter 16

11/11: Building Nations, Building Empires; An Unsettled World
  • Read Chapters 17 & 18

11/18: World at War and the Interwar Years; World at War, Again
  • Read Chapter 19
  • Map Quiz 3 (Africa)

11/25: Fall Break – No Class

12/02: Decolonization, The Cold War and Three Worlds
  • Read Chapter 20
  • All Extra Credit must be submitted today

12/09: Exam 4

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