Fall 2015

HIST 1001

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University of New Orleans

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WORLD HISTORY TO CA. 1500:
‘CIVILIZATION,’ EMPIRE AND EXCHANGE IN THE PRE-MODERN WORLD

HISTORY 1001, FALL 2015

Lecture: Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00-9:50 (LA 140)
Discussion Sections: Fridays 9:00-9:50 (Rooms TBA)

Teaching Team
James Mokhiber, jmokhibe@uno.edu  Liberal Arts 125, Office Hours: M/F 10:15-11:15, Th 11:00-12:00
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Course Description
This course focuses on the increasingly-intertwined historical development of peoples, societies and cultures across the globe from about 10,000 BC (or BCE, “Before the Common Era”) until about 1500 AD (or CE, “Common Era”). Over the course of the semester, we will examine and compare many societies – from ancient Mesopotamia to the Mongol Empire – that have emerged over the course of human history. We will concentrate successively on three key themes: “civilization,” empire, and exchange. As we will see at the start of the course, the development of agriculture set the conditions for the emergence of great river valley “civilizations,” characterized by urban life, occupational specialization, writing, new technologies and increasingly sophisticated culture and art. From this background powerful “empires” emerged. These empires, often in dialogue and conflict with nomadic societies, ushered in widespread religious, cultural, social and economic change. Our third theme, exchange, highlights how peoples – particularly in the three-continent zone of “Afro-Eurasia” – began to migrate and communicate across great distances, oceans and deserts. As historians are increasingly aware, the resulting “exchange” of trade goods, diseases, technologies, belief systems and more helped to shape the ancient world. We will see how these linkages created a world that was, by about 1500, largely centered on its Asian components – far from the European zone that rose to dominance in the subsequent “modern” period. Beyond the specific subject matter, this course is also an introduction to critical and historical thinking. In class we will have multiple opportunities to move beyond the communication of information to the discussion and exploration of theories, methods, sources and perspectives

Student Learning Objectives
Thus, after successfully completing this course, students should be able to:
• Identify key sites, figures and events in ancient world history;
• Compare and contrast different societies across the broad span of time;
• Interpret a wide variety of historical evidence;
• Evaluate and discuss historical themes and theories.

Readings
The required texts by Bentley and Wiesner are available at the UNO Bookstore, and we strongly urge you to buy them there, since internet purchases often results in unacceptable delays. Please note that we have gone out of our way to try to reduce textbook prices for this course. The Berkin text is recommended for students who wish to have a handbook to consult as they brush up their general historical skills.
You should plan to complete the assigned Bentley textbook reading before each Monday’s class. Be aware, however, that the chapters and lectures may not perfectly align each week. Use your textbook as a basic source and a reference tool – it is far more reliable than some random online source, and that is why we assign one! Become familiar with the table of contents and use the index liberally, especially when reviewing for the exams.

Additional readings will be available online through the course’s Moodle website. After it goes live during the first week, the Moodle site should be your first stop for announcements and other class-related matters. Over the course of the semester changes in scheduling, assignments and other matters may be announced in lecture or via the Moodle site, and you should update your syllabus appropriately. All announcements – including room changes and class cancellations – will be made through Moodle too, so checking in is always a good idea.

Again: all students must have Internet access to www.uno.edu and the Moodle portion of HIST 1001. Printed instructions for working with Moodle are available at the University Computing Center. You may also call the UCC computer help desk at 280-4357 (or “280-HELP”). Since we cannot be expected to track down non-university email addresses, students should rely on their UNO accounts for all email communications from the course instructors.

Class Requirements and Grading
This introductory course is made up of two components: two lectures per week plus a third discussion/small group session each Friday. You are expected to attend the lectures, and we will pass a roll for students to sign at each class. Please note how we have divided the course; you must attend the specific discussion section that will meet at another time and place during the week. Missing classes – especially discussion sections – will negatively affect your attendance and participation grades. Thus you will not be required to bring in medical notes or excuses of any kind. (Note, however, you can “make up” some of the points you lose through absences through . See below.)

Attendance at and participation in discussion sections constitutes a significant part of your grade, and you will be required to carefully read, consider and talk about the assigned materials. Section leaders will also assign other tasks – some of which will be graded – throughout the semester. The two unit exams will include multiple choice and identification questions. The final exam will be comprehensive, though it will be weighted toward the latter part of the course. It will include multiple-choice, identification, and essay questions. Important: If all three exams (Two unit exams and the final) are taken, we will drop the lowest score and double the next highest. Please note that make-up quizzes and exams will not be offered. We may, however, be able to make other arrangements – including adding extra weight to a later or previous exam – in truly extraordinary situations. Students should contact their section leaders to discuss any issues.
Grading System:

Lecture Attendance..............................................................10%
Friday Discussion Sections..............................................30%
    (attendance, quizzes/assignments and participation)
Unit Exams........................................................................20% + 20%
Final Exam..........................................................................20%

Course Grade:

A= >90%
B=79.5-89.4%
C=69.5-79.4%
D=59.5-69.4%
F= less than 59.4%

Please note: Noise carries easily in our large lecture hall. Do not disturb your neighbors or the lecturers by chatting or leaving early. Turn off your cellphone at the start of class. If you intend to take notes on a laptop computer you must sit in the first two rows of the auditorium. No internet surfing, Facebooking, text messaging, etc. will be tolerated, as these can be a distraction to fellow students and the lecturers. Violators will be penalized at least one day’s attendance points. No photography, video, audio or other electronic recording is permitted in either discussion section or lecture without the express, written permission of the instructor.

If you require course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please see the Office of Disability Services or the Accommodative Testing and Adaptive Technology Center in LIB 120. We are all happy to work with everyone to make this a rewarding course and experience. Finally, trust is an essential part of a productive learning environment. Academic dishonesty – including cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and falsifying identity – cannot be tolerated. Refer to the online UNO Judicial Code for further information.

Preliminary Schedule of Topics

Week One: Introduction
How do new understandings about “world history” suggest a different way of understanding the human past? When did “humans” emerge, and how do historians, anthropologists and other scholars view our earliest history? Why do some historians see migration as a theme running through all human history?

Lecture reading: Traditions and Encounters,

W 8/19 Introduction: course concepts, structure and learning strategies
F 8/21 Discussion Section Assignment:
    • Read entire syllabus
    • Familiarize yourself with both assigned texts
    • Read Handout/Moodle → Swinton, “Outlines of General History” (1874)

Week Two: Agriculture and its Revolutionary Effects
Where is the “starting line” for human society and history? What were the long-term ramifications of the development of farming and herding for human history?

Lecture Reading: Traditions and Encounters, ch. 1 (begin)

M 8/24 Human ‘prehistory,’ migrations and the peopling of the world
W 8/26 Agricultural and pastoralist ‘revolutions’
F 8/28 Discussion Section Assignment: Moodle → Jared Diamond, “13,000 years”
**Week Three: Origins of Urbanism?**

As population grew and complexity developed, what did the first human societies look like? What are the roots and characteristics of the first ‘proto-urban’ societies? What are the strengths and limitations of the idea of “civilization” or “complex society?” Why was the so-called Fertile Crescent -- particularly the great river valleys of ancient Mesopotamia -- such an advantageous place for the development of complex society? What role did cultural diffusion play in shaping societies from Mesopotamia to Egypt and beyond?

Lecture Reading: *Traditions and Encounters*, ch. 1 & 2

M 8/31 From the Neolithic Farming Village to Complex Society: Sumer and Early Mesopotamia
W 9/2 Ancient Egypt and Nilotic Peoples
F 9/4 Discussion Section: Wiesner, *Discovering the Global Past*, “The Need for Water,” Ch. 1

**Week Four: The Old World ‘Core’ and Beyond**

How did inter-regional trade increase with the emergence of the Indus Valley societies? What accounts for the sudden decline of this complex society? How do discoveries in China highlight the need to revise our understanding of the rise of complex societies around the world?

Lecture Reading: *Traditions and Encounters*, ch. 3

M 9/7 LABOR DAY
W 9/9 Indus Valley and the first Old World Integration?
F 9/11 Discussion Section: Wiesner, *Discovering the Global Past*, "Writing and Power," Ch. 2

**Week Five: The Americas**

How do our changing understandings of the Americas challenge our beliefs about early historical change? How must we look beyond the so-called “great civilizations” to other non-agricultural peoples, societies and cultures to understand the history of the ancient world?

Lecture Reading: *Traditions and Encounters*, ch. 3 & 4

9/14 Ancient China
9/16 The Americas and Oceania
9/18 Lecture Hall ➔ Unit Exam I

**Week Six: Empires and ‘Barbarians’**

What are the characteristics of ancient empires? How do some societies come to expand and dominate others, and what are the long-term repercussions of such domination? After a key struggle with the powerful Persian empire, Greek culture and power extended far beyond the Peloponnesian peninsula – particularly after the advent of Alexander the Great. What was the long-term significance of Greek influence in the wider Hellenistic world?
Lecture Reading: *Traditions and Encounters*, ch.5 & 8 (begin)

9/21  Unit II: Empires in World History; Persian Empire
9/23  The Aegean World and Ancient Greece
9/25  Discussion Section
       *Wiesner, Discovering the Global Past*, “Representing the Human Form,” Ch. 3.

Week Seven: Roman Republic and Empire
In what ways did Rome pick up where ancient Greece left off? Why did Rome make the transition away from a conservative Republic to an Empire? What did it mean to be “Roman?” When and how did Rome “fall”?

Lecture Reading: *Traditions and Encounters*, ch 8 (finish)

9/28  Alexander and the ‘Hellenistic Synthesis’
9/30  The ‘Romans’: Etruscans through the Republic & Empire
10/2  Discussion Section: Moodle → Alexander documents

Week Eight: Unifying China
How did the emerging Qin and Han empires reshape Chinese society?

Lecture Reading: *Traditions and Encounters*, ch. 6

10/5  China: Qin Unification
10/7  Han Empire
10/9  Discussion Section: *Wiesner, Discovering the Global Past*, “Han and Rome,” Ch. 4.

Week Nine: Comparing Empires: China and India
What was India’s experience of empire and why do some describe it as “intermittent?” How can we compare Eurasian empires?

Lecture Reading: *Traditions and Encounters*, ch. 7 & 9

10/12  India: Mauryan and Gupta Empires
10/14  Discussion Section: Moodle → *The Ramayana* documents
10/16  SEMESTER BREAK

Week Ten: Imperial legacies
How did the Byzantine empire’s sway over the Eastern Mediterranean allow for the continuing spread of Roman traditions, including Christianity?

Lecture Reading: *Traditions and Encounters*, ch. 10 & 16

M 10/19  Byzantine and Sassanid Empires
Week Eleven: The Dar al-Islam emerges and expands
By what means and paths did a new world religion – Islam – emerge in Arabia in the seventh century and expand so rapidly? Why did the Islamic political capital repeatedly shift over time? What forms did Islamic empires take in later periods of world history?

Lecture Reading: Traditions and Encounters, ch. 11

Week Twelve: Exchange and Africa
How do we define ‘exchange’ and how does it begin to reshape the so-called Old World? To what degree was Africa involved in Old World exchanges? How did migrations and trade disperse technologies, languages, religion and people throughout the continent, while new empires took root? What kind of new cultural and economic linkages were created, connecting Africa with the rest of the Old World/Eurasia? What were the effects upon the peoples and societies of these regions?

Lecture Reading: Traditions and Encounters, ch. 15

Week Thirteen: The Indian Ocean: Key to the “Asian Center?”
Why is the Indian Ocean sometimes described as the “center” of the ancient world?

Lecture Reading: Traditions and Encounters, ch. 13 & 15

Week Fourteen: Chinese apogee?
How did China’s position and power influence and transform the Asian rim?

Lecture Reading: Traditions and Encounters, ch. 12

M 10/21  Christian Medieval Europe
F 10/23  Discussion Section: Wiesner, Discovering the Global Past, “International Religious Communities,” Ch. 5.

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Lecture Reading: Traditions and Encounters, ch. 11

M 10/26  Origins of Islam
W 10/28  The Umayyads and Abbasids & the ‘Dar al-Islam’
F 10/30  Discussion Section: Wiesner, Discovering the Global Past, “Two Faces of ‘Holy War’” ch. 7

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Lecture Reading: Traditions and Encounters, ch. 15

M 11/2  Lecture Hall → Unit Exam II
W 11/4  Defining ‘Exchange’ and Afro-Eurasian Crossroads
The Sahara and North/West African History
F 11/6  Discussion Section: Moodle → Comparing “Sundiata” Accounts

Week Thirteen: The Indian Ocean: Key to the “Asian Center?”
Why is the Indian Ocean sometimes described as the “center” of the ancient world?

Lecture Reading: Traditions and Encounters, ch. 13 & 15

M 11/9  Central/East Africa and the Indian Ocean
W 11/11  India and Southeast Asia

Week Fourteen: Chinese apogee?
How did China’s position and power influence and transform the Asian rim?

Lecture Reading: Traditions and Encounters, ch. 12

M 11/16  Tang and Song China
W 11/18  East Asian Rimlands

Week Fifteen: Rise and repercussions of the Mongols
How did Steppe horsemen defeat one of the most powerful and economically vibrant powers in the world and link up Eurasia in important new ways? What crucial transformations did this unleash?

Lecture Reading:  Traditions and Encounters, ch. 14 & 18

M 11/23  A Mongol World?
W 11/25  After the Mongols in Eurasia
F 11/27  THANKSGIVING

Week Sixteen: On the threshold of the ’modern’ world?
As Afro-Eurasia integrated, how did American ”worlds” connect large territories and populations before regular contact with Eurasians began? What did the American empires that emerged from these traditions look like by the fifteenth century? What changes were unleashed by the creation of Atlantic connections?

Lecture Reading:  Traditions and Encounters, ch. 17 & 18

M 11/30  American ‘Worlds’
W 12/2  Europe from Crisis to ‘Renaissance,” the Maritime ‘Revolution’ and the Columbian Exchange
F 12/4  Last day of Classes

12/7-11  FINALS WEEK

Notes/Changes: