SYLLABUS: HISTORY 448-130: AN INTRODUCTION TO WORLD HISTORY, 4 credits

SPRING 2013-2014
4:00 -5:15 TR 1641 Mosse Humanities Building

Professor André Wink

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There are numerous approaches to world history, and none of them aims to cover everything. Rather than attempting to cover all major themes of world history (let alone history), this course will broadly focus on three large questions: 1. What are the origins of human civilization? 2. How did human civilization become diverse and differentiated in the various (sub) continents of the world? 3. How can we understand the emergence of the modern world?

The reading requirements are listed in the week-by-week program outlined below. We will read four books (two rather long ones, two very short ones) and a Reader which contains comments on specific subjects, articles and short extracts from books, as well as instructions.

Reading List (with numbers of pages)


This will be our principal textbook. Its purpose is to ‘convey an overall sense of human history and an idea of some of the ways in which it is interesting’ (p. xxi). In the week-by-week program below, it will be abbreviated as BH and we will read and discuss it in its entirety over the length of the course.

In addition to this textbook we will read one book each on the Roman empire, the Islamic world, and the British empire — these are arguably the three most important world-historical topics in respectively ancient, medieval and modern times.

The last item on the above list [4] will be our Big Read for the second part of the semester, and you are well advised to begin reading it as early as the Spring Break. It is an illustrated account of the British empire that originally accompanied a British History Channel 4 television production. You must use the complete edition — with all the illustrations — not an abbreviated version of the book.

You can obtain a paper copy of the Reader from the Humanities Copy Center.

Anyone and everyone is welcome to take this class. No previous course work in world history or any other field of history is necessary. The credit requirements are as follows: one mid-term exam (essay questions); a 6-8 page review of Reading List item # 4 (for instructions see Reader, p. 17); and a final exam on the official date (essay questions). The final grade will be based on participation in TA sessions (15%) and the above three requirements in equal measure. [Grading scale: 92-100% A; 88-91.9% AB; 82-87.9% B; 78-81.9% BC; 70-77.9% C; 50-69.9% D; 0-55% F]
February 6: Australia and the Americas
Readings:
BH, 55-98

February 11: Africa
Readings:
BH, 99-121

February 13: The ancient Near East
Readings:
BH, 125-146
Reader, 11

February 18: India
Readings:
BH, 147-174
Reader, 12-14

February 20: China
Readings:
BH, 175-204
Reader, 15-16

February 25, 27: The ancient Mediterranean world
Readings:

BH, 205-233


**March 4: Western Europe**

Readings:

BH, 234-264

**March 6: Mid-term exam**

**March 11, 13, 25, 27: The Islamic world**

Readings:

BH, 267-290


**April 1, 3, 8, 10: European expansion and imperialism**

Readings:

BH, 295-320


Reader, p. 17
April 15, 17, 22, 24: The modern world

Readings:

BH, 325-348

Reader, pp. 18-30

April 29, May 1, 6, 8: The world today

Readings:
