



Fall 2019

HI 175: World History to 1500

Professor Eugenio Menegon

Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30 – 1:45

Location: Psychology Building, Cummington Mall, room PSY B55

A Blackboard site for this course is available at: <https://learn.bu.edu>

<p>Professor's Office: Department of History, 226 Bay State Road, room #409. Phone: 617 - 353-8308 emenegon@bu.edu</p> <p>Office Hours</p> <p>Tuesday, 2:00 – 3:00 PM; Thursday, 2:00 – 3:00 PM; and by appointment.</p>	<p>Teaching Fellow: Ethan Michael Key</p> <p>Department of History, 226 Bay State Road, room B10 ekey@bu.edu</p> <p>Office hours</p> <p>Monday, 3:00 – 4:00 PM; Wednesday, 3:00 – 4:00 PM; and by appointment.</p>
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys basic themes in world history from the origins of humanity until about the year 1500 A.D. Rather than attempting to cover all of world history in one semester we will focus on general themes, processes, trends and relationships in areas such as politics, economics, social life, and religion. Much of the material will be presented through the reading of primary historical sources, and the discussion of the textbook's narrative and secondary scholarship on specific themes.

Major themes include:

1. The rise of complex societies in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, East Asia, Central Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas;
2. The role of environmental and technological change in human history;
3. The role of imperial states in the ancient world;
4. The development of major world religions;
5. The establishment of trade routes and other forms of contact between the main complex societies.

REQUIRED WEEKLY READINGS are posted on Blackboard (*Sources* and other materials).

NB: Occasional EXTRA required readings (also posted on the website) will be announced in class and by email as appropriate.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

- Textbook (abbreviated as *World*): Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *The World. A History*, Vol. 1 (to 1500, chaps. 1-15). Pearson - Prentice Hall, Third Edition, 2016 (***any other older edition is fine as well; available from Pearson or on Amazon and other online vendors as used.***)
- Writing Guide: Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. 8th edition. Boston: Bedford - St. Martin's, 2015 (***any older edition is fine; available from online vendors for a few dollars.***)

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

The course will be conducted through lectures, discussion in class, films, and the completion of a group project. Requirements for the course include, besides assigned readings:

Midterm exam: 15%

Written assignments, maps and quizzes: 40%

Group activity: 10%

Final exam: 20%

Attendance (5%) & participation (10%): 15%

Exams will consist of essays, short answers, identifications, and maps. Throughout the course students will be called upon to answer specific questions relating to the weekly readings or maps. Attendance in all classes (including film screenings) is expected and will be recorded.

If you cannot attend a specific class please make all efforts to notify the instructor beforehand. **Schedules, topics, and readings may be revised at times, in which case announcements will be made in class as appropriate.** No make-up or late exams (or extensions on the assignments) will be given, except in case of extreme emergencies, and then ONLY with adequate documentation and the instructor's agreement that it was an emergency.

Plagiarism in any form is never acceptable. You are advised to review the college's definitions of and policies regarding plagiarism and cheating which are available online and in print. See: <http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>

Cell phones must be turned off during classes.

Use of computers and other portable devices is permitted only for class-related work.

MIDTERM: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019, in class

FINAL: MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2019, 12:30 - 2:30, in class

SYLLABUS OF READINGS

NOTE: Reading assignments are listed under the topics of class meetings to which they pertain; they must be completed in advance of the relevant class meetings.

❖ Week I: (September 3 & 5) PEOPLING THE EARTH

World: **Chapt 1**, “Out of the Ice: Peopling the Earth” [for first class, focus on section “So you think you are human,” pp. 5-8], entire chapter, pp. 4-29.

Chapt. 2, “The Problem of Agriculture, sections on “The Spread of Agriculture,” pp. 46-58.

[2016 edition: Chapt. 1, pp. 2-35]

Sources: Margaret Meade, “Warfare is only an invention”

Web resources: 1) [“The Cave of Chauvet-Pont-d’Arc”](#); 2) [Herzog’s Cave of Forgotten Dreams](#)

❖ Week II: (September 10 & 12) THE GREAT RIVER VALLEYS

World: **Chapt. 3**, entire chapter, pp. 63-91 (for this week read more carefully parts on Egypt and Mesopotamia)

[2016 edition: Chapt. 2, pp. 36-47]

Sources: 1) “The Code of Hammurabi”; 2) “Praise of the Scribe’s Profession”

Web resources: 1) [Stele of Hammurabi at the Louvre](#); 2) [Papyrus Lansing](#)

❖ Week III (September 17 & 19): COMPARING RIVER VALLEYS. EARLY CHINA, GILGAMESH, AND DEATH

World: **Chapt. 3**, re-read parts on China, pp. 83-84; **Chapt. 4**: “Conflict on the Yellow River”, pp. 107-109; **Chapt. 5**, “The Zhou Decline” pp. 137-138.

[2016 edition: Chapt. 2, pp. 48-49; 54-57; Chapt. 3, pp. 76-78; Chpat. 4, pp. 108-109]

Sources: “Chinese Ancestor Worship”; selections from *Gilgamesh. A New English Version*, translated by S. Mitchell (Prologue; Books 1-2 & 9-11; pp. 69-90 & 159-199).

Web resources: [The Story of Gilgamesh \(Annenberg Foundation\)](#)

Written Assignment # 1: due on Thursday in class

❖ **Week IV (September 24 & 26): THE AXIAL AGE. THE GREAT SCHOOLS**

World: **Chap. 6**, entire chapter, pp. 156-187

[2016 edition: Chapt. 5, pp. 122-147]

Sources: 1) Siddharta Gauthama, “Sermons”; 2) Plato, “The Republic – On Shadows and Realities in Education”; 3) Confucius, “The Analects.”

❖ **Week V (October 1 & 3): THE GREAT EMPIRES**

World: **Chapt. 7**, entire chapter, pp. 188-225

[2016 edition: Chapt. 6, pp. 148-177]

Sources: 1) Asoka, “Edicts of Asoka”; 2) Augustus, “The Deeds of the Divine August” 3) “Slaves in the Roman Countryside”

Written Assignment # 2: due on Thursday in class

❖ **Week VI (October 8 & 10): THE RISE OF WORLD RELIGIONS**

World: **Chapt. 9**, entire chapter, pp. 269-298

[2016 edition: Chapt. 8, pp. 214-241]

Sources: 1) Buddhism, “Excerpts from the *Dhammapada*”; Paul, “*The Act of the Apostles* – The Good News in Athens”; 3) Ibn Wahab, “An Arab Merchant Visits Tang China”

Film selection: From Jesus to Christ. The First Christians

**NB: Week of COLUMBUS DAY WEEKEND: NO CLASS on TUESDAY OCTOBER 15
(Monday schedule on Tuesday)**

❖ **Week VII (October 17) MIDTERM EXAM**

MIDTERM EXAMINATION IN CLASS, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17

❖ Week VIII (October 22 & 24): EURASIAN CONNECTIONS ALONG THE SILK ROAD
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Reading: Whitfield, *Life along the Silk Road*, selections, TBA

Additional readings & group activity – Instructions to follow.

❖ Week IX (October 29 & 31): ENVIRONMENTAL FRONTIERS: THE MAYAN CASE

World: **Chapt. 8**, pp. 231-35 (Teotihuacan and early Maya); **Chapt. 10**, pp. 307-312 (later Maya).

[2016 edition: Chapt. 6, pp. 183-186; Chapt. 9, 249-253]

Film selection: *Apocalypto*

Web Resources: [The myth of the Popul Vuh \(Annenberg Foundation\)](#)

Written Assignment # 3: due on Thursday in class

❖ Week X (November 5 & 7): ISLAM, THE CRUSADES, BYZANTIUM AND THE SONG

World: **Chapt. 12**, pp. 373-395

[2016 edition: Chapt. 11, pp. 306-335]

Sources (Blackboard): **Chapt. 12:** 1) Al-Ghazzali, “On the Separation of Mathematics and Religion”; 2) Liutprand of Cremona, excerpt from *Report of his Mission to Constantinople*; 3) “A Muslim View of the Crusades: Beha-ed-Din, Richard I Massacres Prisoners after Taking Acre” 4) “The Markets and Attractions of Hangzhou”

Web Resources: [The Qingming Scroll \(Song dynasty\)](#)

❖ Week XI (November 12 & 14): THE WORLD THE MONGOLS MADE

World: **Chapt. 13**, pp. 411-429

[2016 edition: Chapt. 12, pp. 340-367]

Sources: William of Rubruck, “Account of the Mongols”

Web Resources: [The Mongols in World History](#)

Written Assignment # 4: due on Thursday in class

❖ Week XII (November 19 & 21): THE REVENGE OF NATURE

World: Chapt. 14, pp. 443-462

[2016 edition: Chapt. 13, pp. 368-383]

Sources: 1) Marchione di Coppo Stefani, *The Florentine Chronicle*, “Concerning a Mortality in the City of Florence in which Many People Died”; 2) University of Paris Medical Faculty, “Writings on the Plague”

Film selection: Ingmar Bergman’s *The Seventh Seal*

❖ Week XIII (November 26): NO CLASS**NOVEMBER 27-December 1: THANKSGIVING RECESS****❖ Week XIV (December 3 & 5): EXPANDING WORLDS AND OCEANIC CONTACTS**

World: Chapt. 15, pp. 481-524

[2016 edition: Chapt. 14, pp. 400-433]

Sources: 1) Ma Huan, *The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores*; 2) “Excerpt from the travel journal of Vasco da Gama”; 3) “Chronicles of the Incas”; 4) “Cortes’s letter to Charles V”

❖ Week XV (December 10): REVIEW**FINAL EXAMINATION**

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2019, 12:30 - 2:30, in class