

SYLLABUS FOR HIST 502 – Explorations in World History II  
Spring 2021

Time and venue: Fridays, 08:40-11:30, synchronous online sessions over zoom (Students will register through their **Sabanci University e-mail accounts** to attend online classes and will keep the web camera on throughout the session)

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Office hours: by appointment

This is the second of a sequence of two related courses on World History that are required of all MA students in History. It is a general survey course that explores specific themes and periods from ca. 600 to ca. 1600, and problematizes them in comparative, theory-intensive ways. The early modern age serves as the end-point of our discussion, as it was a turning point in human history, bringing about profound shifts in the economic, social, and political make-up of Eurasia and the wider world. Topics to be dealt with in the second semester include but are not limited to such theoretical problems as

- the periodization of history;
- religion and state;
- elites vs. subalterns;
- center vs. periphery;
- history and nature;
- Modernity's subsumptions and transformations of pre-modernities;

and more historical issues, such as

- the economics of peasant production;
- the rise of monotheistic religions and late Antiquity;
- nomadic pastoralism, mounted archers, steppe empires;
- the role of movement and conquest in history;
- tributary states and societies;
- the function and varieties of fief distribution;
- types of urban space and culture;
- the Italian Renaissance as the dawn of early modernity;
- the world on the eve of the “European miracle.”

Instead of covering the entire span of human history, which is an impossible task without running the risk of superficiality, we will concentrate on major nodes of interaction and leading patterns. In addition to the substance of history, students will also be encouraged to learn and develop methods as to how to broach historical sources—be they textual, material, or any other kind—critically.

The course will proceed in a rough chronological sequence. The readings will be made up of the textbooks and other more specialized books, supplemented with primary reading texts in English translation.

**Class set-up:** Lecture and discussion

**Weekly Assignments:** To prepare for lectures and discussions, students are expected to complete the assigned readings in advance of the class meeting where they are mentioned on the Course Schedule. To facilitate the students' engagement with the reading assignments, they are required to reflect on them on the Class Discussion Forum (on SuCourse+) by 09:00 p.m. on Thursdays before the day of the class at the latest. In their written comments on SuCourse+, they can also ask questions about the readings and bring those questions to class, where we will discuss some of them.

**Evaluation:** Mid-term (30%) and Final (30%) examination, book review, approx. 5 pages in length (20%), weekly assignments, on which students are required to reflect on the discussion forum in SuCourse+ (20%).

The two exams are comprised of two sections: (1) a section on the primary concepts, events, persona discussed in class, and (2) an essay assignment, in which students have to demonstrate how well they have understood the basic historical processes and the larger framework outlined during the course. Both exams will be conducted on SuCourse+ and on zoom simultaneously. Your webcam and microphone should be on during the exam. In the case of non-compliance with this and other declared exam procedures, your exam will be void. Make sure to check that your webcam and microphone function properly before the exam.

**Key dates:**

Week 5: submission book review (Cook, *A Brief History of the Human Race*)

Every Thursday 09:00 p.m. last time to contribute to the discussion about the weekly reading assignment on the SuCourse+ discussion forum.

Week 8: Midterm

Final exam: specific date to be announced on SIS

**Reading assignments:** There are reading assignments both from primary and from secondary sources. Primary sources are just as essential a part of the course material as secondary readings from the text books as well as lecture notes and presentations.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is essential for good performance. No absence is tolerated without a documented medical problem or other well-founded and documented reason. Students will attend classes over zoom with their video cameras on.

This syllabus is subject to change. Students are responsible to follow announcements.

**Textbooks:**

Clive Ponting, *World History: A New Perspective* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000).

Patricia Crone, *Pre-Industrial Societies: Anatomy of the Premodern World* (London: Oneworld, 2000).

Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York; London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997).

Mark A Kishlansky, *Sources of World History: Readings for World Civilization* (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1995).

Michael Cook, *A Brief History of the Human Race* (New York: Norton, 2003).

Neil Macgregor, *A History of the World in 100 Objects* (London: Allen Lane, 2010).

- Readings and extra materials will be available online or on SUCourse+: <http://sucourse.sabanciuniv.edu>. **Students are to regularly check the SUCourse+ website to follow weekly pacing, additional materials and announcements.**

## **Weekly schedule**

### **1. Introduction:**

- Peter Brown, *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), Ch. 1.
- Jürgen Osterhammel and Niels Petersson, *Globalization: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), Ch. 3 “The Development and Establishment of Worldwide Connections until 1750”.
- Ponting, Overview 6.

### **2. The Rise of Islam and the Eastern Roman Empire**

- Ponting, Ch. 11: pp. 301-313; Overview 7.
- Warren Treadgold, *The Byzantine Revival* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), Ch. 1.
- Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (London: Faber and Faber, 2002), Ch. 3.
- MacGregor, Ch. 46.

### **3. The Great Empires: China, Inner Asia, Western Europe, 600-1000 CE**

- Ponting, Ch. 11: pp. 313-347; Overview 8.
- Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, vol. 1, 2004 [1961], Ch. 4.
- MacGregor, Ch. 55.

### **4. Eurasia, ca. 1,000 CE**

- Ponting, Ch. 12.
- Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, vol. 1, 2004 [1961], Ch. 11.
- Kishlansky, vol. 1, nos. 41-42.

### **5. The Age of China, ca. 1,000-1,250 CE**

- Ponting, Ch. 13, Overview 9.
- Francesco Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades* [Sources] (London: Routledge, 1984), excerpts.

### **6. The Mongol Empire (1200-1350)**

- Ponting, Ch. 14.
- *Moğolların Gizli Tarihi* (1240) (Ankara: TTK, 1986), excerpts.
- Kishlansky, vol. 1, no. 43.

### **7. Recovery (1350-1500)**

-Ponting, Ch. 15, Overview 10.

-Monica Green (ed.), *Pandemic Disease in the Medieval World: Rethinking the Black Death* (The Medieval Globe, 2014), excerpts, [https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/medieval\\_globe/1/](https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/medieval_globe/1/)

### **8. MIDTERM**

### **9. From pre-industrial societies to modernity**

-Crone, Chs. 2 and 8.

### **10. The Mediterranean (1500-1600)**

-Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean*, vol. 1, Ch. 5 “The Mediterranean as a Human Unit: Communications and Cities”.

-Fikret Yılmaz, “Osmanlı Hanedanı, Kullar ve Korsanlar: Beşiktaş’ın Doğuşu ve İktidar Rekabeti (1534-1557)”, *Journal of Turkish Studies*, vol. 52 (2019), pp. 397-425.

### **11. The Columbian World**

-Ponting, Ch. 16.

-Diamond, excerpts.

Kishlansky, vol. 1, nos. 61, 63-64.

### **12. The Early World Economy**

-Ponting, Ch. 17.

-Şevket Pamuk, “The Price Revolution in the Ottoman Empire Reconsidered”, *IJMES* 33 (2001), pp. 69-89.

-MacGregor, Chs. 76, 78, 80.

### **13. Capitalism**

-Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism (15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Century)*, vol. 2 (London: Fontana Press, 1982), 231-349.

-Kishlansky, vol. 1, no. 72.