

World Civilizations I (10/FA-CH-300-07)

Fall 2010

Wednesday: 9.30 a.m. – 12.20 p.m.

Information Science Center (ISC) **209**

Instructor: **Keerati Chenpitayaton**

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Office Hours: Wednesday: 12.30 – 1.30 p.m. (ISC **212**) (or by Appointment)

“It would be pleasant to be able to define the word ‘civilization’ simply and precisely, as one defines a straight line, a triangle or a chemical element”

-- Fernand Braudel, *A History of Civilization* (1993)

Course Syllabus

Course Description:

This course explores different civilizations and globally interconnected systems around the globe in the period between the 13th and the 18th centuries, highlighting some essential features of what is often referred to as the *early modern world*. Although it aims as a survey course in world history, it does not necessarily follow a standard chronological order and geographical map usually found in history textbooks. Rather, the course will touch upon *different themes* that help promote a better understanding of how various *historical forces* such as cultural, social, and political shaped the courses of civilizational developments and global interconnections in this particular time period. In addition, toward the end of the course, we will critically focus on deconstructing the “Eurocentric” viewpoint in history. This course is the *first part* of the *World Civilizations* sequence. The *second part* will take up where we left off in this course.

Course Format and Objectives:

There will be a combination of lectures and some in-class discussions of assigned readings. Short writing assignments and quizzes will be given out in class from time to time. Thus, you are expected to print out and bring assigned readings to class. Although you are not demanded to participate continuously and aggressively in discussion, you are still encouraged to ask questions and give comments on the readings when appropriate.

There are at least **THREE** objectives for this course:

- 1) The **FIRST** objective is to provide you with a liberal arts background for your art, business, and professional educations. One of the meanings of the term “liberal” is “non-vocational,” or “not being trained for a particular subject or career.” This course is designed as a gateway for providing you with a body of knowledge about world history, especially for the various characteristics of the *early modern* period. By the end of this

course, you should be able to identify the basic themes of this *early modern world* and articulate the multiple connections among them.

- 2) The **SECOND** objective is to help you to become a better writer, by asking you to identify problems, analyze materials, evaluate options, and make your own arguments and conclusions. This objective will be achieved via in-class short writing assignments and one longer research paper due at the end of the semester.
- 3) The **THIRD** objective is to encourage you to think historically. “History” is more than a compilation of “facts.” Historians do not usually tell the stories of the past as the way they were recorded. Their interpretations often influence their storytelling mechanisms and finished products. Most of the time, the historians’ interpretations are not valid, fair, or even inspiring. “History,” thus, is not an objective, neutral, or free floating enterprise that anyone can just naively pick up, use, keep, or discard. “History” is subjective. To understand it—or to “think historically”—requires critical thinking skills necessary for unpacking the source materials, primary as well as secondary, and developing your own interpretation of history.

Readings:

There is **ONE** required pocket book for the course.

Mary Lynn Rampolla (2010), *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 6th Ed.

If you do not want to get it online, I have ordered it for you to purchase at Pratt Bookstore. Or, you can pick up a copy at the Pratt Library’s reserve. This is a small, famous, cheap, and easy to read pocketbook for helping you with writing assignments in this course and other courses as well. I highly recommend that you to get one copy for yourself.

All other readings are available as PDF files on the **MyPratt** Learning Management System (LMS). Login to my.pratt.edu; then click on the Learning Management System (LMS) tab at the top of the screen. Click on this course: “World Civilizations I”; then click on the specific reading materials on the screen to download them.

Course Requirements:

→ Class Participation, Attendance, and Quizzes: **10%**

As I said earlier, “you are not demanded to participate continuously and aggressively in discussion, **BUT** you are still encouraged to ask questions and give comments on the readings when appropriate.” Thus, I tend to evaluate participation part of this 10% of your final grade according to your enthusiasm for the course and reading materials in general.

Attendance: According to *Pratt Institute Policies*, more than **THREE** unexcused absences from class results in an automatic failure for the course. Please contact me beforehand (or

soon afterward in case of an emergency) if you need to miss class for a documented emergency or other excused absences.

Excessive lateness will affect your participation grade. **THREE** instances of arriving ten or more minutes late will count as an absence.

NOTE: According to *Pratt Institute Policies*, cell phones, laptop computers, and other electronic devices must always be turned off and kept out of sight.

→ **TWO** In-Class Writing Assignments (Wed, October 6 & Wed, November 3): **10%**

Information about these assignments will be announced in class soon.

→ **ONE** Research Paper (**Due** Wed, December 8): **20%**

Information about this research paper will be announced in class soon.

→ Mid-Term Exam (Wed, October 27): **30%**

→ Final Exam (Wed, December 15): **30%**

Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to be familiar with *Pratt Institute Policies* regarding the various issues about academic integrity such as plagiarism, cheating, and the wrongful use of intellectual property. Any confirmed instance of cheating or plagiarism will automatically result in an “F” for the course and a report of the incident will be sent to the Student Affairs Division to become part of your permanent record. It is important that you come to speak with me if you are confused about these policies and definitions or if you are struggling for any reason. As for a specific guideline, please see the syllabus attachment at the end for some clarifications.

Services for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities may receive assistance and accommodation of various sorts to enable them to participate fully in courses at Pratt. To establish the accommodations appropriate for each student, please alert your instructor to your needs and contact the Director of Disability Services at the following address and phone number: Willoughby Residence Hall, First Floor, 718-636-3711. For more information, please visit the following URL below to download a copy of the Accommodations for Student with Disabilities handbook.

http://www.pratt.edu/student_life/student_affairs/student_policies/

Other Matters:

I reserve the right to change the syllabus at my own discretion. However, I will notify you by email in advance if any change will be made. I will also upload each updated version of the syllabus on the LMS.

If you are confused about anything in the course, please do not hesitate to ask me about it.

Course Outline:

Week 1: (Wed, September 1): Introduction to the Course

Introducing Course Syllabus and Some Mechanical Concerns

I. General Historical Survey (Week 2-3)

Week 2: (Wed, September 8): General Historical Survey I

Introductory Lecture: “Civilization” as a Concept; Overview of the World Civilizations before the 13th Century

Secondary Reading: David Ringrose (2001), *Expansion and Global Interaction: 1200-1700*, Chapter 1: “The Globalization of History: Climate, Nomads, Mongols” (pp. 5-28).

Primary Sources: Excerpts from *The Secret History of the Mongols* (Unknown Author) and *On the Mongols* (by William of Rubruck)

Week 3: (Wed, September 15): General Historical Survey II

Secondary Reading: David Ringrose (2001), *Expansion and Global Interaction: 1200-1700*, Chapter 2: “The Struggle for the Mediterranean, 1300-1700” (pp. 29-63).

Primary Sources: Excerpts from *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks* (by Doukas); *History of the House of Osman* (by Asikpasazade); and “*The Tale of the White Cowl*”: *A Russian Tale* (Unknown Author)

Research Paper Assigned!!

II. The Course of Western Civilizations (Week 4-10):

Week 4: (Wed, September 22): Thematic Focus I: The Age of Exploration

Secondary Reading: Eugene Rice, Jr. & Anthony Grafton (1994), *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe* (2nd Ed.), Chapter 1: “Science, Technology, and Discovery” (pp. 1-44).

Primary Sources: Excerpts from *Six Books Concerning the Revolutions of the Heavenly Orbits* (by Nicolaus Copernicus), *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* (by Issac Newton) and *Letter to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella* (by Christopher Columbus)

Week 5: (Wed, September 29): Thematic Focus II: The Economic Expansion

Mid-Point Lecture: Non-Western Economies on the Eve of Western Expansion

Secondary Readings: Eugene Rice, Jr. & Anthony Grafton (1994), *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe* (2nd Ed.), Chapter 2: “The Economic Expansion of Europe” (pp. 45-76) and Rondo Cameron & Larry Neal (2003), *A Concise Economic History of the World* (4th Ed.), Chapter 5: “Europe’s Second Logistic” (pp. 94-127).

Week 6: (Wed, October 6): Thematic Focus III: The Renaissance

Secondary Reading: Eugene Rice, Jr. & Anthony Grafton (1994), *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe* (2nd Ed.), Chapter 3: “Renaissance Society and Humanist Culture” (pp. 77-109).

Primary Sources: Excerpts from *The Prince* (by Niccolò Machiavelli), *The Notebooks* (by Leonardo Da Vinci), and “*Oration on the Dignity of Man*” (by Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola)

In-Class Writing Assignment I

Week 7: (Wed, October 13): Thematic Focus IV: The Reformation

Secondary Readings: Eugene Rice, Jr. & Anthony Grafton (1994), *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe* (2nd Ed.), Chapter 5: “Revolution and Reformation in the Church: The Problem of Authority” (pp. 146-177); Chapter 6: “Revolution and Reformation in the Church: The Problem of Conversion” (pp. 178-202).

Primary Sources: Excerpts from *95 Theses* and “*Statement of Grievances,*” *Diet of Worms, 1521* (by Martin Luther); *Draft of Ecclesiastical Ordinances, September and October 1541* (by John Calvin)

Week 8: (Wed, October 20): Thematic Focus V: State Building and Absolutism

Secondary Reading: Martin van Creveld (1999), *The Rise and Decline of the State*, Chapter 2: “The Rise of the State: 1300-1648” (pp. 59-125).

Primary Sources: Excerpts from *Patriarcha* (by Robert Filmer) and *Leviathan* (by Thomas Hobbes)

Review for Mid-Term Exam

Week 9: (Wed, October 27): **Mid-Term EXAM!!**

Week 10: (Wed, November 3): Thematic Focus VI: The Enlightenment

Primary Sources: Excerpts from *The New Science* (by Giambattista Vico); *The Perfectibility of Man* (by Marquis de Condorcet); *The Social Contract* and *Emile* (by Jean-Jacques Rousseau); *A Treatise of Human Nature* (by David Hume); “*What Is Enlightenment?*” (by Immanuel Kant); *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (by Mary Wollstonecraft).

In-Class Writing Assignment II

III. Rethinking “Eurocentricism”: The West in the Interconnected World

Week 11: (Wed, November 10): The Other Civilizations I: The New Origins?

Janet L. Abu-Lughod (1989), *Before European Hegemony*, Chapter 1: “Studying a System in Formation” (pp. 3-42)

John M. Hobson (2004), *The Eastern Origins of Western Civilization*, Chapter 1: “Countering the Eurocentric Myth of the Pristine West: Discovering the Oriental West” (pp. 1-26).

Week 12: (Wed, November 17): The Other Civilizations II: Rethinking Interconnections?

David Ringrose (2001), *Expansion and Global Interaction: 1200-1700*, Chapter 7: “Outcomes and Portents” (pp. 191-198).

Eric L. Wolff (1997), *Europe and the People without History*, Chapter 1: “Introduction” (pp. 3-23); “Afterword” (pp. 385-393).

Robin Blackburn (2010), *The Making of New World Slavery: From Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800*, 2nd Ed., “Introduction” (pp. TBA).

Week 13: (Wed, November 24): Thanksgiving Break: **NO CLASS!!**

Week 14: (Wed, December 1): The Other Civilizations III: The Making of the East-West Divide

Edward W. Said (1979), *Orientalism*, “Introduction” (pp. 1-30).

Gerard Delanty (1995), *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, Chapter 2: “The Origins of the Idea of Europe” (pp. 16-29).

IV. Conclusion: The Birth of Modern World

Week 15: (Wed, December 8): The Rise of Modern World

Concluding Lecture: The Rise of the Modern “Interconnected” World

C. A. Bayly (2004), *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914*; Chapter 2: “Passages from the Old Regimes to Modernity” (pp. 49-85); Chapter 3: “Converging Revolutions, 1780-1820” (pp. 86-120).

Review for Final Exam

Research Paper Due!!

Week 16: (Wed, December 15): **Final EXAM!!**

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