



Making of the Modern World 12

Instructor: Prof. Mira Balberg

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Office: H&SS 6073

Office Hours: Thursday 1-3

Class meeting time and place:

TTh 9.30-10.50

Warren Lecture Hall 2001

Description

This course explores some of the most formative events, ideas, and cultural developments in world history between approximately 100 BCE and 1100 CE. Covering an era that featured some of the most powerful and transformative empires in world history (e.g., the Roman empire, the Han and Tang empires, The Sasanian empire and the Islamic empire) and saw the emergence of new religions (e.g., Christianity, Mahayana Buddhism, Islam), the course focuses on the theme of relationship between religion and empire. It also emphasizes phenomena of cross-cultural impact and global engagement, and of the dynamic relations between different peoples and different traditions.

Requirements and evaluation

Materials:

- [A History of World Societies](#) (McKay, J, P. Ebrey, R. Beck, C. Crowston, M. Wiesner-Hanks, J. Davila), 11th Edition. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2018= HWS
- Additional course readings – posted on Canvas under “files”
- iClicker

Preparation and attendance:

Your main task is to read the materials assigned for each class, which would normally include relevant pages from the textbook *History of World Societies* and some primary sources; occasionally you will also be asked to read a scholarly article. The lectures will be based on the assumption that you have read the assigned materials and are largely familiar with their content. Reading materials will be discussed in greater depth during sections.

Lectures

Your attendance and engagement in lectures is important, and it will be tracked and facilitated through the use of iClickers in class. Clicker questions will be presented and discussed in all lectures, and while you will not be graded on the content of your answer, you will be graded on your participation. Your participation through Clickers is worth 5% of your final grade. Note

that there are no make-up options for clicker questions, but we will discount 15% of the total number of Clicker questions in the end, so if you had to miss a class or your clicker didn't function for some reason, you have some wiggle room. It is your responsibility to bring your own clicker to class and to make sure it functions properly.

Students sometimes mistakenly think that in a big lecture class they are invisible. This is not the case. In particular, arriving late to class or leaving class before the lecture ends is not only disrespectful, but also very disruptive to the class. Please make an effort to show up to lecture on time and to stay until the end (and please contact me if circumstances force an exception).

Multiple studies show that the use of laptops, tablets, and smartphones during classes significantly compromises one's ability to listen to lectures and engage in discussions. **I strongly encourage you not to use any electronic devices during lectures.**

PowerPoint presentations will be made available to you after each class through Canvas. *These presentations are your professor's intellectual property and you are legally prohibited from posting them anywhere or sharing them with anyone other than other students in the course.* They are for your personal use only.

Sections

Your participation in the class sections is mandatory, and your contribution to discussion during sections is worth 10% of your grade.

Evaluation:

You will be evaluated based on two short assignments, a midterm, and a final exam. The final grade will be calculated in the following way:

Discussion section	10%
Written assignments Assignment 1: 10% Assignment 2: 25%	35%
Clickers	5%
Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	30%

Assignments. There are two writing assignments for the course, which you will work through with the teaching assistants.

The assignments must present your own individual work, and any source that you are using must be properly cited. Any suspicion that you have not followed this code of academic integrity will lead to further investigation and potential disciplinary action.

Midterm and final exams. The midterm will include one essay question (which will be given in advance), whereas the final exam will include three questions, also given in advance. The final exam is non-cumulative (i.e., it only covers the material studied after the midterm).

Topics and assigned readings for each class

1. Introduction to MMW 12: The Age of Surprises (T 1/7)

2. Rome: From Republic to Empire (Th 1/9)

Reading:

- HWS 119-131
- Background information on Augustus (<https://www.ancient.eu/augustus/>)
- Suetonius, excerpts from *The 12 Caesars – Augustus*

3. Religious encounters in the Roman Mediterranean (T 1/14)

Reading:

- Background on Apuleius and the *Metamorphoses*
- Apuleius, *The Golden Ass (=Metamorphoses)*, Book 1 and Book 11

4. A view from a province: The Imperial Cult and Judea in the First Century (Th 1/16)

Reading:

- HWS 132-142
- *The Gospel of Mark* 1-3, 7-8, 10-11, 14-16
- James Rives, “Animal Sacrifice and Political Identity in Rome and Judea.”

5. Christianities of the 2nd and 3rd centuries (T 1/21)

Reading:

- Excerpt from the *Epistle to Diognetus*
- *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*

6. The Roman Empire in the fourth century: division and “decline” (Th 1/23)

Reading:

- Background information on Constantine (https://www.ancient.eu/Constantine_1/)
- Excerpt from Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*
- Edward Watts, “Christianization”

Paper 1 due 1/28 by lecture time

7. China: The Western and Eastern Han Empires (T 1/28)

Reading:

- HWS 145-155
- Excerpt from Huan Kuan, *Debate on Salt and Iron*
- Excerpts from Liu Xiang, *Lives of Exemplary Women*

8. Religion and empire in Han China (Th 1/30)

Reading:

- Background on *The Scripture on Great Peace*

- Excerpt from *The Scripture on Great Peace*
 - Recommended: HWS 84-91 on Confucianism and Daoism

9. Mahayana Buddhism from India to China (T 2/4)

Reading:

- HWS 155-158
- Background on *The Great Maudgalyayana Saves His Mother from Hell*
- *The Great Maudgalyayana Saves His Mother from Hell*
 - Recommended: HWS 62-65 on the beginnings of Buddhism

10. Iran between East and West (Th 2/6)

No reading – take the time to prepare for the midterm!

11. Midterm (T 2/11)

12. India's Classical Period (Th 2/13)

Reading:

- Excerpt from Faxian, *Travels*
- Excerpt from Kalidasa, *Shakuntala* (prologue and Act V)

13. The World of Late Antiquity (T 2/18)

Reading:

- HWS 170-193
- Two accounts by Procopius (*History of the Wars* and *The Secret History*)

14. The Monastic Life: A Comparative Look (Th 2/20)

Reading:

- Excerpt from Theodoret, *History of the Monks of Syria* (on Simeon Stylite)
- *The Legend of Miao-Shan*
- Excerpt from John Cassian, *The Monastic Institutions*

15. The Rise of Islam: Muhammad and the Quran (T 2/25)

Reading:

- HWS 195-198
- Qur'an surahs 113, 96, 81, 3

16. The Spread of Islam: The Muslim Conquest (Th 2/27)

Reading:

- HWS 198-219
- *The Pact of Umar*
- Al-Saduq, "Creed Concerning the Imams"
- Three poems about Baghdad by al-'Abbas ibn al- Ahnaf

17. Cosmopolitan East Asia in the Tang Era (T 3/3)

Reading:

- HWS 158-166
- Background on *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow* (<https://www.ancient.eu/article/888/song-of-everlasting-sorrow/>)
- Bai Juyi, *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow*
- Background on *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, chapter 1
- *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, chapter 1

18. Limitations of religious and artistic expression: two debates (Th 3/5)

Reading:

- John of Damascus, "In Defense of Icons"
- F.E. Peters, "Saints and Mystics," 307-312, 335-343
- Selected poems of al-Hallaj

Paper 2 due 3/10 by lecture time

19. Medieval Science and Philosophy between Jews and Muslims (T 3/10)

Reading:

- Al-Ghazali, *Incoherence of the Philosophers*, 4
- Maimonides, *Guide to the Perplexed* Part II, Introduction and Chapter 1

20. Conclusion; toward the First Crusade (Th 3/12)

HWS 326-339

Final exam: Tuesday 3/17, 8-11 am