

HIS 1500: Roots of the Modern World: Religion and Society

Fall 2023

ὁ δὲ ἀνεξέταστος βίος οὐ βιωτὸς, “The unexamined life is not worth living.”

—Socrates

Dr. Lee E. Patterson

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Office Hours: M 12-1, T 10-12, F 12-1, and by appointment

Note: I will be holding office hours both in my physical office and on Zoom, using the following link:

<https://eiu.zoom.us/j/98079699121?pwd=OHZsamQxMEtFV2JycDhIRnZZaGxzdz09>

Texts:

William J. Duiker and Jackson J. Spielvogel, *World History: Volume I: To 1800*, 9th edition

Kevin Reilly, *Worlds of History: A Comparative Reader*, 4th edition

Other readings on D2L

Grading:	Exam #1:	10%	Participation:	10%
	Exam #2:	15%	Short Papers (4):	40%
	Final Exam:	25%		

From the Catalog: This course will explore the historical origins of the world's great religions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. We will study the “founders” of each faith and the central beliefs of each group, and analyze the conflicts (spiritual, social and political), that promoted changes of beliefs and practices over time. HIS 1500G is a general education course open to all EIU students.

Course-Level Objectives:

1. Explain historical significance of factual information
2. Discuss historical and historiographical issues of interpretation
3. Interpret and analyze primary and secondary sources
4. Compare and contrast the origins and development of the world's ancient societies and religions

Consider this: If we seek an answer to why we should study history, a good starting point is the famous quote given above. Essentially, history is there for us to learn from it. We can learn about ourselves, both as individuals and as a society, by studying the past. But to apply its lessons in modern life, a healthy knowledge of important figures, events, and movements is required, which this class is designed to provide. But this goal can only be achieved by you. Even if you have no previous knowledge of the distant past, you are just where you need to be to learn about it, as well as to develop the skills of analysis and communication in the field of history. As Socrates teaches us, one of the most important questions we can ask is “how do we know what we know?” And we will apply this principle to the study of history. I am here to help as I can, but in the end your efforts are mainly what will yield satisfactory results, including a good grade.

Communications: When e-mailing me, please only use Panthermail, not D2L. Please identify yourself and indicate what class you're in. Also, employ correct etiquette by starting your message with a proper salutation, like "Dear Dr. Patterson." If you e-mail me after 10 p.m., do not expect a response until the next day.

Transferable Skills: This is your class. The working methodology is for you to engage the material as much as you can and employ a set of transferable skills that are essential for your development as a student, a citizen of the world, and a human being. The following skills will be especially important in this class:

Critical Thinking: There is more to reading a text than gaining knowledge. How do you use the text to understand better the civilization you are studying? Critical thinking skills allow you to interpret and evaluate evidence produced by a culture, to gauge its usefulness for forming historical arguments, and to assess the viability of your interpretations. These texts are generally divided into two categories. **Primary texts** were produced by the civilization under study. As they were not written for us and often reflect a world view very different from our own, they require special care. **Secondary texts** can help in this endeavor. These are generally modern scholarly treatments of the subject matter. But modern scholars have their biases too, so you must also apply critical thinking skills to their arguments as well.

Writing Skills: Clear and effective written communication is one of the most important skills to have for professional success and personal fulfillment. In a typical class students are at different levels in their command of grammar, mechanics, vocabulary, syntax, clarity of expression, and so on. Whatever your level, I hope your writing skills will be enhanced in this class.

Short Papers: Instead of a term paper, in the course of the semester, you will choose four out of six short papers to write, allowing you to explore various aspects of the cultures we will be studying. The topic of each paper is provided in the schedule below. More information will be provided separately. Note that I will not grade more than four papers. Also, if you choose not to write on the first two topics, then you are committed to the last four.

Visual Literacy: Most of the evidence we will consider is text-based, but material culture also produces an enormously important reservoir of evidence. Analyzing how ancient and medieval societies present themselves visually will be an essential part of our effort to understand them. Pay special attention to any visuals provided in the books and my PowerPoints.

Public Speaking: This is the oral counterpart to the writing skill. Although there is no formal presentation, an important part of this class is regular participation. Again, different students will have varying comfort levels with this, but oral communication ability is an important component of your education and, as with the writing skill, is also essential for professional success and personal fulfillment. This component is mostly covered in the Participation portion of the class. To earn an A in Participation, all you need to do is show routine engagement with the class, especially in response to the discussion questions posted for each class. If you're anxious about giving the "wrong" answer, I'm less concerned with that than with your general engagement. Don't worry about expressing views that you think others may fault.

Exams: There will be three exams in this class. Each exam will consist of in-class and take-home portions. You will have 24 hours to upload the take-home portion following the end of class. The due dates are indicated in the schedule below. These dates are absolute. Failure to upload the take-home portion to the corresponding Dropbox folder within the required window will result in a 0 for that portion. No late submissions will be accepted. The only exceptions are when work cannot be completed due to illness or other extreme circumstance beyond your control. The same conditions as explained below under Make-Up Policy apply to take-home exams, notably the requirement of written documentation when asking for extensions on take-home portions. *Instructor's discretion alone determines what constitutes a valid excuse for both in-person and take-home portions.*

Attendance and Make-Up Policy: Regular attendance should be considered a top priority. Roll will be taken at the start of each class. After calling the roll, I will close the door. If you arrive after the door is closed, you are considered absent. Make-ups for exams are only possible if your absence on that day was absolutely unavoidable and beyond your control (e.g., a serious medical condition, a serious accident, etc.), and you will need to provide written documentation. Make-ups are not possible unless these two conditions are met. No exceptions! **(Believe me when I say this: if you are not totally committed to the class and do not attend regularly, chances are you will not get the grade you want.)**

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<https://www.eiu.edu/deanofstudents/conductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Accountability & Support. Additionally, serious violations such as plagiarism and cheating may result in a course grade of F. All writing assignments are scanned with plagiarism software.

Students with Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Accessibility and Accommodations. All accommodations must be approved through this office. Please stop by McAfee Gym, Room 1272, call 217-581-6583, or email accommodations@eiu.edu to make an appointment. *Waiting to the last minute to make requests is strongly discouraged.*

Student Success Center: Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to McAfee Gym, Room 1336.

In-Class Protocols: Do not start to put away your notes, books, etc. until class is properly finished. It is disruptive in the last few minutes of class, not to mention disrespectful. Do not have smart phones and other portable devices out during class. If you're more interested in what's on your little screen than what's going on in the classroom, don't take my class! During exams, all phones and other portable devices must be turned off and stowed away at all times.

Desire2Learn (D2L): I will be using this resource to post key names and questions (*which are required viewing before each class*), powerpoints, assigned readings, and other materials. You will also submit written assignments to the Dropbox and will be able to check your grades regularly. This syllabus will

also be posted on the website, disallowing any excuse for losing the syllabus.

Technology Issues: I'm happy to help you with some technology issues, but in general your best bet is to consult Campus Technology Support: Phone: (217) 581-4357; Email: support@eiu.edu; Twitter: [@EIU_ITS](https://twitter.com/EIU_ITS); Web: <https://www.eiu.edu/panthertech/>.

Tentative Schedule (subject to change)

You are responsible for keeping track of all assignments, test dates, and due dates. Any changes will be announced ahead of time.

DS = Duiker and Spielvogel, R = Reilly, D2L = Desire2Learn (selections that are online)

Note: Exams will include quotations from primary sources. The Reilly book provides useful primary documents, as listed below, but don't forget to read the inserts in the assigned sections of Duiker and Spielvogel and anything posted on D2L. Quotations could come from any of these sources, as indicated in the study guides.

Week 1

M Aug 21: Introduction

Note: Be sure to fill out the survey I have posted on D2L (under Assessment > Surveys). Failure to do so by Aug 28 will adversely affect your Participation grade for the week.

W Aug 23: Early Mesopotamia: Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians (DS pp. 10-16; Sources: Code of Hammurabi = R pp. 58-61)

F Aug 25: Early Mesopotamia II

Week 2

M Aug 28: Ancient Egypt (DS pp. 17-24; Sources: Book of the Dead and Images = R pp. 66-72)

W Aug 30: Ancient Egypt II; Judaism and Hebraic Civilization (DS pp. 25-30; Sources: Old Testament = R pp. 212-22)

F Sept 1: Later Mesopotamia: Assyrians, Neo-Babylonians (DS pp. 30-34)

S Sept 3: **Short Paper #1** due (in Dropbox on D2L by midnight)

Topic: Royal Propaganda in Mesopotamia and Egypt

Week 3

M Sept 4: **Labor Day (no class)**

W Sept 6: Persia and Zoroastrianism (DS pp. 34-36)

F Sept 8: **Exam #1** (Take-home portion due in Dropbox on Sept 9 at 11 a.m.)

Week 4

M Sept 11: Ancient India (DS pp. 39-53, 59)

W Sept 13: Early Hinduism (Sources: *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Gita*, R pp. 91-102, 200-02)

F Sept 15: Hinduism II

Week 5

M Sept 18: Buddhism (DS pp. 53-58; Sources: Selections from the Pali Canon = R pp. 202-09)

W Sept 20: Buddhism II

F Sept 22: Class Exercise: Understanding the Eightfold Path

S Sept 24: **Short Paper #2** due (in Dropbox on D2L by midnight)

Topic: How might you apply Buddha's Eightfold Path to your own life?

Week 6

M Sept 25: Ancient China: Early Dynasties (DS pp. 65-93)

W Sept 27: Ancient China II

F Sept 29: Ancient China: Confucianism, Taoism, Legalism (Sources: Confucius, *Analects* = R pp. 138-40; Han Fei, *Legalism* = R pp. 140-44; Laozi, *Tao Te Jing* = R pp. 144-48)

Week 7

M Oct 2: Medieval India and Buddhism (DS pp. 241-59)

W Oct 4: Medieval China (DS pp. 270-82, 289-94)

F Oct 6: The Mongols (DS pp. 282-86; Sources: Secret History = R pp. 418-25; John of Plano Carpini = R pp. 425-31)

S Oct 8: **Short Paper #3** due (in Dropbox on D2L by midnight)

Topic: How Buddhism, Confucianism, or Legalism influenced the political and social structure of China

Week 8

M Oct 9: Review: Religions and Cultures of South and East Asia

W Oct 11: **Exam #2** (Take-home portion due in Dropbox on Oct 12 at 11 a.m.)

F Oct 13: Ancient Greece: Bronze to Archaic Ages (DS pp. 96-106; Sources: Aristotle, R pp. 102-04)

Week 9

M Oct 16: Ancient Greece: Classical Period (DS pp. 106-117; Sources: Thucydides, R pp. 105-09)

W Oct 18: Class Discussion: Lessons from the Trial of Socrates (Sources: Plato, *Defence of Socrates*, D2L)

F Oct 20: **Fall Break (no class)**

S Oct 22: **Short Paper #4** due (in Dropbox on D2L by midnight)

Topic: Why was Socrates condemned and executed?

Week 10

M Oct 23: Ancient Greece: Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Age (DS pp. 118-27)

W Oct 25: Roman Republic (DS pp. 130-39)

F Oct 27: Roman Empire (DS pp. 139-52; Sources: Juvenal, Graffiti from Pompeii, D2L)

Week 11

M Oct 30: Excursus: Indigenous Experience on the Roman Frontier (Readings TBD)

W Nov 1: Christianity in the Roman World (DS pp. 152-55; Sources: Paul = R pp. 231-34)

F Nov 3: Christianity II (Sources: Pliny and Trajan = R pp. 243-46; Eusebius = R pp. 246-49)

Week 12

M Nov 6: Islam (DS pp. 187-212)

W Nov 8: Islam II (Sources: *Qur'an* = R pp. 259-67; Peace Treaty = R pp. 272-74; Constitution of

Medina, D2L)

F Nov 10: Islam III

S Nov 12: **Short Paper #5** due (in Dropbox on D2L by midnight)

Topic: The challenges of scholarly investigation of the *Qur'an* (*Koran*), as explained by Alexander Stille (R pp. 267-72)

Week 13

M Nov 13: Africa (DS pp. 215-38)

W Nov 15: Africa II

F Nov 17: Early Middle Ages: Europe and Byzantium (DS pp. 325-33, 357-66)

Thanksgiving Break: November 20-24

Week 14

M Nov 27: Early Middle Ages II; High Middle Ages (DS pp. 333-48; Sources: *Magna Carta* = R pp. 284-89)

W Nov 29: High Middle Ages II

F Dec 1: Crusades (DS pp. 352-54; Sources: Fulcher of Chartres, Anna Comnena, Ibn al-Qalanisi, Raymond of St.Giles, Ibn al-Athir, R pp. 350-59, 365-83)

Week 15

M Dec 4: Late Middle Ages (DS pp. 373-79; Sources: de' Mussis, Boccaccio, al-Maqrizi = R pp. 441-58)

W Dec 6: Late Middle Ages II; Renaissance (DS pp. 379-85; Sources: Boniface VIII, *Unam Sanctam* <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/B8-unam.asp>)

F Dec 8: Final Thoughts

S Dec 10: **Short Paper #6** due (in Dropbox on D2L by midnight)

Topic: Popes vs. Kings and Emperors in Medieval Europe

Final Exam: Tuesday, Dec 12, 10:15-12:15 (Take-home portion due in Dropbox on Dec 13, 12:30 p.m.)