Course Objectives:

For over two centuries Europe and its cultural extensions have dominated the world economically, culturally and politically. The great colonial empires that emerged in the 16th and 17th centuries and were consolidated in the 19th century, along with the “de-industrialization” of portions of what became the “Third World,” that accompanied it, were the most visible elements of that process of domination. The extension of the global economic system, dominated by the United States and the other developed economies of the world, is yet another, more recent, element of that process. But, what is it that placed Europe [and later the United States] in the position to dominate the other cultures and civilizations of the world? Is the standard Eurocentric story that still permeates world history as taught throughout the industrialized West really an accurate depiction of the global system from about 1500 to 1800 and of how Europe in the 19th century came to conquer and control virtually all the peoples and resources of the world? Did European civilization pull itself up by its intellectual and economic bootstraps, so to speak, to outpace economic, political and cultural development throughout the rest of the globe? Was there something “special” about Europeans, their civilization, the socio-political and/or geographical environment that led to the “take-off” about 500 years ago that led “irreversibly” to European domination?

The objective of the course is to pose these and other questions that challenge the standard Eurocentric interpretation of the “modern” development of Western and global civilization. We will discover, for example, that contrary to generally held “truths” in the West the world outside Europe at the time of Columbus, da Gama, and other noted European “explorers” was not populated exclusively by backward peoples living in squalor and hopelessness. In fact, in 1500 the level of economic development throughout substantial portions of the rest of the world was significantly higher than that in Europe. Available evidence indicates that as late as 1800, for example, the standard of living in China was probably comparable to that in the more advanced parts of Europe.

We will also learn that much of the supposedly internally driven economic development of Europe from the late Middle Ages through the Industrial Revolution half a millennium later drew heavily on resources from outside Europe. In fact, throughout the Middle Ages Europe was but a cultural and economic backwater on the very periphery of a global trading system centered on the Indian Ocean and based on major exchanges of goods from China and Southeast Asia to India, the Middle East and East Africa. Many of the commercial and technological innovations that would contribute to the emergence of capitalism and the industrial revolution had their origins in this Afro-Asian system. The so-called “Age of Discovery,” for example, would have been impossible without the technological innovations in navigation that had been pioneered in “the Orient” prior to the emergence of Portuguese ocean-going vessels in the 15th century. Moreover, the European conquest of the Americas – and the fantastic advantages that this gave to Europe -- resulted as much, or even more, from epidemics unleashed by the Europeans that destroyed entire communities as from European military superiority.

Crucial, as well, for the economic growth that occurred in Europe in the period after 1500 and its greater role in the global economic system were the immense wealth that poured into Europe from the Americas in
the form of gold and silver seized from conquered indigenous populations and the tremendous profits that
the slave trade and slave-based plantation agriculture provided to Europe. The blatant racism, usually
religiously based, that justified mass extermination, slavery, and oppression of non-European peoples –
whose very humanity was questioned – were all a part of the set of factors that contributed to the gradual
expansion of European global domination.

The course will draw upon the work of analysts who, though from a broad array of academic disciplines
and backgrounds, share a concern about the unreality of many of the myths that underlie the Eurocentric view
of the past millennium of global history. We will begin with a short reading from a book by Barry
Buzan and Richard Little, two British IR theorists, who argue that international relations theory is hampered
by its failure to look at the history of international systems. We will then turn to the work of a number of
scholars from a variety of fields to begin to gain an accurate picture of the origins of the modern
international system. Jared Diamond is a physiologist at the University of California, Los Angeles whose
recent work has focused on those factors that contributed to the differential development and decline of
human societies. J.M. Blaut, a geographer at the University of Illinois, Chicago, outlines the major
arguments concerning Eurocentric bias in most Western writing on the global system. The late Edward W.
Said of the University of Texas discusses Orientalism, his term for what Blaut and others term
Eurocentrism. André Gunder Frank was a Dutch economist who taught in the Netherlands, later at the
University of Toronto, and for a short while at the University of Miami. A polemical iconoclast, he
challenges, at times stridently, virtually all aspects of the traditional social sciences. Janet L. Abu-Lughod is
professor emerita of sociology and history at the New School for Social Research. Her work is seminal in
demonstrating the existence of a vibrant integrated trading system in Asia in the pre-modern world. Stewart
Gordon, a senior scholar at the Center for South Asian Studies of the University of Michigan, provides a
detailed picture of the evolution of the system identified by Abu-Lughod. John M. Hobson, an historian
now at the University of Sheffield, expands on the work of Frank and challenges the very foundations of the
Eurocentric view of modern history. María Louise Menocal, a professor of Spanish and Portuguese at Yale
University, is almost lyrical in her depiction of Islamic Spain as both a tolerant society in a Europe not
committed to tolerance and the conduit for the revival of classical learning that led to the Renaissance in
Europe. The late Eric R. Wolf, formerly professor of anthropology at City University of New York, is
concerned with the interconnectedness of the peoples of the world at the time of European expansion and the
role that the conquest of the Americas and the exploitation of its peoples [including imported slaves] and
resources had for the emergence of Europe. Charles C. Mann, a correspondent for Science and The Atlantic
Monthly, surveys the current state of our knowledge about the Americas prior to the arrival of Europeans
and presents a picture quite different from the standard one. William J. Bernstein, a financial analyst and
historian, tracks the history of trade and its impact on human society from early human history, through the
era of Asian dominance, to the present. Kenneth Pomeranz, an historian at the University of California,
Irvine, examines the factors that differentiated Europe from China in the late 18th century and led to the
industrial revolution in the former. He emphasizes the significance of readily available coal in England and
the immense resources of the Americas seized from the indigenous population and exploited largely through
slave labor among the crucial factors. Jack Goldstone, an historian at George Mason University, provides a
brief overview of the reasons for the economic development of Europe. We will conclude the course by
asking the “so what” question. J.M. Blaut points to the ways in which major social scientists, such as Max
Weber have developed the theoretical underpinnings of the social sciences on fallacious assumptions and
John Hobson tracks the impact of Eurocentric and racist thinking on the developments in Eurocentric
thinking.

A broad list of studies -- some directly relevant to the course, others more peripheral to its focus – can be
found in the reading list at the end of the syllabus.

SEMESTER ASSIGNMENTS

A. Reading assignments are listed in the course outline. Students will have completed readings prior to
each class session, so that they are able to follow and engage in discussion. In the first class dealing
with each topic one or two students will be responsible for a leading a portion of the class
discussion. [If two students are involved, they should coordinate their roles before preparing for class.]
The students will touch on what they see as the central aspects of the authors’ arguments and provide their own reactions to the material. As essential portion of the student leaders’ role will be to get other students involved in discussing the materials. The student will submit to the instructor the materials/notes/outline developed as part of his/her preparation for leading the class discussion. Note: students enrolled in the course for graduate credit will make at least two of these presentations; those enrolled for undergraduate credit will be responsible for at least one presentation. These presentations should be taken seriously; they will be evaluated based on a clear, articulate and logical presentation. Students should not write out and read a formal talk.

The instructor is aware of the fact that the readings are extensive. Students are expected to complete as much of reading as possible each week, so that they understand the central arguments of the various authors, the evidence that the present to support those arguments, and are able to provide an initial assessment of the strength of the arguments.

B. Papers of about two pages [typed, double-spaced, with standard margins] will be submitted in the first class class on each topic [late papers will not be accepted, since the purpose of the paper is to prepare the student for participation in class discussion]. The materials submitted by those leading class discussions will fulfill this requirement. The papers will provide a brief assessment of the readings completed for the week. In so far as possible these papers should not be mere descriptions, or summaries, of the readings. Rather they should assess and compare the arguments presented in the readings. One purpose of the weekly papers is to ensure that students have not only completed the readings, but also that they thought about the assumptions, mode of analysis, and logic underlying the individual presentations and have evaluated the arguments presented. Once again, students should be reminded that these brief papers will be an importance measure of the participation portion of the course grade.

C. A major research paper, which is due by 5:00 p.m. on 10 December 2014 (late papers will be downgraded) should be fifteen to twenty typewritten pages in length (double-spaced) [twenty-five to thirty pages for those receiving graduate credit]. Students should place a hard copy of the paper in the instructor’s mailbox in 1300 Campo Sano Drive, but also send him an electronic version as an e-mail attachment. Each student should write a paper on one of the many topics that we shall cover in the course. The paper should draw upon both more traditional Eurocentric literature, as well as the literature that challenges the perspectives that have dominated Western scholarly and popular interpretations for most of the past two or three centuries. These papers need not be original research papers in the strict sense of the term. They will no doubt draw primarily on secondary materials and will generally not involve original research. They may, for example, consist in part of comparative review essays that assess the strengths and weaknesses of some of the literature noted below in the supplemental reading list or in other published materials that treat the issues covered in the course.

Students should submit their papers in standard research paper format -- i.e. title page, notes either at the bottom of the page or at the end of the paper, and a bibliography. Use the format given below for both notes and bibliography. It is assumed that students will give due attention to such concerns as spelling, grammar, appropriate word selection and neatness! Although the instructor will place primary consideration in evaluating the paper on content, logic of the argumentation, and evidence, stylistic concerns (i.e. spelling, grammar, syntax, etc.) will also be taken into account.

As part of the paper project, students will be required to submit a one- or two-page proposal concerning the paper in class on 28 October 2014. The proposal should identify the topic, outline the key issues to be treated, indicate how those issues relate to central concerns of theoretical importance, and indicate the most relevant source materials already consulted for the project.

In class on 20 November 2014 students submit a five-page, typewritten and double-spaced, précis/outline of the general argument of their research papers. [These papers will be returned by 2 December, so that students can consider the instructor’s comments in writing the final version of the paper.] This version of the paper should summarize the basic argument of the paper, but need not
provide the detailed evidence employed in the final paper to support the argument. These presentations will be evaluated on the basis of the clarity of the argument, the presentation of supporting evidence, the effectiveness of the presentation, etc. This paper and presentation will be graded as a part of the entire research paper project. The presentation should be “polished” and should provide the audience with a clear view of the student’s project and her/his findings to date.

NOTE: Backup your work on an external drive (e.g. USB Key, Hard Disk), portable device (e.g. smart phone, PMP) or online service (e.g. myUMbackup [http://www6.miami.edu/myumbackup/], Mozy, intronis, idrive, amazon simple storage service, backblaze, backjack [macs only]). There can be no excuse for loss of data because of computer malfunction, theft etc. Please be proactive and backup your computer files.

D. Grading: Fifty percent of the grade for the course will be determined by a combination of class attendance, class participation, including performance when leading class discussions, and the weekly papers. Fifty percent of the grade for the course will be based on the research paper, including the one-page statement [5 percent], the five-page précis [10 percent], the oral presentation of the précis [10 percent] and the completed final paper [75 percent].

Note that students will be required to include a signed statement on each major written assignment swearing/affirming that the work that they are presenting is completely their own. Clear evidence of cheating will result in the grade of “0” for the assignment.

E. Required Reading Assignments

Reserve copies of the books listed below are available at the undergraduate reserve desk in Richter Library. Shorter readings will be available on electronic reserve through the Blackboard site for the course. If the student wishes to have a personal copy of other titles and not “compete” with others for access to the reserve copies, s/he should purchase them on line. Barnes and Noble [www.bn.com] and Amazon [www.amazon.com], for example, usually deliver materials within a week of ordering. Usually one or other of these on-line stores has used copies of books at substantially reduced cost. Note that for orders of new books valued at more than $25.00 neither Barnes and Noble nor Amazon charges a delivery fee. Another location that usually provides information about lower prices for books is Textbookland [http://www.textbookland.com/]. It will probably be easiest to find books on the Textbookland website using the ISBN number, which I have included below for each book. Both Barnes and Nobles and Amazon also have used books available – usually at greatly reduced prices, even with the delivery charge of ca. $3.00 per book. Delivery of these books usually takes about 10-12 days. Note that quite a few of the titles are out of print and available only as used books.

Books on Reserve and Available for Purchase on the Internet


1 Digital copies of many of the reserve materials are available on line. They can be accessed by clicking the "Course Reserves" link on your course's Blackboard page. https://www.courses.miami.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp For instructions on using the new system please click the link below: http://library.miami.edu/services/reserves/reserve_info_students.html <http://www.library.miami.edu/vlib/VIDEO_reserves/VIDEO_reserves.html>


Materials available via Blackboard on Electronic Reserve [some also at reserve desk]


http://www.columbia.edu/~gas1/project/visions/visions.html [electronic reserve]

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Topic 1**  
28 Aug.  
Introduction to the Course  
Picq, “Situating the Amazon,” 27 pp. [total = 68]

**Topic 2**  
2, 4 Sep.  
The Challenge to Eurocentric History  
Reading: Blaut, *Colonizer’s Model*, pp. 1-216  
Frank, *Re-Orient*, pp. 1-51 [total = 277]  
+2-page paper  
Discussion leader: _______________

**Topic 3**  
9, 11 Sep.  
The Fates of Human Societies  
DVD: Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, Part I: Out of Eden; Part II: Conquest  
Part III: Into the Tropics  
Reading: Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, pp. 1-441 [total = 441]  
+2-page paper  
Discussion leader: _______________

**Topic 4:**  
16, 18 Sep.  
The Eurocentric Story  
Reading: Roberts, *The Triumph of the West*, pp. 1-291  
Frank, *Re-Orient*, pp. 321-359 [total = 339]  
+2-page paper  
Discussion leader: _______________

**Topic 5:**  
23, 25 Sep.  
Before European Hegemony: Global Economy in the Asian Age  
+2-page paper  
Discussion leader: _______________
Topic 5: When Asia was the World  
30 Sep., 2 Oct.  
**Reading:** Gordon, *When Asia was the World*, pp. vii-viii, 1-191 [total = 194]  
+2-page paper  
Discussion leader: 

Discussion leader:

Topic 6: Eastern Origins of Western Civilization  
7, 9 Oct.  
**Reading:** Hobson, *Eastern Origins*, pp. i-xv, 1-322 [total = 337]  
+2-page paper  
Discussion leader: 

Discussion leader:

Topic 7: Islam, Spain, and the Rise of Europe  
14, 16 Oct.  
**Reading:** Menocal, *Ornament of the World*, pp. xi-xvi, 1-298  
Saliba, *Islamic Science and the European Renaissance*, pp. 1-26  
Saliba, “Whose Science is Arabic Science” [total = 367]  
+2-page paper  
Discussion leader: 

Discussion leader:

Topic 8: Europe and the People without History, I  
21, 23 Oct.  
**Reading:** Wolf, *Europe and the People without History*, pp. i-xvii, 1-126, 263-472 [total = 362]  
+2-page paper  
Discussion leader: 

Discussion leader:

Topic 9: The Americas before Columbus  
28, 30 Oct.  
**Reading:** Mann, *New Revelations of the Americas*, pp. ix-xii, 1-465 [total = 468]  
+2-page paper  
Discussion leader: 

Discussion leader:

28 Oct.  
Research Proposals are due in class

Topic 10: Europe Enters the Global Trading System  
4, 6 Nov.  
**Reading:** Bernstein, *A Splendid Exchange*, pp. 1-388 [total = 388]  
+2-page paper  
Discussion leader: 

Discussion leader:
The World Before European Domination
Fall 2014

Topic 11: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy
11, 13 Nov.
Reading: Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*, pp. i-x, 1-297
Huang, “Development or Involution,” pp. 501-538
Pomeranz, “Beyond the East-West Binary,” pp. 539-590
+2-page paper
Discussion leader: ____________________

Discussion leader: ____________________

Topic 12: Eurocentrism, Orientalism, and the Rise of the West
18, 20, Nov.
Reading: Blaut, *Eight Historians*, pp. xi-xii, 1-208
+2-page paper
Discussion leader: ____________________

Discussion leader: ____________________

20 Nov. Five-page précis/outline is due in class

25, 27 Nov. Thanksgiving Week

Topic 13: Eurocentrism, Racism, and International Relations Theory
2, 4 Dec.
Hobson, “Reconstructing International,” pp. 414-430
+2-page paper
Discussion leader: ____________________

Discussion leader: ____________________

2 Dec. Students’ papers with comments and suggestions will be returned in class on 4 December

6-9 December Reading Days

10 Dec. Research Paper Due
5:00 p.m. Hard copy in professor’s mailbox, along with a digital copy sent via e-mail attachment.

I. Guidelines for Research Paper

Note that the “Guidelines for Written Papers” are based on a document [available at http://arapaho.nsuok.edu/~alexandra01/STYLE02.pdf] prepared by two of Kanet’s former graduate students, James T. Alexander, now of Northeastern State University (Oklahoma) and Brian V. Souders, now of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County; it is used here with their permission.
The paper should deal with some aspect of the emergence of the West, the relationships between East and West in the European Middle Ages, or related topics. Regardless of the topic selected, the student should deal with it **analytically**, not merely descriptively. This means that the paper should address a specific **question** and develop and **support an argument**. It should draw upon and respond to the relevant theoretical literature.

1. Format of the Paper

The paper should stay within the page limits listed above [12-point type with standard margins]; it should be formatted in standard research paper form -- i.e. including reference notes (either at the bottom of the page or at the end of the paper -- not “scientific notation”) and a bibliography. The format listed below **should be used** for both notes and bibliography.

2. Essay/Paper Style Sheet

Writing clear and concise English is a skill that will benefit you throughout life. I do take good writing seriously and enjoy reading papers written in clear, correct English. It is a joy to read clear sentences that have both subjects and verbs, that do not sprinkle commas around at random, and that realize that English language plural nouns do not use apostrophes. The short amount of time that you take editing your paper will catch most of the mistakes that drive teachers crazy.

Students who have difficulties with rhetoric are encouraged to purchase William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style*. New York: Macmillan, 1999. 4th edn. To ensure that you understand when and how to provide references for materials used you should consult Gordon Harvey, *Writing with Sources: A Guide for Students*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 2002, or a similar source. These two guides should prove to be useful throughout your entire career as a student, as well as later in life.

Please note that this style document is briefly and generically written. It neither covers all situations, nor is it intended for just one type of writing assignment. Specifically pay attention to the citation guidelines, for all parts may not apply to a particular assignment.

If you want to avoid some common problems, read the following rules carefully:

1) **Never use contractions.** If you are going to use ‘don’t’ and ‘can’t,’ you may as well write ‘gonna’ and ‘coulda.’ Contractions are markers of casual speech in written form. Use the forms ‘do not’ and ‘cannot.’

2) **Make certain that all sentences have both a subject and a verb.** Sentence fragments are sentences that are missing either a subject or a verb. "A man who had traveled all over the country and lived in many states" is not a sentence, since it has no verb. The man is not doing anything, since there is no verb in this sentence. Careful editing will pick up mistakes like this one.

3) **Pronouns need antecedents.** Never start a paragraph with a sentence such as, "They created a Congress consisting of a Senate and a House of Commons." The reader has no idea who ‘they’ are. If you use a definite pronoun (he, she, it or they) or indefinite pronouns (this, that, these or those), be certain that these pronouns refer back to some concrete noun.

4) **Introductory participial phrases modify the subject of the main clause of the sentence.** "Waiting for the train to arrive, it became clear that I was going to be late" is incorrect. In this case the participle “waiting” modifies the subject “it” grammatically. In fact, it is meant to modify an implied “I.” The sentence must be restructured.

5) **Word processors have spell check for a reason.** Every word processing program has some sort of spell checking system. **USE IT.** You might also consider using the grammar check function that many word processing programs now contain. Remember to proofread your final copy, because spell check
cannot pick up mistakes like 'tot he' instead of 'to the'. Grammar check may have even a greater risk of error, although it can still be useful. Therefore, be careful, as you use these tools.

6) **Use the right form of the word.** The English language is filled with dozens of spelling land mines, words that sound the same but are spelled in three or four different ways. These homonyms still cause people problems. The worst offenders that teachers find are:

- *there* - an adverb denoting place
- *their* - a possessive adjective for the pronoun ‘they’
- *they’re* - a contraction for ‘they are,’ which you should not use anyway
- *its* - a possessive adjective for the pronoun ‘it’
- *it’s* - a contraction for ‘it is,’ which you should not use anyway Note: *its* is not a word in the English language.

7) **Punctuation is not for decoration.** Commas are not thrown into sentences at random. The English language has rules for the use of commas. Learn these rules and follow them. The same holds true for semi-colons, colons and other forms of punctuation. Any large dictionary and most pocket dictionaries have brief reference sections on the proper use of punctuation.

8) **Have someone else read your paper.** When you have spent thirty hours working on a paper, the last thing you want to do is look at it one last time to see if everything is spelled correctly. Also, it is hard to identify errors if you have become too involved in the paper. Have someone else look at your paper to pick out any mistakes you may have missed. Failing this, try reading the paper aloud. You can often hear and spot grammar and spelling errors in this fashion.

8) **Consistently cite your sources.** You must properly cite your source if you use an idea or quote from another's work. For citing sources (footnotes or endnotes) in research papers, I prefer that you use the following style:

9) **Wikipedia is NOT an acceptable source.** Although convenient and often useful as a guide to primary sources, this is not an acceptable peer-reviewed source.

a. **Bibliography:**

All entries should be listed in alphabetical order, last name first, using the following format:

1) **Periodical article:**

Some journals do not employ volume numbers, others do not employ consecutive pagination within an entire volume. This format can be adjusted to the former by excluding the volume number, and presents no problem for the latter situation.

2) **Article in an edited book:**

3) **Authored book:**

4) **Edited book:**
5) **Newspaper article:**

6) **Miscellaneous publication:**
Some items do not fit easily into any of the categories listed above. You should adapt the format to fit the item. For example, pamphlets can usually be treated as books.

7) **Translated material:**
For translated materials, full publication information should be provided for both the original and the translation source: e.g., *Pravda*, date, p. ?; translated in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. ?, no. ?, date, p. ?.

8) **Internet material:**
These materials should be treated as publications. Full information concerning the source should be given, so that the reader will be in a position to find it. In the case of "reprinted" materials, both the original and the internet source should be given: e.g., “Yeltsin Administration Upbeat On Outgoing Year,” Moscow, 30 December 1997, *Interfax*; available on *Johnson's Russia List* #1453, 30 December 1997 <davidjohnson@erols.com>. “Russia, China Sign Nuclear Deal,” *RFE/RL Newsline*, Vol. 1, No. 187, Part I, 30 December 1997 <http://www.rferl.org/newsline>. Since you cannot cite pages for internet sources, you should be especially careful to provide proper link information and dates when accessed.

9) **Unpublished material:**
Specific information should be provided about the source of unpublished material, such as interviews, letters, and other documents. The name of the interviewee, the date and place of the interview should be provided. Letters and other documents should be treated in similar fashion. In all cases information concerning the current location of the material should be provided.
Reading List:


Fernand Braudel: *Civilization and Capitalism 15th-18th Century.*
The World Before European Domination

Fall 2014


Panorama of Arab Science,” Al-Ahran Weekly On-line, issue no. 767 (2-8 November 2006).


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http://www.columbia.edu/~gas1/project/visions/visions.html


