

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department:	Communications, Arts and Social Sciences
Programme:	BA in History
Level:	5
Course Title:	War of the Worlds? Empire and Civilisation
Course Code:	HST 5430
Course Leader:	Dr Mike Keating
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
Semester:	Spring
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

This course offers students a novel understanding of the empires and civilisations of Europe and Asia by viewing them as interactive elements of shared international systems. Students are encouraged to rethink the traditional assumption that they can be legitimately studied in isolation and are introduced to the multiple cultural, social, geopolitical and economic processes that shaped their respective historical trajectories. In doing so, the course seeks to displace eurocentric conceptions of European development that see it as 'unique and separate'. These themes are explored across a longer span of time, including the study of the Islamic caliphates, the pax-Mongolica, and Europe's maritime empires. A particular emphasis is put on the strategic importance of control of Western Asia and the Eurasian Steppe to the contending civilisations of Eurasia.

Prerequisites: INR 4105

Aims and Objectives:

- To enrich and deepen students' understanding of research methodology through engagement with non-eurocentric and 'long duration' historiography.
- To draw attention to the subtleties and complexities of Eurasian development and the role of interlocking processes of cultural and social transformations within international systems.
- To provide students with an opportunity to relate theories and concepts to historic processes and, as such, test these ideas against 'real world' processes.

Programme Outcomes:

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following programme outcomes:

5A(i) 5A(ii) 5A(iii) 5B(i) 5B(ii) 5B(iii) 5C(i) 5C(ii) 5C(iii)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is maintained by Registry and located at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Understand the origins and historical influence/importance of interaction between Europe and Asia to global social, economic, cultural and political processes;
- Develop a grasp of how major social cleavages, such as patriarchy, ethnicity, class, colonialism, etc., were manifested in the civilisations and empires of Europe and Asia;
- Understand the importance of *international* history; the way in which regions and nations are shaped by, and themselves contribute to, global social and cultural transformations.

Indicative Content:

- Empire, civilisation and the critique of eurocentrism
- The eighth century 'merchant revolutions' and the Islamic Renaissance
- Imperial China's place in the Eurasian world: from the Tang to the Song
- The Pax-Mongolica: Eurasia's first superpower
- The Italian City States, the Silk Roads, and Marco Polo
- After the Mongols: Tamerlane's war and the Ming
- The Sino-world system of the sixteenth century
- Rise of the north-western fringe: maritime colonialism in Eurasia
- A Eurasian perspective on the long nineteenth century

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board.

Teaching Methodology:

This course will be taught through a combination of lectures and seminar-type activities, including group work, sub-group activities, classroom discussion, and the showing of documentaries. The general approach to classes is informal, and discussion is viewed as an essential part of an interactive and participatory learning program. Audio-visual aids, study materials and electronic learning resources will be used as appropriate.

Lectures provide a framework for the course, and are designed to ensure students have an overview of main issues and concerns on a particular topic, receive clarification on the major points of debate understand the broad dimensions of core problems, and are aware of relevant literature in the specific area of concern. It is essential that lectures are supplemented with assigned readings; together, the readings and the lectures are designed to provide guidance for seminar discussion.

The seminars provide an opportunity for discussion of contentious issues, addressing questions and exploring academic debates in more depth, group and sub-group discussion. They are encouraged to share their opinions freely, but must also maintain respect for the opinions of others. It is expected that students will participate regularly in discussions in a creative, competent and critical way, as the formulation of their own thoughts and clarification of their assumptions, often in contradiction to other students' thoughts and assumptions, form a crucial part of the learning process. Students are expected to come to seminar classes prepared.

Bibliography:

- Beckwith, C., *Empires of the Silk Road; A History of Eurasia*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Burbank, J., *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Darwin, J., *After Tamerlane: The Rise and Fall of Global Empires, 1400-2000* London and New York: Penguin Books, 2008.

Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus

Change Log for this CSD:

Major or Minor Change?	Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or LTPC)	Change Actioned by Academic Registry