HIST 56b: World History to 1960

Our goal this summer is to look at the history of the world from 1450 to 1960 through the words, images, and artifacts produced by and about historical actors, and to come to understand the connections developed between peoples and societies through the creation of worldwide networks of economic and cultural exchange, the rise of modern political systems and industry, and the experience of colonialism, imperialism, and resistance. We will also seek to understand changes in religious and philosophical systems, the construction of race and gender, and the environment in response to these developments. As an online course, we will be combining traditional and new media to create an experiential, stimulating “space” for learning and to produce work that relies on research, historical sources, critical thinking, and the development of argumentation through both written and visual work.

Please read the entire syllabus with care.

Required Texts:


Note: Texts will be available at the Brandeis Bookstore and can also be purchased online from Oxford University Press. (I’ve found very few used editions out there, unfortunately, but the text and source reader together run about $65 new.) You can also rent online versions for much less—for example, VitalSource has the text for $22 and the reader for $10.

If you are having difficulty purchasing course materials, please make an appointment with your Student Financial Services or Academic Services advisor to discuss possible funding options and/or textbook alternatives.
Online Specifics:

We will be working asynchronously with the LATTE platform available at lts.brandeis.edu/courses/newlatte. To participate in the course, you will need a computer with Internet connection, Microsoft Word or equivalent, an email program, and a phone with camera/digital camera. Please talk to the instructor if any of these are going to be a hardship.

To begin, please log in, post about yourself in the welcome forum, and look at the Week 1 checklist—each week there will be a checklist that will guide your work for the week. Please note that “Week” 1 is only three days, and the standard week runs from Thursday to Wednesday.

Contacting the Instructor/Virtual Office Hours:

Please contact me any time with questions via email or text. Please allow 24 hours for a reply. At three points during the semester I will hold virtual office hours—I will send out a Zoom link a few days before. Please drop by if you have questions or just want to check in. And of course I’m happy to set up some other time if you would like to talk.

Here are the dates/times:

Monday, June 17, 8 pm Eastern Standard Time
Wednesday, July 10, 4 pm Eastern Standard Time
Tuesday, July 23, 1 pm Eastern Standard Time

ALSO, IMPORTANT: An important part of this course will be regularly checking your email. Course announcements and feedback will often come through email.

Assignments:

1. Class Participation – 50% (25% original posts, 25% replies)
Each week students are asked to post to the weekly discussion forum by Sunday (midnight EST), and to post replies to two of your colleagues by Wednesday (midnight EST). The earlier in the week you post, the richer the resulting discussions can be.
Original responses should include your own insights into the topic question as well as references to required readings or other external sources, with citations, and consist of at least 300 words. If you have watched the week’s film, please feel free to draw on your insights from that experience. (The citations can be in any style. The discipline of history uses Chicago Style citation, otherwise known as footnotes, and you will be asked to use this style for your paper—there is a guide to using these posted on our LATTE course site in the first block at the top of the page.) At least twice in the semester, please incorporate something you have learned from one of the articles you’ve read.
Replies should be substantive, following on from the post with related experience or materials, and should consist of at least 150 words.
I will reply to each original post, and to selected second and third posts, but please understand that it is not possible for me to reply to every post.
PLEASE NOTE: Fifty percent is a huge portion of your grade, and missing a few weeks of posting can have a very significant impact on your final grade, but the grades are weighted this way because the heart of the class is our discussion of the material. Please be conscious of the importance of consistent posting.

2. Film Review – 3%
There are a rich variety of films linked on LATTE, and a document with short descriptions in the first block on the LATTE homepage. All of these films relate in some way to material we’re discussing. It is my hope that you will take the opportunity to watch as many as you can, and think about the ways they intersect with the material. Please choose one film to think more deeply about, however, and submit a short (two- or three-page) reflection, answering the following questions:
   1. What is this film about?
   2. What does is have to do with the historical processes we’re discussing?
   3. Given what you know, does it seem historically accurate to you?
   4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using film in a history course?
You can submit this any time before the last day of class—I recommend that you do so as early as possible for your own sake.

3. Material Culture Project – 22%
Historians learn about the past in multiple ways. This summer we are going to take a deeper look at material culture—the things that people produce and leave behind—in order to better understand world history. To get started, please read through an essay by Irene Bierman of UCLA on interpreting images, at http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/unpacking/imagesmain.html and another by Daniel Waugh of the University of Washington on interpreting objects, at http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/unpacking/objectsmain.html

The project itself is in two parts:

a. Gathering Data – 8%
Posted on LATTE you will find a sheet explaining this in detail (including technical aspects). We’re fortunate in an online course to have people spread out geographically, so we’re hoping to take advantage of that. Wherever you are in the world, within the first two weeks of the course, you will need to visit a museum. If this is an extreme hardship, let me know and we’ll work out an alternative, but often even the tiniest towns have a museum of some sort or other. At that museum, I’m going to ask you to photograph objects (if allowed, otherwise, find documentation of them elsewhere, such as postcards or online) relating to world history and create a simple PowerPoint with a short commentary that will be uploaded to LATTE and shared with the class. It is better
to find a historical or ethnographic museum if you can, or an art museum that contains non-Western as well as Western art.

b. Analyzing and Presenting Data – 14%
Out of your data-gathering, hopefully you will find a topic that really interests you. You DO NOT have to focus on an object or topic you encountered at your museum—you can find inspiration elsewhere, but the idea is to think about the challenges and opportunities of looking at history through artifacts—which is especially important when working with the history of preliterate or minimally literate cultures. You’ll be asked to draw on your coursework and your own research and create a presentation—Powerpoint, Prezi, or whatever format you choose—on a relevant topic that can be shared with the class. (Please consult with the instructor on your final topic.) You can incorporate text, video (clips or shot specifically for the project), music and other recordings, maps and other images, to produce a roughly fifteen-minute presentation that can be uploaded and viewed independently. More instructions are available on LATTE, but it should address a critical question, use appropriate sources, and be carefully cited. Before using Internet sources, be sure to read this essay on finding and using appropriate sources:
http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/framingessay1.html

3. Source Paper – 25%
Written sources are the primary raw material in the creation of history, especially in highly literate cultures. Every week we will be reading and working with written sources and our online conversations will center around their interpretation. It is strongly recommended that in preparation you read the following four short articles on interpreting sources: “Newspapers,” by Anne Rubenstein of York University:
http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/unpacking/newsmain.html; “Official Documents,” by David Trask of Guilford Technical Community College:
http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/unpacking/docsmain.html; “Personal Accounts,” by Beverly Mack of the University of Kansas:
http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/unpacking/acctsmain.html; and “Travel Narratives,” by Jerry Bentley of the University of Hawai‘i:

As a culmination of our work with written sources, you will each be asked to write a 7–10 page paper, addressing a pertinent historical question, based on primary sources supported by secondary material (books, scholarly articles, etc.). If you choose a new topic, you should consult with the instructor—you can also continue to work on the topic you covered in your material history project. A first draft will be due two weeks before the end of the semester, a final draft on the last day. Very specific instructions for this paper are posted on LATTE. Please make sure to read them before commencing work.
Readings and Media:

Each week there will be readings from the text and the source book. There are additional articles posted in each week—you are expected to read one of these. There may also be additional primary sources. In most weeks, there will be two lectures posted that are required. Sometimes these will be in PowerPoint form, sometimes video, sometimes both, in which case you can choose. (In my experience, most people do not view the videos, so I’m phasing them out. But they’re there if you want them.) There will also be a collection of clips, images, sources, videos, podcasts, and so on, most of which are optional but will enhance your learning if you have time for them. It will be made clear in the weekly checklists which are optional and which are not. The schedule of assignments (not including media and uploads) follows.

Please note: In order to make it possible to post on Sundays (in order to give those who work time to read on the weekends), the first and last weeks of the semester are “half weeks,” and the weeks proper run Thursday to Sunday. This can cause some confusion at first, so please pay attention to dates.

Calendar of Due Dates

Sundays by midnight EST—Posts
Wednesdays by midnight EST—Replies
Sunday, June 23 – Gathering Data due
Sunday, July 14 – Analyzing and Presenting Data due
Wednesday, July 31 – First draft of final paper due
Sunday, August 11 – Final paper due, Film review due
Monday, August 12 – Course evaluations due

Note: If a discrepancy exists between the syllabus and the online checklist, please follow the checklists, as these are updated frequently.

Week 1 • June 3–June 6 • What Is World History?

Readings and Media:
• Watch Introduction and Requirements video
• Watch lecture 1: What Is World History?/The World in 1450
• View lectures and media under “Week 1 Checklist”
• Read textbook, introduction and chapter 1, “The Many Worlds of the Fifteenth Century,” 1–45.

Assignment:
• Post a brief response to our warm-up question, posted on LATTE under “Week 1,” by Wednesday night. You are not required to incorporate readings in this particularly post. It’s
mostly an exercise to get to know each other and where we’re coming from. Read some of your colleagues’ responses.

**Week 2 • June 6 to June 12 • “Discovery” and the Columbian Exchange**

**Readings and Media:**
- View lectures and media under “Week 2 Checklist”
- Source reader, chapter 2, 15–26, plus pages 32–38.
- Read one of the articles posted on LATTE

**Assignments:**
- Respond to weekly discussion forum by Sunday midnight EST/replies by Wednesday midnight EST
- View film *The Other Conquest* (optional)

**Week 3 • June 13–June 19 • Conquest and the Atlantic System/Empire and Religious Conflict in Europe**

**Readings and Media:**
- View lectures and media under “Week 3 Checklist”
- Read one of the articles posted on LATTE

**Assignments:**
- Respond to weekly discussion forum by Sunday midnight EST/replies by Wednesday midnight EST
- View film *Jodhaa Akbar* or *Black Robe* (optional)

**Week 4 • June 20–June 26 • Global Trade and Its Effects on North America and the Caribbean/Transformations in “the East”**

**Readings and Media:**
- View lectures and media under “Week 4 Checklist”
- Source reader chapter 5, 58–73.
- Read one of the articles posted on LATTE.

**Assignments:**
- Respond to weekly discussion forum by Sunday midnight EST/replies by Wednesday midnight EST
• View film *Master and Commander* (optional)
• Gathering Data presentation due June 23, midnight.

**Week 5 • June 27–July 3 • Cultural Flourishing in the Islamic World, East Asia, and Africa/Enlightenment in Europe and the Americas**

**Readings and Media:**
• View lectures and media under “Week 5 Checklist”
• Textbook, chapter 6, “A New Order for the Ages,” 147–76.
• Source reader chapter 6, 74–91.
• Read one of the articles posted on LATTE

**Assignments:**
• Response to weekly discussion forum by Thursday/reply by Wednesday
• View film *The Opium War* (optional)
• Make sure to have begun research for presentation.

**Week 6 • July 4–July 10 • Revolutionary Transformations/The Rise of Industry and New Economic Relationships**

**Readings and Media:**
• View lectures and media under “Week 6 Checklist”
• Textbook chapter 7, “The Engines of Industrialization,” 177–201.
• Source reader chapter 7, 92–114.
• Read one of the articles posted on LATTE

**Assignments:**
• Response to weekly discussion forum by Sunday/reply by Wednesday
• View film *We Shall Remain* (optional)
• Continue working on presentation

**Week 7 • July 11–July 17 • Revitalization, Rebellion, Insurgency/Socialists and Radicals**

**Readings and Media:**
• View lectures and media under “Week 7 Checklist”
• Source reader chapter 8, 115–32.
• Read one of the articles posted on LATTE

**Assignments:**
• Response to weekly discussion forum by Sunday/reply by Wednesday
• View one of the following films: *Lagaan, Shatranj ke khilari* (optional)
• Analyzing and Presenting data presentation due July 14, start thinking about final paper
• Virtual Office Hours: **Thursday, July 12, 4 pm EST** (optional)

**Week 8 • July 18–July 24 • Expansion and Imperialism**

Readings and Media:
- View lectures and media under “Week 8 Checklist”
- Source reader chapter 9, 133–51.
- Read one of the articles posted on LATTE

Assignments:
- Response to weekly discussion forum by Sunday/reply by Wednesday
- View film *Suffragette* (optional)

**Week 9 • July 25–July 31 • Mass Migration, Urbanization, and Anti-Colonial Movements/Total War/Cultural Modernism and Class Conflict**

Readings and Media:
- View lectures and media under “Week 9 Checklist”
- Source reader chapter 10, 152–72.
- Read one of the articles posted on LATTE
- First draft of source paper due midnight EST, **July 31** (I will return these with comments by August 7 at latest).

Assignments:
- Response to weekly discussion forum by Sunday/reply by Wednesday
- View film *Gandhi* (optional)

**Week 10 • August 1–August 7 • Mass Society and Mass Politics/The Second World War**

Readings and Media:
- View lectures and media under “Week 10 Checklist”
- Source reader chapter 11 to 184, 173–84.
- Read one of the articles posted on LATTE.

Assignments:
- Response to weekly discussion forum by Sunday/reply by Wednesday
- View one of the following films: *Camp Thiaroye, Nowhere in Africa, Indochine* (optional)
Week 11 • August 8–August 11 • Cold War/Decolonization

Readings and Media:
• Source reader chapter 12, 193–211, plus pages 185–92.

Assignments:
• Only the first response is due this week—please post by midnight Sunday, August 11.
• View one of the following films: Battle of Algiers, Earth (optional)
• Course evaluations due August 12.
• Final paper due August 11 at midnight.
• Film review due August 11 at midnight.

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Students are responsible for exploring each week’s materials and submitting required work by the due dates. The calendar of assignments and due dates is located above.

On average, a student can expect to spend approximately 15–18 hours per week reading, completing assignments, and posting to discussions.

Late Work:
Posts that are one day late will receive half-credit, more than one day, no credit. Papers will lose 10% of their grade for each day late. The pacing of a summer course is very different from the fall and spring semesters, and it is easy to find yourself behind. If that happens, please communicate with me so I can help you.

Conversion of Percentages to Letter Grades

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Confidentiality
We should respect our fellow classmates and work under the assumption that what is discussed here stays within the confines of the classroom.

For your awareness, members of the University’s technical staff have access to all course sites to aid in course setup and technical troubleshooting. Students enrolled in online courses can expect that individuals other than their fellow classmates and the course instructor(s) may visit their course for various purposes. Their intentions are to aid in technical troubleshooting and to
ensure that quality course delivery standards are met. Strict confidentiality of student information is maintained.

University Policies

Accommodations

Brandeis seeks to welcome and include all students. If you are a student who needs accommodations as outlined in an accommodations letter, please talk with me and present your letter of accommodation as soon as you can. I want to support you. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Support (SAS) at 781.736.3479 or access@brandeis.edu

Academic Honesty and Student Integrity

Academic honesty and student integrity are of fundamental importance at Brandeis University and we want students to understand this clearly at the start of the term. As stated in the Brandeis Rights and Responsibilities handbook, “Every member of the University Community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. A student shall not receive credit for work that is not the product of the student’s own effort. A student’s name on any written exercise constitutes a statement that the work is the result of the student’s own thought and study, stated in the student’s own words, and produced without the assistance of others, except in quotes, footnotes or references with appropriate acknowledgement of the source.” In particular, students must be aware that material (including ideas, phrases, sentences, etc.) taken from the Internet and other sources MUST be appropriately cited if quoted, and footnoted in any written work turned in for this, or any, Brandeis class. Also, students will not be allowed to collaborate on work except by the specific permission of the instructor. Failure to cite resources properly may result in a referral being made to the Office of Student Development and Judicial Education. The outcome of this action may involve academic and disciplinary sanctions, which could include (but are not limited to) such penalties as receiving no credit for the assignment in question, receiving no credit for the related course, or suspension or dismissal from the University.

University Caveat

The above schedule, content, and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.