

**HIS 208 01 TOPICS IN MODERN WORLD HISTORY I:  
EUROPEAN EXPANSION AND EMPIRES  
MWF: 11-11:50am, MHRA 1214**

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**Professor:** Dr. Jill Bender

**Office:** MHRA 2116

**Office Hours:** Mondays, 1:00-2:00pm; Wednesdays, 1:00-2:00pm; and by appointment

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The empires of France and Britain once encompassed nearly 1/3 of the world's population. By the 1920s, the British Empire alone covered more than 14 million square miles of the world's surface. European expansion and imperialism is a reality of our past and has significantly shaped the world in which we live. This course provides a historical survey of European expansion and empires from the early eighteenth century to the late twentieth century. Why did expansion occur? How did expansion occur? And, what was the impact of this expansion? We will pay particular attention to the cultural, social, and political ramifications of imperialism.

**Student Learning Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the significance of the major events, people, and debates in the history of modern Europe's imperial expansion.
  - Use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary sources representing different points of view.
  - Use evidence based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting a written argument.
  - Identify the historical origins of significant debates in today's world.
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**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Throughout the semester, we will examine and analyze a variety of historical sources – from political documents to novels to music to films. The following books are available on reserve at Jackson Library or for purchase at the university bookstore:

Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost*

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

All other reading material is available on the course Blackboard site or will be distributed in class. Please note that there is no central text for this course. The course lectures are designed to provide the necessary context and background often provided by a traditional textbook. Should you wish to consult a text in addition to the required readings, however, I have placed *The Earth and It is Peoples* on reserve at the university library.

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## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

### **Participation and Attendance**

To perform well in this course, you must attend all lectures, take notes, and thoroughly engage with the assigned readings. Weekly reading assignments should be completed in preparation for Friday class meetings, which will largely involve discussion (please note that one discussion will take place on Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>). Students must come to classes labeled “Discussion” prepared to participate – in other words, ready to ask questions and discuss the readings. *Students must bring a copy of the assigned readings and their notes to class meetings.*

### **In-class Reading Quizzes**

Each course labeled “Discussion” will begin with a short (10 minute) writing assignment or quiz based upon the reading due for that day. These will be graded on a scale of 1 to 10. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped at the end of the semester.

### **Writing Assignments**

Students will be required to complete two writing assignments over the course of the semester. The first writing assignment will take place **in class** on **September 17<sup>th</sup>**. The second writing assignment will be completed **outside** of class and will be due on **November 5<sup>th</sup>**. Writing topics will be provided in advance of both due dates. Writing assignments are due in class. I do not accept emailed copies of papers.

### **Exams**

There will be two exams in this course. Both exams will be content-driven, based largely on lectures and class discussions. The midterm exam will be on **October 12<sup>th</sup>**; the final exam will be on **December 10<sup>th</sup>**. Review sheets will be provided in advance of both exams.

### **Grading**

Grades will be based on five different aspects of student performance: (1) in-class writing assignment (2) mid-term exam (3) paper (4) final exam (5) participation, attendance, and reading quizzes. The final grade will be determined according to the following calculation:

**In-class writing assignment 20%**  
**Mid-term Exam 20%**  
**Paper 25%**  
**Final Exam 25%**  
**Participation, Attendance, and Quizzes 10%**

\*\*\*Plagiarism is a breach of the university’s academic integrity policy. For more information on this policy, please see <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/>. All work must be your own! If you have further questions regarding this policy, please consult me.\*\*\*

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## PART I: THE AGE OF REVOLUTIONS

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### WEEK ONE

**Aug 20:** Introduction

**Aug 22:** What is an empire?

**Aug 24:** The First “Global” War

**Reading:** No Reading

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### WEEK TWO

**Aug 27:** Britain’s “Swing to the East”

**Aug 29:** The Industrial Revolution

**Aug 31: DISCUSSION:** *The British in India*

**Reading:** Linda Colley, “Another Passage to India,” *Captives*, 241-268.

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### WEEK THREE

**Sept 3:** *No Classes*

**Sept 5:** Science, “Race,” and Empire

**Sept 7: DISCUSSION:** *Orientalism*

**Reading:** William Jones, “A Discourse of the Institution of a Society” (1784)

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### WEEK FOUR

**Sept 10:** The French Revolution and its global repercussions

**Sept 12:** The Haitian Revolution and its global repercussions

**Sept 14: DISCUSSION:** *France and its eighteenth-century colonies*

**Reading:** “Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen” (1789)  
The Free Citizens of Color, *Address to the National Assembly*,  
(1789)  
*Letters from the Uprising of Vincent Ogé* (1790)  
*Napoleon's Proclamation to His Troops in Italy (March-April  
1796), selections*

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## PART II: THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND NEW IMPERIALISM

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### WEEK FIVE

**Sept 17: \*\*\*IN-CLASS WRITING ASSIGNMENT\*\*\***

**Sept 19:** Age of Imperial Reform

**Sept 21:** Mid-century conflicts

**Reading:** No reading

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### WEEK SIX

**Sept 24:** Mid-century cultural transitions

**Sept 26:** The modern nation state

**Sept 28: DISCUSSION:** *Belgium and its empire*

**Reading:** *King Leopold's Ghost*, chapters 1, 2, and 4

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### WEEK SEVEN

**Oct 1:** New Imperialism I

**Oct 3:** New Imperialism II

**Oct 5: DISCUSSION:** *New Imperialism*

**Reading:** *King Leopold's Ghost*, chapters 8, 10, 11, and 12

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### WEEK EIGHT

**Oct 8:** Empires at home?

**Oct 10:** midterm review

**Oct 12: \*\*\*MIDTERM EXAM\*\*\***

**Reading:** No Reading

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## PART III: EMPIRES AND WORLD WARS

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### WEEK NINE

**Oct 15:** *No Classes*

**Oct 17:** The Great War

**Oct 19: DISCUSSION:** *World War I and the imperial perspective*

**Reading:** David Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War: Soldiers' Letters, 1914-1918* (excerpt)

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### WEEK TEN

**Oct 22:** New Countries, New Colonies I

**Oct 24:** New Countries, New Colonies II

**Oct 26: DISCUSSION:** *Interwar Nationalism*

**Reading:** Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* (excerpt)

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### WEEK ELEVEN

**Oct 29:** The Second World War

**Oct 31: FILM:** *The Burma Boy*

**Nov 2: DISCUSSION:** *World War II and the imperial perspective*

**Reading:** There is no reading assignment and no reading quiz this week. Instead, we will discuss *The Burma Boy*.

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## PART IV: DECOLONIZATION

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### WEEK TWELVE

**Nov 5:** Reordering the Post-war World      **\*\*\*PAPER TWO DUE\*\*\***

**Nov 7:** Decolonization I

**Nov 9: DISCUSSION:** *Decolonization and Violence*

**Reading:** Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (excerpt)

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**WEEK THIRTEEN**

**Nov 12:** Decolonization II

**Nov 14: FILM:** *Amandla!*

**Nov 16: FILM:** *Amandla!*

**Reading:** Begin Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

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**WEEK FOURTEEN**

**Nov 19: DISCUSSION:** *Amandla!* \*\*\*No reading quiz\*\*\*

**Nov 21:** *No Classes*

**Nov 23:** *No Classes*

**Reading:** Continue Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

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**WEEK FIFTEEN**

**Nov 26:** Legacies of Empire I

**Nov 28:** Legacies of Empire II

**Nov 30: DISCUSSION:** *The Colonial Impact*

**Reading:** Finish Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

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**WEEK SIXTEEN**

**Dec 3:** Conclusion

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**\*\*\*FINAL EXAM: Monday, December 10, 2012, 12-3pm\*\*\***

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