

**HS 208 01: TOPICS IN MODERN WORLD HISTORY I: EUROPEAN  
EXPANSION AND EMPIRES  
T/TH: 12:30-1:45pm, SOEB 204**

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**Professor:** Jill Bender

**Office:** MHRA 2116

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 2:00-3:00pm; Thursdays, 11:00am-12:00pm; and by appointment

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In the 1820s, the British Empire encompassed 1/5 of the world's population. By the 1920s, the British Empire covered more than 14 million square miles of the world's surface. And the British Empire is only one example of the world's empires. 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.

Learning Objectives:

1. By the completion of the course, students will be able to identify and give the significance of the major events, peoples, and debates in the history of Europe's modern imperial expansion.
2. Students will develop the ability to construct and support an analytical argument based on primary historical sources. These skills will be developed both through writing assignments and classroom discussions.
3. Students will be introduced to 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 films to novels. The following books are required and available 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, I have placed *The Earth and It is Peoples* on reserve.

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## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

### **Participation**

To perform well in this course, you must attend all lectures, take notes, and thoroughly engage with the assigned readings. Attendance is mandatory. Most class meetings will involve some discussion. With that in mind, students should complete all reading assignments in advance and come to classes prepared to participate – in other words, ready to ask questions and discuss the assigned readings. I recommend that students bring a copy of the assigned readings and their notes to class meetings.

### **Quizzes**

There will be four quizzes during the semester, one for each part of the course. These quizzes will be short (10 minute) writing assignments based on the readings. Quizzes will be graded on a scale of 10, and 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 February 2<sup>nd</sup>. The second writing assignment will be completed **outside** of class and will be due on March 29<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 March 1<sup>st</sup>; the final exam will be on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

*Academic Integrity:* Please familiarize yourself with the university's academic integrity policy: <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>.

### **Grading**

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

**In-class writing assignment 20%**  
**Midterm Exam 20%**  
**Paper 25%**  
**Final Exam 25%**  
**Participation and Quizzes 10%**

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## PART I: THE AGE OF REVOLUTIONS

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### WEEK ONE

**Jan 10:** Introduction

**Jan 12:** The First “Global” War

**Reading:** No reading assignment

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### WEEK TWO

**Jan 17:** Britain’s Swing to the East

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

**Jan 19:** Science, “Race,” and Empire

**Reading:** Documents on Orientalism

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### WEEK THREE

**Jan 24:** The Industrial Revolution and its global repercussions

**Reading:** No reading assignment

**Jan 26:** The French Revolution and its global repercussions

**Reading:** Maya Jasanoff, “Invading Egypt,” *Edge of Empire: Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East 1750-1850*, 117-132.  
Documents on the French Revolution

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### WEEK FOUR

**Jan 31:** Napoleon’s Empire

**Reading:** Maya Jasanoff, “Invading Egypt,” *Edge of Empire: Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East 1750-1850*, 132-148.

**Feb 2:** \*\*\*IN-CLASS WRITING ASSIGNMENT \*\*\*

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## PART II: THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND NEW IMPERIALISM

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### WEEK FIVE

**Feb 7:** Abolition

**Reading:** No reading assignment

**Feb 9:** Mid-century conflicts

**Reading:** Documents from the 1857 Indian rebellion and the Morant Bay rebellion

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### WEEK SIX

**Feb 14:** Mid-century cultural transitions

**Reading:** No reading assignment, but I recommend that you begin *King Leopold's Ghost*

**Feb 16:** The modern nation state

**Reading:** Begin *King Leopold's Ghost*

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### WEEK SEVEN

**Feb 21:** New Imperialism I

**Reading:** Continue *King Leopold's Ghost*  
\*\*\*Reading Quiz\*\*\*

**Feb 23:** New Imperialism II

**Reading:** Finish *King Leopold's Ghost*

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### WEEK EIGHT

**Feb 28:** Review

**Mar 1:** \*\*\*MID-TERM EXAM\*\*\*

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## PART III: EMPIRES AND WORLD WARS

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### WEEK NINE

**Mar 6:** *No Classes*

**Mar 8:** *No Classes*

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### WEEK TEN

**Mar 13:** The Great War

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

**Mar 15:** *No Class*

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### WEEK ELEVEN

**Mar 20:** New Countries, New Colonies I

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

**Mar 22:** New Countries, New Colonies II

**Reading:** Documents on the League of Nations

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### WEEK TWELVE

**Mar 27:** The Second World War

**Reading:** No reading assignment

**Mar 29:** *Film: The Burma Boy* **\*\*\*PAPER TWO DUE\*\*\***

**Reading:** No reading assignment, we will view and discuss *The Burma Boy* in class.

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## PART IV: DECOLONIZATION

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## WEEK THIRTEEN

**Apr 3:** Reordering the Post-war World

**Reading:** No reading assignment

**Apr 5:** Decolonization I: Britain and India

**Reading:** Documents on Partition

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## WEEK FOURTEEN

**Apr 10:** Decolonization II: France and Algeria

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

**Apr 12:** Legacies of Empire I

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

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## WEEK FIFTEEN

**Apr 17:** Legacies of Empire II

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

**\*\*\*Reading Quiz\*\*\***

**Apr 19:** Conclusion

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**\*\*\*FINAL EXAM: Friday, April 27, 3:30-6:30pm\*\*\***