Brigham Young University  
Fall Semester 2011  
History 201, Section 006  
World Civilization to 1400 AD

11:00-11:50 pm MWF  
B003 JFSB  
TAs: Ian Davidson  
   Franklin Wilkerson  
Office # and hours TBA

Instructor: P.B. Pixton  
Office: 2148 JFSB; ext. 2-3335  
Hours: MWF 10:10-10:50am; 12:10-12:40pm

Rationale

In this section of History 201 we will first establish a working definition of the term "civilization," and then we will consider the five ancient "cradles" of civilization – Sumer, the Nile River Valley, the Indus River Valley, the Yellow River Valley, and the island of Crete, demonstrating the basic characteristics of civilized societies by means of these quite unique cultures.

We will then move to the Classical Age (roughly 800 BCE to about 400 CE), during which the major regions of Eurasia (East Asia, South Asia, West Asia and Europe) took on those cultural aspects which are recognizable down to the present day and continue to impact our modern world.

The last third of the course will focus on the period 400 CE to 1400 CE – what we call “the Middle Ages” in the West – during which classical civilizations either permanently fragmented into various regional permutations (e.g., the Latin West, Byzantium, Islam), or else developed satellite civilizations (such as Japan, Southeast Asia, etc.).

We will also seek to demonstrate briefly the consequences of geographical and cultural isolation on certain other areas of the world, helping us understand better the “time lag” which one observes as we approach 1400 CE.

Given the scope of the course, it is unrealistic to expect you to learn the names and dates of all the characters mentioned in the textbook; it is equally unrealistic to expect you to remember all of the geographical data presented in the course. But, as with any discipline, we must develop a "critical mass of information upon which we can build, and that requires considerable effort." It therefore behooves each of you to work at getting your arms around the large conceptual framework, the large blocks of time and space, the most important events and personalities of this 5000 year period. My job (and that of the TAs) is to help guide you through, to help you distinguish the important from the trivial, to help you see “the forest in spite of the trees.”

While the calendar of lectures/presentations is accurate as of today, there may be some slight adjustments as the semester progresses, and these will be announced in a timely fashion. Stay current with the reading, collaborate with other students whenever possible, take advantage of TA office hours and help sessions. It is your responsibility to know when exams are going to be held, and to be present on that day (exceptions must be discussed with me in advance, e.g., authorized university activities, such as intercollegiate athletics, etc.)

Exams and Primary Sources Summaries

There will be two mid-term exams and a final, all essay in format. Review questions for the first mid-term have
been provided in this syllabus; using this model, you will be expected to develop your own review questions for the second mid-term and the final. A comprehensive section of the final will contain a compulsory question: for this, I have appended a list of 4-5 review questions as well – I will arbitrarily select one of them for the exam.

There are a sizeable number of Primary Sources to be found in Kishlansky. \textit{You are just as responsible for these as you are for material in the primary textbook} (Fernandez-Armesto) and the lectures. For each lecture there are corresponding Readings, the number of which varies from day to day. At roughly three-week intervals you will be responsible for submitting a \textit{one-page summary/analysis} of any 3 of the readings assigned for that period (hence, 3 pages total each three weeks X 4 periods for the semester = 12 total pages). These \textit{must be your own work: plagiarism will be dealt with as a violation of BYU Honor Code} and \textit{no late work will be accepted}. If you are not present on the day the papers are due, you have the responsibility of getting it to the TAs by the end of class (9:50 am) that day (early submissions seem to be the best answer for those absent due to university business); no electronic submissions will be accepted, unless you are a member of the United States Armed Forces and your unit has been activated). No footnotes or other scholarly apparatus is necessary, but they must be typed or printed on a word processor, using 1" margins and 9 point font (Times Roman is preferred) – all papers which do not conform to this will be summarily rejected. These will be read and graded by the TAs and by the instructor and returned within 1 weeks. Given this, \textit{there will not be any term paper due at the end of the semester!}

The 4 summaries will be scored as a percentage of 100, making the total the equivalent of each mid-term exam. \textit{They are thus a critical part of your grade and should be taken seriously.}

\textit{An introduction to textual analysis is provided in Kishlansky, as is a guide to interpreting visual materials. Everyone is expected to read and understand this material. It is essential for your comprehension of the readings and the visual materials used in the course.}

All scores for summaries and exams will be posted on Blackboard, allowing you to know at all times where you stand relative to the 500 total points possible for the course. Using a straight ten-point scale, you can see whether you are doing A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, etc. work.

\textbf{ACHTUNG! The FINAL EXAM}

\textbf{SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS:} We will do our best to accommodate you; please see me a.s.a.p.

\textbf{BYU Standards:} Dress, grooming, plagiarism, respect for others and for the instructor. Your use of a laptop computer in this classroom is \textbf{not an entitlement, but a privilege} extended to you by me. If you abuse that privilege, you lose it, no explanation needed. Likewise, Ipods, texting and other electronic junk is off limits for the duration of the class – same rule applies.

I encourage each and every one of you to get involved in discussions.

\textit{Textbooks:}

Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, The World, vol. 1 to 1500
Mark A. Kishlansky, Sources of World History: Readings for World Civilization (4th ed., vol. I)

\textit{Lecture Topics and Reading Assignments:}

\begin{itemize}
\item[1st week: Aug 29] Definition of Civilization
\hspace{1cm} Reading: F-A xxii-128 (skim Part 1)
\hspace{1cm} Kishlansky xxii-xxxiii (read this carefully, and preferably several times!)
\item[Aug 31] History Begins At Sumer: the Breakthrough
\end{itemize}
Reading: F-A (Continue reading to p. 128)
Kishlansky Nrs. 3, 6, 7

Sep 2  No Class Period (Check Blackboard for PowerPoint Presentation N. 1)

2nd week: Sep 5  LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

Sep 7  The Gift of the Nile: The Rise of Egypt (Power Point Presentation Nr. 2 on Blackboard)
Reading: F-A (Continue reading to p. 128)
Kishlansky Nrs. 8, 9

Sep 9  Class Resumes: Variations on a Common Theme
        Video Clip: The Egyptian

3rd week: Sep 12  The Indus River Civilization
                Reading: F-A (Continue reading to p. 128)

Sep 14  Variations on a Common Theme

Sep 16  The Yellow River Civilization
        Reading: F-A (Continue reading to p. 128)
        1st Summaries Assignment Due at 11:00 am

4th week: Sep 19  Variations on a Common Theme

Sep 21  First Hour Exam

Review Questions for First Essay Exam

Questions very similar to these will be on the exam. You will have a choice from 4 or 5, and you will be required to write a well-organized essay, using the full 50 minutes of the class period, supporting generalizations with specific details.

1. Although the "diffusion" model helps us understand how civilization spread from one core region to another in the ancient world, it does not explain why all civilizations subsequent to the first were not simply "carbon copies" of the original.

What other factors can you introduce which take us to the next level of understanding?

2. We have defined "civilization" as a very specific type of human culture which can be recognized on the basis of certain distinguishing characteristics.

What are these characteristics and how were they manifested in two or more of the ancient civilizations? Do we have any evidence that civilization, once achieved, can also be lost?

3. Writing was an important feature of each of the four core civilizations studied to this point, and yet in each there were different applications of this tool.

Discuss the importance of a writing system in the ancient world, and explain its value to the modern-day historian as well who seeks to get inside such a long-ago age.

4. One of the major themes of ancient history is the absorption of non-civilized peoples into the sphere of influence of the core areas, thus extending the benefits and characteristics of civilized life well beyond their respective points of origin. In the process, civilizations such as that created by the Sumerians ensured their survival for millennia.

Using any one of the core areas studied to date, demonstrate how civilization survived the various "power shifts" that occurred from time to time in the ancient world -- in other words, even though power in the Ancient Near East changed
from the Sumerians to the Akkadians to the Babylonians, to the Assyrians, etc., we can still speak of them as proponents of a single civilization. Likewise, the institutions and cultural characteristics established by the Xia were perpetuated through the Shang and Zhou dynasties; and the Hyksos imitated the Egyptians during their two centuries of power. (I haven’t stated this very well, but have fun grappling with it).

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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| Sep 23 | The Age of Classical Civilizations -- The Ancient Near East  
Reading: F-A 130-202 (Begin reading Part 3)  
Kishlansky Nrs. 4, 10 |
| 5th week: Sep 26 | Ancient Near East (cont.) |
| Sep 28 | Classical Civilizations: East Asia  
Reading: F-A (Continue reading 130-202)  
Kishlansky Nrs. 19-24 |
| Sep 30 | East Asia (cont.)  
Video Clip: The Emperor and the Assassin |
| Oct 2 | Classical Civilizations -- India  
Reading: Kishlansky Nrs. 16, 17, 18  
F-A (Continue reading 130-202) |
| Oct 7 | India (cont.)  
Video Clip: Asoka |
| Oct 9 | Europe’s First Civilizations -- Crete and Peloponnesus  
Reading: F-A (Continue reading 130-202)  
Kishlansky Nr. 11  
2nd Set of Source Analyses Due at 11:00 am |
| 7th week: Oct 12 | Crete (cont.)  
Video Clip: “Helen of Troy” or “Ulysses” |
| Oct 14 | Classical Greece  
Reading: Kishlansky Nrs. 12-15  
F-A (Continue Reading 130-202) |
| Oct 16 | Classical Greece (cont.) |
| 8th week: Oct 19 | Classical Greece -- The Rise of Philosophy  
Video Clip: “A Visit with Socrates” |
| Oct 21 | Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic World  
Video Clip: “Alexander the Great” (Richard Burton, Claire Bloom, et al.) |
| Oct 23 | Etruria and the Rise of Roman Civilization  
Reading: F-A (cont. 130-202)  
Kishlansky Nrs. 25-27 |
| 9th week: Oct 24 | Roman Civilization (cont.)  
Reading: F-A (cont. 130-202) |
| Oct 26 | Roman Civilization (cont.)  
Video Clip: “Gladiator” or “Ben Hur” |
| Oct 28 | East and West in the Meridian of Time  
Kishlansky Nr. 28 |
Reading: (Cont. F-A 130-202)
3rd set of Source Analyses Due by 11:00 am

10th week: Oct 31
The Breakup of the Classical Worlds, 200-500 CE
Reading: F-A (cont. 130-202)

Nov 2
Second Hour Exam
Review Sessions TBA -- prepare your own review questions

Nov 4
Post Classical Roman Empire -- Byzantium
Reading: F-A (202 to 407)
Kishlansky Nrs. 29-30

11th week: Nov 7
Islam -- Mohammed and the Four Pillars
Reading: F-A (cont. 202-407)
Kishlansky Nrs. 31-33, 75, 79

Nov 9
Islam (cont.)
Reading: F-A (cont. 202-407)

Nov 11
Tang and Sung China
Reading: F-A (cont. 202-407)
Kishlansky Nrs. 36, 37, 39-43

12th week: Nov 14
Gupta India
Kishlansky Nr. 38

Nov 16
The Latin West to 1000 CE
Reading: F-A (cont. 202-407)
Kishlansky Nrs. 44-50

Nov 18
The Latin West, 1000 - 1400 CE -- The Three Orders
Reading: F-A (202-407)
Kishlansky Nrs. 47, 48, 51, 52
4th set of Source Analyses due at 11:00 am

13th week: Nov 21
The Latin West -- Cultural Achievements

Nov 22
Intellectual Challenges
Reading: F-A (202-407)

Nov 23-25
Thanksgiving Break

14th week: Nov 28
West Meets East/Cultural Encounters Before 1400
Reading: F-A (202-407)

Nov 30
Cultural Isolation I: The Western Hemisphere
Reading: F-A (TBA)
Kishlansky Nrs. 71, 72, 34, 78

Dec 2
Cultural Isolation II: Sub-Sahara Africa
Reading: TBA

Dec 5
If we are on schedule: Cultural Isolation III: Polynesia
Dec 7: Annual St. Nicholas Lecture
Final Exam: TUESDAY, 13 December 2011 – 3 pm 6pm

Comprehensive Review Questions

The following questions are provided for your benefit in studying for the comprehensive portion of the final exam (100 points). I will arbitrarily select one of these for the exam and all students will write on the same question.

1. From the most ancient civilizations of Sumer, Egypt, the Indus Valley and East Asia, to the post-classical civilizations of the period 400–1400 AD, there has been a steady clash between those peoples who were civilized and those who were not.

Select any such group of uncivilized nomads from each of the three major divisions of history covered by this course (i.e., ancient, classical and medieval) and discuss their impact upon the civilized world(s) of their day.

2. While certain details of any given civilization slip through the cracks over time, or are simply overwhelmed by the more compelling aspects of a succeeding civilization, many of the achievements/developments of the ancient world survived to become part of the post-classical (or medieval) world.

Select any four such achievements/developments and trace their progress from ancient Sumer or Egypt or the Indus River Valley or the Yellow River Valley, to the post classical worlds of medieval Europe, Islam, Gupta India, or Tang/Sung China.

3. Human progress is often measured in terms of technological development.

Select two such technological innovations from each of the three periods into which the course has been divided, and assess the impact that such advances had upon their respective periods.

4. At the dawn of civilization in the various regions of the world, small pockets of civilized peoples existed in the midst of a sea of barbarism. By 1400 AD, there was a continuous band of civilized territory stretching from Ireland and Spain and Morocco on the extreme west to Korea and Japan and Southeast Asia on the eastern end of the Eurasian land-mass.

Discuss some of the forces at work during the period 3500 BCE to 1400 CE which helped bring about this latter condition. Using either sub-Saharan Africa or the Western Hemisphere as the comparative example, discuss the importance of long and sustained contacts with other advanced peoples in the development of sustainable human civilizations.

5. The study of history brings us face to face with the question of who ultimately has the greatest impact upon the world – the men of guns (that is, military leaders, great conquerors, etc.) or the men of ideas?

Argue the two sides of this question using representatives of each from our course material. (Hint: this may not be a simple case of either/or, but you decide.)