

World History II: The Rise of the East, 200–1500

History E-10b/W

Spring 2022

(Tuesdays 3:00–5:00 pm EST)

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Harvard University Extension School

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Attendance policy: Attendance at “live” lectures is not required. Any students, however, who do not attend “live” lectures are required to view the recordings of the lectures on their own.

Discussion section attendance is encouraged but not required. We will announce times and dates of discussion sections.

Course Goals: To investigate ideas about world history from AD 200 to 1500, while reading critically, thinking logically, and questioning intelligently. To provide a method with which one might continue to study the artifacts of the human past and to encourage that study. As the philosopher of science Sir Karl Popper has written: “all teaching on the University level (and if possible below) should be training and encouragement in critical thinking.” In this course every fact, assertion, and interpretation about history is open to reconsideration. Merely accepting authority, invoking political considerations, or agreeing with the instructor is neither necessary nor sufficient for determining one’s own views. Such uncritical accepting, invoking, and agreeing are corrupting influences that tend to hinder the development of independent thinking. Ideas and arguments in this class will be accepted or rejected on the basis of three criteria: (1) logical coherence (i.e., no internal contradictions); (2) correspondence to external source testimony (i.e., no suppressed evidence); and (3) conceptual elegance (no unnecessary abstractions). For a fuller explanation, see “Three Criteria of Historical Study” (on the course website).

Undergraduate Student Grading and Deadlines:

	<i>draft</i>	<i>for grade</i>	<i>TPQN</i>
10% First Writing Assignment (see p. 8)	Feb 8	Feb 22	Mar 22
20% Second Writing Assignment (see pp. 9–10)	Mar 8	Mar 29	Apr 19
30% Third Writing Assignment (see pp. 11–12)	Apr 12	Apr 26	May 10
40% Final Examination		May 10	
10% Course Engagement (see pp. 14–15)		<i>passim</i>	

In the writing assignments you have a chance to demonstrate your conceptual thinking ability. The questions for the writing assignments are on this syllabus. Prepare and write the essays outside of class and send them in on the designated due dates. The first date is when you should send in the draft (for

comments, no grade) of each assignment. The second date is when you should send in the revised version (for grade). The third date is the *terminus post quem non*, the date after which we will not accept any work on that assignment. You must send in two versions of each writing assignment (a “draft” and a “revised” version) to receive a grade on that assignment.

Graduate Student Grading and Deadlines

	<i>draft</i>	<i>revised</i>	<i>TPQN</i>
10% First Writing Assignment (see p. 9)	Feb 8	Feb 22	Mar 22
5% Proposal for Research Paper (see p. 13)	Mar 8	Mar 29	—
45% Research Paper (see p. 13)	Apr 12	Apr 26	May 10
30% Final Examination		May 10	
10% Course Engagement (see pp. 14–15)		<i>passim</i>	

In the research paper you have a chance to demonstrate your conceptual thinking ability and develop your research skills. It will be up to you to develop your own research topic with the approval of the course assistant and instructor (see recommended topics on page 13). First, consult with your teaching assistant and/or the instructor about focusing on a topic. Then follow the guidelines in *A Guide to the ALM Thesis*, 7th ed., pp. 12–41 (on the course website). Prepare and write your draft and revisions of the proposal (3 pages or 750 words) and research paper and send them in on the designated due dates (see page 13 of this syllabus for further details). A grade representing 5% of your final grade is given for the proposal, and a proposal must be approved before we will accept the research paper itself. The first date is when you should send in the draft (for comments, no grade) of each assignment. The second date is when you should send in the revised version. The third date is the *terminus post quem non*, the date after which we will not accept any work on that assignment. The research paper should be around 6500 words (approximately 25 pages, using 12-point font) long. You will need to send in two versions (“draft” and “revised”) of a proposal and two versions (“draft” and “revised”) of the research paper to receive a grade on that research paper.

Definitions of “Draft” and “Revised” Versions:

The “draft” of a paper is defined as the first version sent in. The “revised” version of a paper is defined as the next version sent in that addresses the TA’s or instructor’s comments made on the “draft”. Only the “revised” version will receive a grade.

Note on Use and Citation of Sources:

The responsibility for learning the rules governing the proper use of sources lies with the individual student. In registering for a course, students agree to abide by the policies printed in on the Extension School website, which contains brief descriptions of plagiarism, cheating, and computer network abuse. Ignoring these policies may have unpleasant consequences. You will find an excellent introduction to proper citation in Gordon Harvey’s *Writing with Sources: A Guide for Harvard Students*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2008), which is available online. See also *Harvard Guide to Writing with Sources*. For format style, use the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th ed. (2017), a “quick guide” version of which is available online.

Examination:

This course has only one exam – the final exam. The questions on the final exam will test your knowledge and thinking ability. The final exam will take 2 hours on May 10. It will consist of 80

multiple-choice questions. You will receive sample questions for study ahead of time.

Textbooks for Both Undergraduates and Graduate Students

- * Peter N. Stearns, Michael Adas, Stuart B. Schwartz, and Marc Jason Gilbert, *World Civilizations: The Global Experience*, vol. 1: *To 1750*, 7th ed. (New York: Pearson, 2014).
World history textbook for the course 0-205-986293
- * Alfred J. Andrea and James H. Overfield, *The Human Record: Sources of Global History*, vol. 1: *To 1500*, 8th ed. (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2015).
Selections from primary sources 1-285-870236
- * *Sources of the Western Tradition*, ed. Marvin Perry, 9th ed., Boston: Wadsworth, 2014, vol. 1: *From Ancient Times to the Enlightenment*.
Selections from primary sources 1133935257
- # *Primary Sources Supplement*, vol. 1: *To 1750*, ed. Donald Ostrowski, Minneapolis/St. Paul, West Publishing, 1995 (PSS) <course website>.

In addition, graduate students will be using the following text in both the fall and spring semesters:

- * *Discovering the Global Past: A Look at the Evidence*, vol. 1: *To 1650*, 4th ed., edited by Merry E. Wiesner, William Bruce W. Wheeler, Franklin M. Doeringer, and Kenneth R. Curtis. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2011. 1-111-341428

Major Works for Both Undergraduates and Graduate Students (You will be choosing 4 of these):

- # *The Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon* (written ca. 1000), trans. and ed. Ivan Morris. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991. (ISBN 0231073372) <<http://tinyurl.com/35ueee>>.
- # Augustine, *Confessions* (written in the 4th century), trans. R. S. Pine-Coffin. New York: Penguin, 1961. (ISBN 014044114X) (*Confessions*) <<http://tinyurl.com/37dm9q>>.
- # Ross E. Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the 14th Century*, Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1986 (ISBN 0520067436) (*Adventures*) <<http://tinyurl.com/2ubphr>>.
- # Anna Komnene (Comnena), *The Alexiad*, translated by Elizabeth A. Dawes. London: 1928.
< <http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/AnnaComnena-Alexiad00.asp>>.
- # *Rus' Primary Chronicle*, translated by Samuel Hazzard Cross. Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1953. < <http://www.mgh-bibliothek.de/dokumente/a/a011458.pdf>>.
- # Marco Polo, *The Travels* (written in the 13th century), trans. Ronald Latham. New York: Penguin, 1958. (ISBN 0140440577) (*Travels*) <<http://tinyurl.com/3cek9m>>.
- # Abelard, *Story of My Misfortunes* (written in the 12th century), trans. Henry Adams Bellows.
<<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/abelard-histcal.html>>.

Christine de Pizan, *Book of the City of Ladies* (written in 1405), rev. ed., trans. Jeffrey Richards, New York: Persea Books, 1998. (ISBN 0892552301) (*City of Ladies*) <<http://tinyurl.com/3x5am8>>.

An asterisk (*) before a title means that this version should be available at the Coop. You may also be able to find used copies of these books available for purchase via the Internet. # available on-line.

Lectures

Readings

A. Introduction

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| Jan 25 | 1. The Virtual Past, the Historical Past, and the Goals of This Course
<i>Website:</i> Ostrowski, “Three Criteria of Historical Study”
<i>Website:</i> Ostrowski, “Historian and the Virtual Past”
<i>Website:</i> Spier, “Elusive Apollo 8 Earthrise Photo” |
| | 2. An Overview of the World, 200–1500
<i>Documentary:</i> 536 A.D: <i>The Worst Year in History</i> / <i>Catastrophe</i> / <i>Timeline</i> |

B. The Decline of the Roman Empire and the Rise of Islam

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| Feb 1 | 1. The End of the Ancient World, or the Beginning of the Middle Ages?
<i>Documentary:</i> Kenneth Clarke, <i>Civilisation</i> , episode 1: “The Skin of Our Teeth” | Stearns 212–231
<i>Confessions</i> (1st half)
<i>Record</i> 201–216
<i>Sources</i> 152–162, 171–193 |
| Feb 8 | 2. Charlemagne and the Origins of Christendom
<i>Documentary:</i> James Burke, <i>The Day the Universe Changed</i> , no. 2: “In the Light of the Above”
DRAFT OF FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE | Stearns 327–333
<i>Confessions</i> (2nd half)
<i>Website:</i> Charlemagne
<i>Record</i> 310–317
<i>Sources</i> 208–221 |
| Feb 15 | 3. Muhammad and the Origins of Islam
<i>Documentary:</i> <i>Islam: Empire of Faith</i> , narr. Ben Kingsley, part 1: “The Prophet Muhammed and the Rise of Islam” | Stearns 235–267
<i>Adventures</i> 1–12, 65–80, 310–320
<i>Website:</i> Muhammed
<i>Record</i> 217–233
<i>Sources</i> 199–202 |
| Feb 22 | 4. The <i>Dar al-Islam</i> : From Andalusia to Indonesia
<i>Documentary:</i> Bettany Hughes, <i>Al-Andalus History of Islam in Spain</i> (BBC) | Stearns 275–289
<i>Adventures</i> 81–173
Marco Polo 33–73
<i>Record</i> 234–241, 268–288
<i>Sources</i> 202–208, 259–261 |

REVISED VERSION OF FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE

PSS 1: 36–39
Website: ‘Umar ibn al-Kattab

C. Frontiers, Centers, and Peripheries

March 1	1. African Civilizations 200–1500 Documentary: Basil Davidson, <i>Africa</i> , no. 2: “Caravans of Gold”	Stearns 290–309 <i>Adventures</i> 13–64, 290–309 <i>Record</i> 333–357
March 8	2. The Medieval European Mind: Dialectic Triumphant Documentary: Terry Jones, <i>Medieval Lives</i> , episode 6: “The Philosopher”	Stearns 333–350 # <i>Story of My Misfortunes</i> Website: Eleanor <i>Sources</i> 234–240, 246–259, 262–293 DRAFT OF 2ND WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE (FOR UNDERGRADS) DRAFT OF PROPOSAL FOR GRADUATE RESEARCH PAPER DUE
		<i>Record</i> 268–275, 318–321, 330–332, 381–386

March 15 Spring Break—no class catch up on your reading

March 22	3. The Byzantine Empire and the Early Rus’ Principalities Documentary: BBC, <i>Art of Eternity: The Glory of Byzantium</i> TERMINUS POST QUEM NON FOR 1ST WRITING ASSIGNMENT	Stearns 310–326 # <i>Alexiad</i> # <i>Rus’ Primary Chronicle</i> <i>Record</i> 300–310, 321–330 <i>Sources</i> 197–199 Website: “Benefit”
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March 29	4. The Cultures of Pre-Columbian Classic America Documentary: National Geographic, “Lost Kingdom of the Maya” REVISED VERSION OF 2ND WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE (FOR UNDERGRADS) REVISED VERSION OF PROPOSAL FOR GRADUATE RESEARCH PAPER DUE	Stearns 168–182, 351–354 <i>Record</i> 357–374 Website: “Collapse”
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D. The Rise of the East

April 5	1. Tang and Song Dynasties: The Genius That Was China, Documentary: Michael Wood, BBC 2 <i>China History</i> 6 3 “The Golden Age”	Stearns 373–393 Marco Polo 74–210 <i>Adventures</i> 241–289 <i>Record</i> 256–268, 291–299, 378–381
April 12	2. The Heian Age of Japan:	Stearns 394–416

	The Ultra-Refinement of Court Life Documentary: <i>Past and Present</i> : “Buddha in the Land of Kami” DRAFT OF 3RD WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE (FOR UNDERGRADS) DRAFT OF GRADUATE RESEARCH PAPER DUE	<i>Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon</i> Website: Murasaki Shikibu <i>Record</i> 246–255 <i>PSS</i> 1: 40–44 Website: “Primary Shaper”
April 19	3. <i>Pax Mongolica</i> and the Yuan Dynasty Documentary: <i>The Mongol Hordes: Storm from the East</i> , episode 2: “World Conquerors” TERMINUS POST QUEM NON FOR 2ND WRITING ASSIGNMENT	Stearns 417–436 Marco Polo 210–345 <i>Adventures</i> 173–240 <i>Record</i> 386–419 Website: Chinggis Khan
	4. The Later Rus’ Principalities and the Rise of Muscovy	Website: Selected articles
E. <i>The Re-Emergence of the West</i>		
April 26	1. Saints and Heretics: The Profit Motive Comes into Conflict with the Gift Economy Documentaries: Terry Jones, <i>Medieval Lives</i> , episode 2: “The Monk” James Burke, <i>The Day the Universe Changed</i> , no. 4: “A Matter of Fact” (first 22 minutes) REVISED VERSION OF 3RD WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE (FOR UNDERGRADS) REVISED VERSION OF GRADUATE RESEARCH PAPER DUE	Stearns 437–445 <i>City of Ladies</i> (1 st half) Website: Francis of Assisi <i>Sources</i> 222–233, 241–245 <i>Record</i> 381–386
May 3	2. Origins of the Renaissance in Western Europe: Artistic Appreciation and Demographic Depreciation Documentary: James Burke, <i>The Day the Universe Changed</i> , no. 3: “Point of View”	Stearns 445–452 <i>City of Ladies</i> (2 nd half) Website: Joan of Arc Website: Petrarch <i>Sources</i> 295–307
May 10	Final Exam	
	TERMINUS POST QUEM NON FOR 3RD WRITING ASSIGNMENT TERMINUS POST QUEM NON FOR GRADUATE RESEARCH PAPER	

Ground Rules

This syllabus is a statement of intent and not a legal contract. As such, I reserve the right to change or modify it, but changes or modifications will be done only with fair warning. At the Extension School, Harvard University standards apply across the board for courses, including amount of reading assigned and in the grading of papers and exams. This course is no exception and is meant to be challenging. We will do what we can to accommodate individual needs, but on no account will we allow standards to be compromised.

The course is “writing intensive” (i.e., writing emphasized), which means you will have a chance to practice your writing skills and receive comments on your essays more than in the usual history course. It does not mean that we guarantee to make you a better writer, nor will you be evaluated on your writing skills, except insofar as lack of such skills negatively affects the articulation of your ideas. Becoming a better writer, just like learning in general, is up to you. The world of learning is open to you and the process is never ending. One of the aims of this course is to provide you a means to continue studying history on your own after the course is over. We will do our best to assist you in the learning process, but in the end what you get out of the course is mainly up to you.

There are fourteen 2-hour classes in this course. Even if I wanted to I could not possibly cover all of world history during class time. What I can do is select certain topics and go into a little more depth than the readings provide. One of the aims of this course is to inspire you to investigate aspects of world history on your own. I will try to provide you some indication of what to look for and how to orient yourself when undertaking that further investigation. I firmly believe that every person benefits from learning to be their own historian. As a result, the human community benefits as well. For that to happen, however, you must not uncritically and unquestioningly adopt someone else’s interpretations, but instead you must think things through for yourself and come to your own conclusions. That is why I place so much emphasis on method, as opposed to so-called “facts.” Facts as such are not given but are frequently the result of some historian’s (biased) interpretation and (faulty) argument. It is up to you to spot the biases and fallacies and to ascertain the evidence for yourself. Since the time is limited, I cannot engage in extended class discussions while giving the lecture. I do encourage you to ask questions in terms of points of clarification and contributing to general understanding. If you have a point or points of dispute with something in the lecture (that is, you understand what I am saying but you do not agree with it), I am more than willing to discuss the issues with you outside class. But class time is short, and we should all try to use it efficiently. Besides, you can always raise these questions in discussion section.

The first two deadlines for each writing assignments are “guideline” deadlines. You will incur *no* penalty if the assignments are sent in after those dates. It does mean, however, that you will have less time to revise the assignments before the *terminus post quem non* (end-after-which-nothing) date for that assignment. The first version of each assignment that you send in will be treated as your draft, i.e., *not* for grade, no matter when you send it in. Even if you send in that first version on the date when the assignment for grade is due, it will still be treated as a draft. No second or subsequent version of a paper will be graded without comments on the previous draft being dealt with. After you receive a grade on the second version of your essay, you may revise that essay and send it in until, but no later than, the date listed as the *terminus post quem non* for that assignment. The last deadline is an absolute deadline (no exceptions), which means *no* more work will be accepted on that writing assignment after that date. If you become aware that you are unable to complete the third written assignment (if you are an undergraduate student) or the research paper (if you are a graduate student) by May 3, then you should obtain and fill out an EXT form from the Registrar’s Office or online.

Please give the course assistants *one week* to grade your assignment. We would prefer that you not ask special favors in terms of getting your paper back in less time than other people. You may, however, send in your assignments earlier than the deadlines. The course assistants will mark the drafts with a $-$, 0 , or $+$. The $-$ means a total rewrite is necessary and you should talk with the course assistant about it. A 0 means you are headed in the right direction, but substantial changes are required. A $+$ means your essay is almost there in terms of getting a good grade. It does not, however, guarantee an A on the next version. If you choose not to send in a revised version after you have done the draft, I will count the assignment as incomplete and will enter the following equivalent grades for computation of your final course grade: $- = E$; $0 = D$; $+$ = C. Please consider this as an incentive to complete the assignments.

First Writing Assignment
(for both Graduate and Undergraduate Students)
(2½ pages) (625 words) (10% of course grade)

Three sets of readings will be posted on the course website: one on Charlemagne, one on Muhammad and one on Eleanor of Aquitaine. Each of these sets includes a primary source and two historians' interpretations on the topic. Pick one of the sets, either on Charlemagne or Muhammad or Eleanor, then follow these instructions.

You are to write two-and-one-half (2½) pages, which will contain a total of five (5) double-spaced paragraphs—two on the first page, two on the second, and one on the third. The first paragraph will be an introduction (which you may want to write last). This introductory paragraph provides some orientation to the reader for what follows. The next three paragraphs are to be brief summaries of each major section within the set you have chosen. Thus, for the Charlemagne set of readings, you will write one paragraph summarizing the selection from the primary source, the *Life of Charlemagne* by Einhard, one paragraph summarizing the selection from the historian Heinrich Fichtenau, and one paragraph summarizing the selection from the historian F. L. Ganshof. If you choose the Muhammad set of readings, write one paragraph summarizing the primary (actually a secondary) source, *Sirat Rasul Allah* by ibn Ishaq, one paragraph summarizing the selection from the historian Sayed Ameer Ali, and one paragraph summarizing the selection from the historian William Montgomery Watt. If you choose the Eleanor of Aquitaine set of readings, you will write one paragraph summarizing the selection from the primary sources, the *Chronicles of William of Tyre* and *John of Salisbury*, one paragraph summarizing the selection from the historian Amy Kelly, and one paragraph summarizing the selection from the historian Marion Meade. The wording in your summaries should be as neutral as you can make it—no editorializing and no value judgments either explicit or implicit. These paragraphs are your presentation of the evidence. Present the evidence fairly.

In your fifth paragraph, briefly give your own opinion about the set of readings you have just summarized. In this paragraph, you are to evaluate the readings and present your own judgment of them. Ideally, whatever you mention in the fifth paragraph, you should have previously referred to in one of the previous three paragraphs. Make sure there is some correlation between your first (introductory) paragraph and your fifth (concluding) paragraph.

This exercise is meant to fulfill two functions: (1) to allow you to demonstrate that you know the difference between analysis and interpretation; and (2) to give you practice in succinct summarizing and characterization of what you have read.

Question Choices for Second Undergraduate Writing Assignment

(5 pages) (1250 words) (20% of course grade)

Write an essay (no more than 5 pages in length) on one (1) of the following questions. Your essay will be judged on its quality and graded on the basis of coherence, correspondence, and conceptual elegance (see course goals).

The first three questions involve comparing two works in some depth on a number of various aspects.

1. Compare the world views (*Weltanschauung*) of Augustine, as evident in his *Confessions*, and Abelard, as evident in *The Story of My Misfortunes*. There are strong similarities between these works because, among other things, both writers are male and Christian. But there are also significant differences. How much can these differences be attributed to the way Christianity developed in western Europe and how much is the result of their different personalities?
2. Compare Ross E. Dunn's *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta*, pp. 13–173, 290–309 with *Ibn Battuta in Black Africa*, by Noël King and Said Hamdun, on reserve in Grossman Library. How accurate is Dunn's presentation of Battuta's book? What are the advantages and disadvantages of reading a primary source like *Ibn Battuta in Black Africa* in contrast to reading a précis and commentary like Dunn's?
3. Compare Ross E. Dunn's *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta*, pp. 41–158 with Marco Polo, *The Travels*, pp. 33–73. What difference in attitudes toward western Asia do you see between the two works? While it could be argued that these are two different genres—Dunn's is a study, Polo's a primary source—in a way Dunn is to Ibn Battuta what Rustichello of Pisa is to Marco Polo, that is the re-teller of a story that was related to him by someone else. Does this make a difference? If so, how? If not, why not?

[Note: If you plan to answer Question #1 in the Third Assignment, do not answer this question]

The fourth question involves comparing a number of different texts on one specific theme.

4. You have just read Augustine's *Confessions*, Abelard's *Story of My Misfortunes*, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta* (pp. 1–173, 290–309), Marco Polo (pp. 33–73). Focus on a specific theme that pervades these texts, e.g., attitude toward the divine, respected values, attitudes toward women, ethics, duty, morals, travel, etc. Look especially for patterns, deep structural similarities, and sharp contrasting differences that characterize these works. What do you think these works indicate about the cultures that produced them?

Your analysis should involve the use of a logical argument (see below). You can then interpret your analysis of the evidence by stating what you think it means. Place your analysis in a historical context by relating your findings, whenever you can, to the lectures, documentaries, discussions, and other readings in the course. Thus, the framework of your essay will look something like this:

1. Introduction (describe the focus of your essay)
2. Point-by-point presentation of aspects of the two major works (summary of important points)
3. Your analysis of the evidence (logical argument)
4. Your interpretation (historical context)
5. Conclusion (recapitulation of theme)

You may modify this framework if you have a good reason to do so, but, for the most part, the general outline of your essay should follow it. This exercise is meant to focus on the development of a logical argument based on the evidence.

Formulating a Logical Argument

A logical argument is a chain of reasoning, such that if the premises are accepted, then the conclusion must be accepted. An example of a chain of reasoning formulated in the early fifth century A.D. follows. It is from Augustine's *Confessions* and is an argument against astrology:

I turned my attention to the case of twins, who are generally born within a short time of each other. Whatever significance in the natural order the astrologers may attribute to this interval of time, it is too short to be appreciated by human observation and no allowance can be made for it in the charts what an astrologer has to consult in order to cast a true horoscope. His predictions, then, will not be true, because he would have consulted the same charts for both Esau and Jacob and would have made the same predictions for each of them, whereas it is a fact that the same things did not happen to them both. Therefore, either he would have been wrong in his predictions or, if his forecast was correct, then he would not have predicted the same future for each. And yet he would have consulted the same chart in each case. This proves that, if he had foretold the truth, then it would have been by luck, not by skill.

The outward signs of a logical argument can include “if..., then...” phrases, and words like “therefore” and “thus.” Sometimes these words and phrases are only implicit. Other times, these words and phrases are used even when there is no logical argument. In the passage above, Augustine uses two “if..., then...” constructions and one “[t]herefore.” The point is, unless the argument is a fallacious one and, therefore, not logical, the only way to avoid acceptance of the conclusion is to attack the premises or dispute the evidence used.

Question Choices for Third Undergraduate Writing Assignment

(8 pages) (2000 words) (30% of course grade)

Write an essay (no more than 10 pages in length) on one (1) of the following questions. Your essay will be judged on its quality and graded on the basis of coherence, correspondence, and conceptual elegance (see course goals).

1. Compare Marco Polo's *Travels*, pp. 74–345 with *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta*, pp. 173–289. What difference in attitudes toward central and eastern Asia do you see between the two works? While it could be argued that these are two different genres—Dunn's is a study, Polo's a primary source—in a way Dunn is to Ibn Battuta what Rustichello of Pisa is to Marco Polo, that is the re-teller of a story that was related to him by someone else. Does this make a difference?

[Note: If you answered Question #3 in the Second Assignment, do not answer this question]

2. Compare Sei Shonagon's *Pillow Book* with Christine de Pizan's *Book of the City of Ladies*. While there are similarities between the two works because both were written by women with relatively high social status, there are also significant differences. How much of these differences can be attributed to cultural differences between eleventh-century Japan and fifteenth-century western Europe? How much can be attributed to the different personalities of the respective authors?

The third and fourth questions involve comparing a number of different texts on one specific theme.

3. Analyze a common theme that you found in *The Travels* of Marco Polo, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta*, Sarashina's *Bridge of Dreams*, and De Pizan's *City of Ladies*. Apply the same question to these texts as you did to the readings for the First Essay. That is: Focus on a specific theme that pervades these works, e.g., attitude toward the divine, respected values, attitudes toward women, ethics, duty, morals, travel, etc. Look especially for patterns, deep structural similarities, and sharp contrasting differences that characterize these works. Tell what they indicate about the cultures that produced them. You may use the same theme that you used for your first essay, or you may choose an entirely different theme.

4. The Byzantinist Cyril Mango has written that no tradition of chronicle writing associated with Byzantine monasteries (Cyril Mango, "The Tradition of Byzantine Chronography," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 12/13 (1988/89): 362). While a tradition of monastic chronicle writing did develop in Rus', and that tradition was influenced by secular Byzantine chronicles. Based on a comparison of *The Rus' Primary Chronicle* and Anna Komnene's *The Alexiad* as well as other course readings, lectures, and documentaries in this course, as well as outside research, to what extent are their similarities and differences between Byzantine secular and Rus' monastic chronicle writing? To be sure, you will have only one full text of each to draw from, but they are representative texts of their particular genre. Describe the similarities and differences as specifically as you can within the limits of a 10-page paper.

In your comparison of the above works, you will want to make a point-by-point analysis rather than presenting the evidence of one, then the evidence of the other. This means you will have to think about which points you consider most important for comparison purposes. The next step is to interpret what you have just analyzed by saying what you think it means. Then, as with the Second

Written Assignment, place your analysis and interpretation in a historical context by relating your findings, whenever you can, to the lectures, documentaries, discussions, and other readings in the course. Thus, the framework of your essay will look something like this:

1. Introduction (describe the focus of your essay)
2. Point-by-point presentation of aspects of the two major works (summary of important points)
3. Your analysis of the evidence (logical argument)
4. Your interpretation (historical context)
5. Conclusion (recapitulation of theme)

You may modify this framework if you have a good reason to do so, but, for the most part, the general outline of your essay should follow it. This exercise is meant to focus on the construction of an interpretation based on a logical analysis of the evidence.

Constructing an Interpretation

Your assignment is to construct an interpretation to explain a set of primary source evidence. You might, for example, begin your essay by analyzing the points of view of the authors of the chosen books. You could then present your own point of view on an aspect or aspects of world history. An interpretation is an explanation of something. While it can involve use of, and be based on, logical argument, it goes beyond the argument itself to try to elucidate why something is the way it is. An interpretation in historical study can take the form of a narrative or analysis, but it should, in any case, fulfill the requirements of a hypothesis that can be tested against the evidence, with more research.

An example of an analytical interpretation follows. It is taken from Garrett Mattingly, *The Armada* (p. 397), in which Mattingly explains what is and what is not significant about the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 at the hands of the English:

Historians agree that the defeat of the Spanish Armada was a decisive battle, in fact one of the Decisive Battles of the World, but there is much less agreement as to what it decided. It certainly did not decide the issue of the war between England and Spain. Though no fleet opposed Drake, ... the war dragged itself out for nearly fourteen years more ... and ended in no better than a draw. Some historians say that the defeat of the Armada "marked the decline of the Spanish colonial empire and the rise of the British." It is hard to see why they think so. By 1603, Spain had not lost to the English a single overseas outpost, while the English colonization of Virginia had been postponed for the duration. Nor did the Armada campaign "transfer the command of the sea from Spain to England." English sea power in the Atlantic had usually been superior to the combined strengths of Castile and Portugal, and so it continued to be, but after 1588 the margin of superiority diminished. The defeat of the Armada was not so much the end as the beginning of the Spanish navy.

Mattingly characterizes his interpretation in the last line and presents this explanation as a way of understanding the evidence and the logical surmises we make from that evidence. The statement that the Armada represented the beginning of the Spanish navy is also a hypothesis that can be tested against the evidence.

Graduate Research Proposal
(3 pages) (750 words) (5% of final grade)

In your proposal, which should be 3 pages long, you need to indicate a tentative title for your research paper. Then devote a paragraph to each of the following points:

1. General introduction to the topic
2. Description of research question(s)
3. Description of tentative answer (hypothesis)
4. Types of sources you plan to use to test your hypothesis
5. Broader implications of your research

Include a working bibliography with works cited, works consulted (with a one-line annotation), and works to be consulted.

For format style, use either the *Chicago Manual of Style* or the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. You may also find *A Guide to the ALM Thesis* (available on-line at <<http://thesis.extension.harvard.edu/>>) useful.

Graduate Research Paper
(25 pages) (6500 words)(45% of final grade)

In your research paper, follow the standard format for an expository essay. State your hypothesis upfront. Provide a roadmap for the reader to show how you will present the results of your research. Then close with a conclusion that recapitulates your hypothesis and any modifications that you have made in it along the way. You may choose to research further an aspect of one of the following controversies that will be discussed in the lectures:

- The fall of the Roman Empire: many theories, little evidence
- The disappearance of Mayan civilization
- Buddhist scholarship: is Enlightenment gradual or does it occur suddenly?
- Feudalism: did it exist?
- The impact of the Mongol world empire
- Dynastic power transfer in England: the last of the Plantagenets and the first of the Tudors

Or you may choose one of the topics from *Discovering the Global Past* to develop further:

- “International Religious Communities”
- “Vikings and Polynesians: Exploring New Worlds”
- “Two Faces of ‘Holy War’: Christian and Muslim ‘Jihads’”
- “Romances and Behavior in Aristocratic Japan and Italy”
- “Facing the Black Death”
- “Trans-Asian Contacts: The Basis of a World System”
- “Regional Metropolises: Constantinople and Tenochtitlan”
- “Medicine and Reproduction in the West and the East”
- “Sacred Journeys: Pilgrimages in Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam”

Or you may pick a topic or topics of your own with the approval of your TA or the instructor.

Documentary videos (to be viewed before class meeting for in-class discussion)

I ask you to view each of these documentaries before the class designated. I will lecture during the first 75 minutes of each class. We will then divide the class into breakout rooms to discuss the documentary. After an appropriate amount of time in the breakout rooms, we will reassemble as a class to discuss what we discussed in the breakout rooms and any new or different ideas you might have about the lecture or documentary. For those who cannot livestream the lecture discussion, be sure to contribute to the discussion board (see next page).

Jan 25: *536 A.D: The Worst Year in History | Catastrophe | Timeline*
< <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JBdedLx-GI>>

Feb 1: Kenneth Clarke, *Civilisation*, no. 1: “The Skin of Our Teeth”
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxEJn7dWY60>>

Feb 8: James Burke, *The Day the Universe Changed*, no. 2: “In the Light of the Above”
<<https://archive.org/details/the-day-the-universe-changed-s01e02-the-way-we-are>>

Feb 15: *Islam: Empire of Faith*, part 1: “The Prophet Muhammed and the Rise of Islam”
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PF6VPZsHDZQ&t=2550s>>

Feb 22: *Al-Andalus History of Islam in Spain*
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtCj0NvhYyI>>

March 1: Basil Davidson, *Africa*, no. 3: “Caravans of Gold”
< <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rSoZ07LXnKo>>

March 8: Terry Jones, *Medieval Lives*, episode 6: “The Philosopher”
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUFjgUGj-z4&t=287s>>

March 22: BBC Documentary, *Art of Eternity: The Glory of Byzantium*
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2xF3Bk70NQ&t=240s>>

March 29: National Geographic, *Lost Kingdom of the Maya*
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gi3miRqQ7Xk>>

April 5: Michael Wood, BBC 2 *China History* 6 3 “The Golden Age”
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dT6TwsMtTRY>>

April 12: *Past and Present*: “Buddha in the Land of Kami”
<https://videos.rccd.edu/mediasite/Play/13ab12c794cb4371a168511680535ca51d?catalog=d63033c58b32422a9aa5b72c1571bd8b21>

April 19: *The Mongol Hordes: Storm from the East*, episode 2: “World Conquerors” (4 parts)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YW6cJ12zMI4&list=PLez3PPtnpncQzGwDhAmI28i7uTjtKCgYX&index=5>

April 26: James Burke, *The Day the Universe Changed*, no. 4: “A Matter of Fact” (part 1: 0:00–22:00)
<<https://archive.org/details/the-day-the-universe-changed-s01e04-the-way-we-are>>
Terry Jones, *Medieval Lives*, episode 2: “The Monk”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_zns1JxVCM>

May 3: James Burke, *The Day the Universe Changed*, no. 3: “Point of View”
<<https://archive.org/details/the-day-the-universe-changed-s01e03-the-way-we-are>>

Course Engagement (10% of final grade)

View the documentary for each of the 14 weeks of lectures. Those of you who livestream the lectures can take part in the discussion on Zoom. Some of you, however, for whatever reason, might not be able to attend the livestream and need to view the recorded version of the lecture and discussion. We wanted to find a fair and equitable way for both the live-streamers and the asynchronous students to demonstrate their engagement with the course. Our solution is the use of the course discussion board. What we would like you to do is write at least one thoughtful comment each about 8 of the 14 lectures/documentaries. You can certainly write more. By “thoughtful comment” we mean a paragraph-or-more-length post that responds in a meaningful way to the lecture, documentary, or discussion for that week. By “meaningful way” we mean something from which others might benefit. If you do that at least 8 times on the discussion board, then you will get the full 10% credit for course engagement. We won’t be splitting hairs over relative meaningful- or thoughtfulness. The following questions are merely heuristic (i.e., to get you started thinking about the subject matter) rather than didactic.

Jan 25: *536 A.D: The Worst Year in History*: Given the course goals, where would you say the documentary succeeded and/or failed to support its interpretation with evidence and logic?

Feb 1: “The Skin of Our Teeth”: Kenneth Clarke has a decidedly Eurocentric point of view. Identify one or more of those instances and analyze whether they/it undercut(s) his interpretation.

Feb 8: “In the Light of the Above”: Isn’t James Burke’s emphasis on the Seven Liberal Arts out of date since we don’t use the term “liberal arts” today in the same way? If not, why not?

Feb 15: “The Prophet Muhammed and the Rise of Islam”: One of the criticisms of this documentary is no talking-head experts from the Middle East, only U.S. scholars. Is that criticism justified?

Feb 22: *Al-Andalus History of Islam in Spain*: Bettany Hughes contends that the “the rise and fall of Islam in the West” should not be forgotten. Has it been “forgotten” or just revised?

Mar 1: “Caravans of Gold”: Basil Davidson is a fan of African culture. Is that a bias? Identify one or more of those instances and decide whether it undercuts his interpretation.

Mar 8: “The Philosopher”: Is the title of this episode appropriate considering that most of the documentary is about Medieval science (medicine, alchemy, etc.)?

Mar 22: *The Glory of Byzantium*: One of the criticisms of the documentary is that it uses “Byzantium” rather than “Eastern Roman Empire”. Does that make a difference in regard to understanding its art?

Mar 29: *Lost Kingdom of the Maya*: The documentary emphasized archaeological finds. Do those finds that are presented support the assertions and interpretations placed on them in the documentary?

Apr 5: *China History* “The Golden Age”: Michael Wood intersperses video of contemporary scenes in China with historical photos. Is doing so anachronistic? If so, why? If not, why not?

Apr 12: “Buddha in the Land of Kami”: The documentary contends that the thinking of the Japanese “is rooted in ... the distant past”. Is that just a narrative device to get people to view a video about history?

Apr 19: “World Conquerors”: The narration asserts that the Mongols attacked sedentary societies because they were only interested in plunder. What evidence do they cite? Are there other explanations?

Apr 26: “A Matter of Fact” and “The Monk”: James Burke seems to be presenting a different view of monasticism from that of Terry Jones. Are those views at odds or are they complementary?

May 3: “Point of View”: Burke makes a number of statements about the influence of perspective in art. Which one(s) of those statements does he effectively support with evidence, or which one(s) not?

Movie Schedule Spring 2022
The Rise of the East

<i>Week of</i>	<i>Film</i>	<i>Lecture</i>
January 26	<i>Agora</i> (2009) [2 hrs 7 min.]	Overview
February 2	<i>The Vikings</i> (1958) [1 hr. 54 min.]	End of Ancient World
February 9	<i>Charlemagne</i> (1993) [1 hr. 52 min. excerpt]	Christendom
February 16	<i>The Message</i> (1976)(pt. 1) [1 hr. 50 min.]	Origins of Islam
February 23	<i>The Message</i> (1976)(pt. 2) [1 hr. 50 min.]	Dar al-Islam
March 2	<i>Ceddo</i> (1977) [2 hr.]	Africa
March 9	<i>Seventh Seal</i> (1957) [1 hr. 36 min.]	Medieval World
March 23	<i>Alexander Nevsky</i> (1938) [1 hr. 47 min.]	Byzantium/Rus'
March 30	<i>Apocalypto</i> (2006) [2 hr. 19 min.]	Pre-Columbian America
April 6	<i>Temptation of a Monk</i> (1993) [1 hr. 58 min.]	Tang and Song China
April 13	<i>Gate of Hell</i> (1953) [1 hr. 39 min.]	Heian Japan
April 20	<i>Urga (Close to Eden)</i> (1991) [2 hr.]	Mongols and Yuan China
April 27	<i>The Name of the Rose</i> (1986) [2 hr. 10 min.]	Saints and Heretics
May 4	<i>The Prince of Foxes</i> (1949) [1 hr. 45 min]	Renaissance

* I selected films on the basis of three criteria: relevance for that week's lecture; quality of treatment of the historical topic; and length of running time. Viewing films is entirely optional. But you might find them to be of interest. All the films are available on YouTube either for free or for rent or buy. Almost all of them are available on DVDs that can be rented or bought. I have not checked Netflix.