Brief Course Description: This course covers world history from around the mid-18th century to the present. Our canvas is huge, but our ambitions will perforce have to be modest. We have a great deal more knowledge of the modern world than we do of the pre-modern world; many of the institutions and ideas that we take for granted took their birth in the “modern” period, assuming that the “modern” can be dated, though this is itself a matter of some debate, to the 18th century. By the same token, there is a good deal of what we assume to be modern that in fact has its origins in the pre-modern world; we might, for instance, believe that people who are modern are also cosmopolitan, but it can also be reasonably argued that in some respects the pre-modern world was much more cosmopolitan, and in perhaps more significant ways, than the modern world. There are also questions to be asked about what we mean when we speak of the “world”, for all too often the world is effectively taken to mean little more than Europe, the United States, or more broadly what is termed ‘the West’. It is also imperative to probe the politics of world history itself: world histories are written in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, London, Cambridge, and Berlin, not in Accra, Lima, Cairo, Khartoum, or even New Delhi or Beijing. Do we begin to do “world history” merely by becoming more inclusive, making certain that we do not confine ourselves to Europe and the United States and their impact on the world?

This course makes no pretense at covering all the major developments of the modern period. Nevertheless, it will attempt to signpost and interpret some key aspects of modern history, thought, and experience. The rise of the nation-state; the growth of the middle class; the industrial revolution; the ascendancy of ideas of liberty, progress, and democracy; the emergence of new instrumentalities of governance, among them the census and modern administrative systems; the growth of the metropolis and the megacity as a new life-form; successive technological revolutions that take us from the invention of the steam engine, telegraph, railways, telephone, automobile, aircraft, and antibiotics to our present digital age; the colonization of much of the world by European powers; histories of anti-colonial
resistance and decolonization; the ‘emergence’ of large segments of the population—women, racial, sexual and linguistic minorities, laborers—into history: this is a very partial list of some of the main topics we might probe.

There are many ways in which we could do world history: some are complementary and many overlap, but in accentuating some modes of inquiry we can sometimes come up with very different readings. For instance, we may attempt doing world history by looking at commodities such as tea, coffee, cocoa, tobacco, sugar, opium, salt, coal, oil, gas, silver, and so on. But how about sensibilities, mentalities, and emotions? Could we substitute for our commodities pleasure, pain, sex, humiliation, love, anger, pride, revenge, justice, retribution, among others? Can we have a notion of world history capacious enough to accommodate even marginally some histories that cannot be accommodated under the rubric of the material, the ideational, and the ideological? We shall at least make a stab in this direction. Much that is important may, however, fall by the wayside: for instance, the birth of the modern (research) university, the segmentation of knowledge and the emergence of the modern academic disciplines; public education; modern taxation, banking, and revenue systems; the history of manufacturing; the increasing commercialization of agriculture; and so on. Nevertheless, I hope that students will emerge from this course with a considerably enhanced understanding of contemporary history, the nature of the “modern” world, the achievements and equally the limits of the “modern”, and an analytical appreciation of the merits of questioning received histories.

Requirements, Operational Details, and Course Materials: The course meets thrice a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 11:00 am to 11:50 am. In addition, each student will be enrolled in a discussion section led by a teaching assistant. Students are expected to attend all lectures and discussion sections.

Grade Distribution: The teaching assistants will explain their expectations and requirements at the first section meeting. Students are responsible for completing assignments that might be set by TAs at their discretion. However, some requirements are common to all students, as follows:
1. Short paper of 2 pages, due in class on Jan 25: 10% of the grade;
2. Short paper of 3 pages, due in class on Feb 11: 15% of the grade;
3. Short paper of 3 pages, due in class on March 4: 15% of the grade;
4. In-class final exam: 40% of the grade—Monday, March 18, 11:30-2:30.
The remaining 20% of the grade is for section attendance, participation, and assignments.
All grading will be done by your TA, and questions about your grades should always be directed to your TA.

Readings: All the readings are available online to registered students, except for four small and inexpensive books that have been ordered for your use at ASUCLA bookstore; these books are part of the required reading:
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The Communist Manifesto
Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents
Sven Lindqvist, ‘Exterminate all the Brutes’
James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*

Please note that though there are many readings, most of them are very short, many as short as 1-3 pages. The total reading amounts to about 100-175 pages a week. The readings introduce students to a very diverse body of work, with an eye to this work as material for historians: speeches, policy documents, manifestos, political treatises, poetry, and a variety of other primary sources; secondary works, mainly scholarly articles and excerpts from scholarly books; and newspaper articles.

The keywords mentioned besides the week’s readings are meant to alert students to some of the principal themes that may be covered in that week’s lectures and/or readings, or themes which arise in relation to the central subject of a particular lecture.

The required books have also placed on research at YRL.

**Instructor’s Blog:** I maintain a blog at [https://vinaylal.wordpress.com/](https://vinaylal.wordpress.com/) and there are a great many essays on my blog site which pertain to this course. There will be some readings drawn from this blog and students should feel free to enter comments—whether scholarly, critical, appreciative, or otherwise—on the site.

**Technologies in the Classroom:** The use of iPhones or other smart phones is **not permitted** in the classroom, under any circumstances. If you absolutely have to use the phone, please leave the classroom, and if you re-enter take a seat by the door. Please ensure that your phones are shut off or in the silent mode for the entire duration of the lecture. I hope not to have to remind any student of this protocol: students found violating this policy will be asked to leave the classroom and 1/3rd of a letter grade will be deducted as a penalty. On a second offence, the grade deduction will be a full letter grade. Phones may not be used to take pictures of power point slides; all text slides will be made available to students and will be posted three days before paper due dates.

**Calendar of Classes and Themes:**

**Week One**

*Note: Class will not be held on Mon, Jan 7 or Wed, Jan 9. We will have a single make-up class on a Saturday, Feb 2, which will include an excursion to the Fowler Museum on campus, as noted in the syllabus.*

F, Jan 11 Introduction to the class: preview of requirements & readings, some remarks on doing ‘world history’.

Two earthquakes: Lisbon, 1755 and Haiti, 2010


Revolutions 1: The French Revolution; Notions of Liberty & Fraternity

(Other keywords: progress, nation-state, the idea of the modern, the secular and secularism, the masses, the Enlightenment)

**Readings:** brief excerpts from *The Declaration of Independence* (1776), *The Declaration of the Rights of Man* (1789), *The
Declaration of the Rights of Woman (1791), and speeches by Robespierre.


**Week 2**

**M, Jan 14**

Revolutions 2: Haiti and the Global South
(Other keywords: slavery, plantation labor, racism, colonization)

**Readings:** Haitian Declaration of Independence (1804), online at http://today.duke.edu/showcase/haitideclaration/declarationstext.html

*Note:* If you wish to read more about slavery in the Atlantic world, there are numerous websites, such as: http://ldhi.library.cofc.edu/exhibits/show/africanpassageslowcountryadapt/introductionatlanticworld

**W, Jan 16**

Revolutions 3: Industrial (1760-1840)
(Other keywords: England, machinery, mechanized labor, capitalism, working class, the industrial city, rural landscapes, Karl Marx, Factory acts)

Testimony from the Factory Act (1833), excerpts.

**F, Jan 18**

Ideologies 1: Colonialism & the Nation-State
(Other keywords: Asia and Europe, colonialism, economic exploitation, European colonization, intellectual conquest, new epistemologies of domination)

Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?” (1882)
Cecil Rhodes, “Confessions of Faith” (1877), online at: http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/Rhodes-Confession.htm
Roger Casement, Consul General’s Report to Sir Edward Grey (1911)
**Week 3**

M, Jan 21  
University Holiday: Martin Luther King, Jr. Birth Anniversary

W, Jan 23  
Revolutions 4: Latin America and Europe  
(Other keywords: Venezuela, Simon Bolivar, revolutions of 1848, the middle class)  
**Readings:** Simon Bolivar, Jamaica Letter (1815), online at:  
http://faculty.smu.edu/bakewell/BAKEWELL/texts/jamaica-letter.html  

F, Jan 25  
The Indian Rebellion of 1857-58 & the American Civil War (1857-61)  
(Other keywords: Sepoy Mutiny, colonial revolts, Slaveholding South, secessionism, Abraham Lincoln, cotton)  
First inaugural addresses of Jefferson Davis  
https://jeffersondavis.rice.edu/archives/documents/jefferson-davis-first-inaugural-address  
Henry David Thoreau, “A Plea for Captain John Brown” (1859),  
online at:  
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/thoreau_001.asp

**PAPER 1 DUE TODAY**

**Week 4**

M, Jan 28  
Japan and China, 19th Century  
(Other keywords: triangular trade: England, India, China; insularity, the idea of the Orient, Opium Wars 1839-42 and 1856-60, “Opening Up” of Japan, Nagasaki)  
**Readings:** Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, 443-64.  
Excerpts from Japanese writers, 19th century.  
Chinese Documents: Lin Zexu, Letter to Queen Victoria (1839),  
online at:  
and Treaty of Nanjing (1842) online:  

W, Jan 30  
Migrations: Immigrants, Laborers, Indentured Slaves, Colonists  
**Readings:** Selections from letters from immigrants to the US and Argentina  
F, Feb 1  
Technology 1: Communications, Travel, Military  
(Other keywords: Steam Engine, Machine Gun, Railways, Telegraph, Communications, Photography)  
**Readings:** John Ellis, *Social History of the Machine Gun* (London: Croom Helm, 1975), excerpts from Chapter IV.  
On the Machine Gun, web article:  

Sat, Feb 2  
10:30 AM – 12:30 PM, Make-up class and visit to Fowler Museum, UCLA Campus, to see the exhibit, “World on the Horizon: Swahili Arts Across the Indian Ocean”.  
Points of discussion: The Museum Complex; Sites of Learning; Organization of Modern Knowledge; Material Objects; the Indian Ocean World; Exchanges between Asia and Africa; Ideas of Cosmopolitanism.

**Week 5**  
M, Feb 4  
Ideologies 2: Liberalism and Marxism  
(Other keywords: Bentham, Utilitarianism, Romanticism, Idealism, John Stuart Mill, Mazzini, Marx, Engels)  

W, Feb 6  
NB: May Day, or International Workers’ Day (except in US)  
Africa and the European Scramble for Power  
(Other keywords: Darwin, social evolutionism, “the primitive”, European colonization, exploration, working class, racism)  
**Reading:** Sven Lindqvist, “Exterminate all the Brutes”: *One Man’s Odyssey into the Heart of Darkness and the Origins of European Genocide* (New Press, 1996).

F, Feb 8  
Ideologies 3: Nationalism—European Origins, Japan, India, and China;  
(Other keywords: Tokugawa, Russo-Japanese war, militarism, Asian age, the nation-state)  

**Week 6**  
M, Feb 11  
Revolutions 5: Russia and Communism
(Other Keywords: Bolshevism, Lenin, Trotsky, Red Army, centralized planning, collectivization of agriculture, Stalin, Ukrainian famine)
Readings: V. I. Lenin, “The Tasks of the Proletariat . . .” (1917), online at: https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/apr/04.htm
Alexander Mosler, “The October Revolution” (1923), online at: http://www.firstworldwar.com/diaries/octoberrevolution.htm
Lenin, “The Transition from Capitalism to Communism” (1917).

**PAPER 2 DUE TODAY**

W, Feb 13 The Late Ottoman Empire and the Arab World
**Readings:** Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, 755-772.
Ottoman Decrees and Proclamations (1856/1870).

F, Feb 15 Wars: Colonial Wars and World War I
(Other keywords: Boer War South Africa, colonialism, ‘The Great War’, European balance of power)
**Readings:** Excerpts from European and African sources
World War I Propaganda Posters—study closely a few posters at this website: http://www.ww1propaganda.com/?page=1
Syrian Congress Memorandum (1919)
Film (recommended) on the Boer War: *Breaker Morant* (1980), dir. Bruce Beresford (available on Kanopy, LAPL streaming service)

**Week 7**

M, Feb 18 University Holiday: President’s Day

W, Feb 20 Revolutions 6: China and Communism
(Other keywords: Boxer Rebellion, Chiang kai-Shek, Nationalists, Mao, Nanking)
Mao Zedong, “A Report on the Peasant Movement in Hunan” (1927), online at: https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_2.htm

F, Feb 22 Revolutions 7: Psychoanalysis, Literature, Art
(Other Keywords: Freud, the unconscious, modernism, Eliot, Yeats, Picasso, Tagore)

**Week 8**

**M, Feb 25**

Ideologies 4: Militarism, Fascism, and National Socialism
(Other keywords: Nazi regime, Holocaust, the Jews, Palestine, racism, eugenics, Aryanism, Holocaust)
Readings: Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (1925), selections;

**W, Feb 27**

Dissent: Nonviolence in India, the United States, & South Africa
(Other keywords: Thoreau, Gandhi, ahimsa, satyagraha, civil disobedience, Albert Luthuli, Nelson Mandela, Sermon on the Mount, Civil Rights movement, M. L. King)
Read Chs. 3-14, 17 at pp. 252-283, 291-98
M. L. King, “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (1963), online at: [https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html](https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html)
Two blog essays by Vinay Lal at:

**W, Mar 1**

Wars: World War II, the Holocaust, Nuremberg, & Tokyo Trial
(Other keywords: fascism, national socialism, Spanish Civil War, Franco, anti-Semitism, the “Jewish Problem”, Palestine, war criminals, “crimes against humanity”)
Testimony of the Commandant of Auschwitz at Nuremberg (1946)

**Week 9**

**M, Mar 4**

Internationalism, the Modern World System, and the Global South
(Other keywords: United Nations, Bretton Woods, global governance, Cold War, Bandung, non-alignment)
Readings: The Yalta Conference (1945).
Sukarno, Speech at the Bandung Conference (1955):  
UN General Assembly Resolution on Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (1960):  

PAPER 3 DUE TODAY

W, Mar 6  
Ideologies 5: Capitalism, Development, The Cold War  
(Other keywords: the free market, free market fundamentalism, social change, Third World)

Readings:  
Winston Churchill, “The Sinews of Peace” (1946)  
George Kennan, “The Long Telegram” (1946)  
Paul Nitze, “A Report to the National Security Council—NSC 68” (1950)  

F, Mar 8  
Decolonization: Asia, Africa, and Latin America  
(Other keywords: Sukarno, CIA, anti-communism, Malay Insurgency, anti-colonialism, counter-terrorism, Algerian war, FLN, Congo, Nkrumah, Lumumba)

Readings:  
Ho Chi Minh, “Vietnamese Declaration of Independence”:  
Patrice Lumumba, “Speech at the Proclamation of Congo’s Independence” (1960), at:  
https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/lumumba/1960/06/independence.htm  
Secret FBI Report on Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana (1966), online at:  
Readings by Pablo Neruda, Fidel Castro, and Charles de Gaulle Film (Recommended), available on Amazon Prime: Lumumba, dir. Raoul Peck (2001)

Week 10

M, Mar 11  
Technologies 2: Aircraft, Nuclear Energy, Cyberspace, The Digital World  
(Other keywords: Airpower, nuclear annihilation, carpet bombing, changing face of warfare, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, computing, the internet, Google, “social media”, Facebook)
Readings: Statement by President Truman Announcing the Use of the A-Bomb at Hiroshima (1945), online at:
http://www.trumanlibrary.org/publicpapers/index.php?pid=100&st=atomic&st1=bomb
Vinay Lal, “How To Speak of Hiroshima?” (blog essay)
https://vinaylal.wordpress.com/2015/08/09/how-to-speak-of-hiroshima/
Vinay Lal, “Hiroshima and American Exceptionalism” (blog essay),
https://vinaylal.wordpress.com/2015/08/08/hiroshima-and-american-exceptionalism/
Memories of the survivors of the atomic bombings, excerpts.
Nehru, Glimpses of World History, 773-79.
Reading on the digital age: TBA.

W, Mar 13  Ideologies 6: Modernity, Women’s Rights, Human Rights
(Other Keywords:  the sexual revolution, contraception, women’s equality, universal franchise, ‘international community’, right to protect, African National Congress, Velvet Revolution, Apartheid)
Readings: Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), online:
http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html
Excerpts on immigrant women and global labor (2001)
World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report 2013, skim a few pages online at
Modernity: short reading TBA

F, Mar 15  Fundamentalisms: Of the Market, Religion, and the American Empire; and a few thoughts on Climate Change.
(Other Keywords: terrorism, humanitarian internationalism, genocide, American exceptionalism, religious extremism, Islamic terrorism, globalization, refugees, xenophobia)
Readings: Osama bin Laden, “Declaration of Jihad Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holiest Shrines” (1996):
http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Osama_bin_Laden%27s_Declaration_of_War
Bertolt Brecht, “A Worker Reads History” (1935, poem)

FINAL EXAMINATION:  Time & location TBA.

SELECT ADDITIONAL WEB RESOURCES:

- Exploring the French Revolution:
http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/exhibits/show/liberty--equality--fraternity
(Explores importance aspects of the French Revolution, such as the role of the Enlightenment and the legacies of revolution. Also contains primary sources and images)

- Slavery and the Haitian Revolution:
  (Summarizes the Haitian Revolution and contains images and primary sources)

- Foundations of Western Culture: The Industrial Revolution
  http://foundations.uwgb.org/

- Cartoon Commentary and the “White Man’s Burden:”
  (Explains the “White Man’s Burden” and analyzes cartoons about the White Man’s Burden. Also, contains an image gallery with political cartoons: https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/civilization_and_barbarism/cb_gallery.html)

- Spanish American Wars of Independence:
  (Explains the Latin American revolutions in a nutshell. Highlights key aspects of the Latin American Revolutions.)

- The First Opium War:
  - https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/opium_wars_01/ow1_essay01.html
  (Detailed information about Opium trade. Contains images and maps.)

- India under British Rule & Indian Nationalism:
  - http://southasia.ucla.edu/history-politics/british-india/
  (Multiple pages by Vinay Lal on the British in India, The Rebellion of 1857-58, Gandhi, etc)

- The Opium War in Japanese Eyes:
  (Explains the Japanese response to the Opium Wars and contains images.)

- The Boxer Rebellion:
  - Part I: https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/boxer_uprising/bx_essay01.html
  - Part II: https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/boxer_uprising_02/bx2_essay01.html
  (Very detailed account of the Boxer Rebellion, and contains images.)

- Throwing Off Asia: Woodblock Prints of Meiji Japan (1868-1912):
  (Explores the westernization of Japan and showcases woodblock prints)

- Visualizing Cultures: A MIT source on 19th & 20th century Chinese, Japanese & Asian history
  https://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/home/vis_menu_03.html

- Becoming Coolies: The Indian Ocean Labour Diaspora, 1772-1920
  - http://www.coolitude.shca.ed.ac.uk/

- African & African American Transformations in the 20th century:
  (Rich visual archive: Colonization of Africa, Black Internationalism, Pan-Africanism, etc)

- Scramble for Africa:
  - http://originalpeople.org/scramble-for-africa-par/
  - http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Scramble_for_Africa
(Both these websites give a very detailed account of the Scramble of Africa.)

- **Russian Revolution:**
  - https://www.marxist.com/
  (Marxism, Marxist theory, Russian Revolution, revolutions in general)

- **Soviet Posters:**

- **Propaganda in the Russian Revolution:**

- **World War I:**
  - https://www.historycrunch.com/world-war-i.html#/ (This is a British Library site: contains articles about World War I. Especially interesting is this page on “Race, empire, and colonial troops”: https://www.bl.uk/world-war-one)

- **Imperial and Global History Blog, Anti-Colonialism, the Global South:**
  - https://imperialglobalexeter.com/

- **Modernism in Art:**
  - https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/m/modernism

- **Nazi Germany:**
  - https://www.historycrunch.com/nazi-germany.html#/ (fascism, militarism, national socialism)

- **Introduction to the Holocaust:**
  - https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/introduction-to-the-holocaust

- **History of the Holocaust:**
  - https://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/Holocaust/websites.html

- **Holocaust Explained:**
  - https://www.theholocaustexplained.org/what-was-the-holocaust/

- **Nuremberg Trial:**

- **Decolonization and the Bandung Conference:**

- **Asian Revolutionaries in the Twentieth Century:**

- **Hiroshima and Nagasaki Remembered:**