

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

The Rise and Fall of the Great Civilizations - 58474

Last update 11-03-2025

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: International Relations

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Gadi Heimann

Coordinator Email: gadi.heimann@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Wednesday, 14:30-15:30

Teaching Staff:

Prof. Gadi Heimann

Course/Module description:

The course deals with one of the most fascinating historical topics, which attracted philosophers, historians and scientists from the beginning of the modern era till today: What is the secret of the rise and fall of civilizations in the history of mankind? The purpose of the course is to present to the students the main theories that emerge from existing research. He will discuss questions such as: Why did most of the major civilizations develop on the continent of Asia and not in America, Africa or Australia? How did it happen that European civilization was the one that exported itself to the world? Is the history of the rise and fall of civilizations a circular history or has it a clear direction? What roles did religions and religious institutions play in civilizations? How did technological developments affect the fate of civilizations?

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

At the end of the course, the students will be introduced to the main narratives that exist today on the topic.

Attendance requirements(%):

80%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: On-line

Course/Module Content:

Lesson 1: Introduction - What is civilization?

Lessons 2-3: The building blocks of civilizations

Lessons 5-4: The history of civilizations as a path of progress

Lessons 7-6: Civilizations in the Cycle of life and Death

Lessons 9-8: The seniority and blessing of Euro-Asia

Lessons 11-10: The Rise of Europe

12: Summary

Required Reading:

שיעור 1: מבוא- מהי ציוויליזציה?

סמואל הנטינגטון, התנגשות הציוויליזציות, (הוצאת שלם, 2003), פרק 2.

שיעורים 2-3: לבני הבניין של הציוויליזציות

Noel Crowen, *Global History: A Short Overview*, (Polity, ???), chapters 7-9 (pp. 74-96).

יובל נח הררי, קיצור תולדות האנושות, (דביר, 2013), פרקים 11-12.

שיעורים 4-5: ההיסטוריה של הציוויליזציות כנתיב של קידמה

Robert Wright, *Nonzero: A Logic of Human Destiny*, (Vintage Books, 2000), chapters 13-14.

Francis Fukuyama *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution*, (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2011), chapter 1.

שיעורים 6-7: ציוויליזציות במעגל החיים והמוות

Arnold Toynbee, *A Study in History, Abridgment of volumes 1-6*, (Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 48-79.

פול קנדי, עליית ונפילתן של המעצמות הגדולות, (דביר, 1992), פרק 2.

Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, (Cambridge University Press, 1981), chapter 4.

שיעורים 8-9: בכירותה וברכתה של אירו-אסיה

ג'ארד דיימונד, רובים, חידקים ופלדה: גורלותיהן של חברות אדם, (עם עובד, 2004), פרקים 3, 4, אחרית-דבר.

שיעורים 10-11: עלייתה של אירופה

ניל פרגוסון, ציוויליזציה: המערב וכל השאר, (עם עובד, 2011), מבוא.

יובל נח הררי, קיצור תולדות האנושות, (דביר, 2013), פרק 15.

J. R. McNeill and William H. McNeill, *The Human Web: A Bird's Eye View of World History*, (W. W. Norton & Company, 2003), chapter 4.

שיעור 12: סיכום

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 100 %

Additional information: