History 500

Problems in Historical Analysis

Fall 2020

University of Rochester

Meets: Mondays, 2:00-4:40 p.m.

Classroom: Le Chase 103

Professor: Matthew Lenoe

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(Virtual) Office Hours (Zoom Meeting will be open): Mondays 10:30-11:30 a.m. Wednesdays 1:30-3:00 p.m. Or by apppointment.

Note: I reserve the right to make minor changes to this syllabus. However, I will not increase your overall workload.

Some Course Goals:

* Gain an understanding of the “history of history” – different approaches to analysis of the past and how they have changed over time. Among the conceptual frameworks and thinkers we will consider are:
  + Historicism
  + Georg Hegel
  + Karl Marx
  + Max Weber
  + The *Annales* school
  + Structuralism
  + World Systems Theory
  + Post-structuralism
  + Benedict Anderson / Nations as imagined communities
  + Gender history
  + Environmental history
* Examine the concepts of time inherent in different types of historical thought.
* Learning to place works of history in the historical context for their production.
* Practice the close reading of texts.
* Consider the use of various types of sources by historians.
* Gain an awareness of which “big questions” have interested historians in different eras, but especially in the 20th-21st centuries.

Monday 8/31 ... **Time, Narrative and Agency in Axial Age Cultures**

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War,*Book One at <http://classics.mit.edu/Thucydides/pelopwar.1.first.html> .  ~47 pages.  Written about 400 BCE, this excerpt reflects on the origins of the Peloponnesian War fought between coalitions of Greek city states in the later fifth century BCE.

Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian of  China*, Rush Rhees Library e-book at <http://quod.lib.umich.edu.ezp.lib.rochester.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?idno=heb06046.0001.001;cc=acls> , vol. 1, part II, “The Vanquished”, **only.**Document named “Sima Qian: Methods and Reflections”, **emailed to you separately.**Sima Qian was a chronicler of the early history of Han Dynasty China (206 BCE -220 CE) who wrote around 100 BCE.

Mandate of Heaven at [https://web.archive.org/web/20011004234925/http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/shu-jing.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20011004234925/http:/acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/shu-jing.html)  .  Reworked during the Han Dynasty, the essence of this text, which deals with the reasons for the rise and fall of ruling dynasties in China, probably dates to before 500 BCE.

“The Law of Manu,” an excerpt from the Indian epic, *The Mahabharata*, summarizing one Hindu cosmology, at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/manu/manu01.htm>  ~4 pages.  Part of the great Indian epic *The Mahabarata,* which probably reached the form in which we have it today by around 400 CE.

Jewish and Christian scriptures.  Use <https://www.biblestudytools.com/> Make sure you select “New Revised Standard Version).  Treat these passages as independent (they almost certainly had different authors), though interrelated.  They do not present a unified cosmology or understanding of human history and time.

 The Tanakh (known to Christians as the Old Testament) - **Exodus** (skim sections specifying rituals, construction of the Tabernacle, etc., that is chapters 36-40) ... based on earlier oral tales and legends, Exodus was probably written in close to its present form around 500 BCE during the exile of Hebrew elites to Babylon.

The Tanakh **.. 2 Chronicles**, chapters 29-33... excerpt from a history of the kings of the Hebrew kingdom of Judah, probably composed between 400 and 250 BCE.

The Tanakh ...**Ecclesiastes**, Chapters 1-3.  Known to Christians as part of the Old Testament's "Wisdom Literature", this work was probably composed between 400 and 250 BCE.

The Tanakh ... **Daniel**Chapter 7.  Nominally a vision seen by a Jewish elite exiled to Babylon in the sixth century BCE, this was probably written in the 100s BCE.

The New Testament ... **Matthew** Chapters 23-25.  The Gospel of Matthew was probably written more or less a decade after the destruction of the Jewish Second Temple in 70 CE during the Roman-Jewish War.  The author was a Jewish follower of Jesus, probably engaged in debate with other Jews about the meaning of Jesus' life.  In these passages, Jesus has an apocalyptic vision.

Monday, 9/14 ... **Early Modern Origins of Modern Historical Practices**

Valla, *Discourse on the Forgery of the Alleged Donation of Constantine* at <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/vallatc.html> . Introduction. Pages 11-48 (ending with “breasts of the Romans”; 71 (from “But it is high time…”) – 81 (up to and including “Since I have to do with priests and not with laymen, I suppose I must seek ecclesiastical precedents”); 85-87 (ending with “did not obtain divine worship.” Bottom of 90 (“Come to life…”) – 113; 121.

Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Penguin edition of Vol. I, whether hard copy or Kindle. Read from “Prefaces” through “General Observations of the Fall of the Roman Empire in the West” but skip Ch. VII from “Birth and Fortunes of Maximin” onwards and all of Chapter XXXV.

Monday, 9/21... **The Germans: Historicism and Philosophy of History**

Selections from Herder, J. G. *Outlines of a History of a Philosophy of Man* (1784)– e-book in U. of R. library catalog - (Page numbers from eTable of Contents, not actual book Table of Contents) 177-238 (Books VII, VIII); 251-253; 362-366 (Book XII, Chapter VI). ~57 pages

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* (1824) at http://socserv2.socsci.mcmaster.ca/~econ/ugcm/3ll3/hegel/history.pdf 14-95. 80 pages.

Von Ranke, Leopold. *History of England* (~1860), volume I at <https://ia802205.us.archive.org/26/items/ahistoryengland06rankgoog/ahistoryengland06rankgoog.pdf> . Be sure to read pdf version. Page numbers are those internal to book (on book pages themselves). Read Ranke’s “Preface”, pps. 3-4, 39-73. total approximately 40 pages

James Kendall Hosmer, *A Short History of Anglo-Saxon Freedom* (1890) at <https://ia600200.us.archive.org/6/items/historyofanglosa00hosmiala/historyofanglosa00hosmiala.pdf> . Preface, Chapters I, II, X.

Monday, 9/28 ...**The Germans II: Marxism.**

Friedrich Engel, *Principles of Communism* (1847) at

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/11/prin-com.htm> . Read only through section 23. NO FURTHER.

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels, *Communist Manifesto* (1848) Parts One and Two **ONLY**, at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf>.

Marx, Karl. *The German Ideology* (“highlights”) (1846) Chapter One **ONLY** at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/abstract.htm>

Soboul, Albert. “Classes and Class Struggle during the French Revolution.” *Science and Society* 17, no. 3 (Summer, 1953): 238-257 (find on JSTOR).

Monday, 10/5 ... **Max Weber and the Protestant Ethic**

Max Weber. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905). E-book available on RCL website.

Monday, 10/12 ... **Annales School**

Pierre Goubert, *The French Peasantry in the Seventeenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986 (second edition) (first edition Must purchase. No copy at library

Claude Levi-Strauss, “Santa Claus Burned as a Heretic”. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rochester/reader.action?docID=4549188> .

Monday, 10/19 ... **Modernity’s Discontents: Post-structuralism and the Holocaust.**

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish.* no e-copy at library. Must purchase hard-copy.

Zygmunt Bauman, “Modernity and the Holocaust.” At <http://www.faculty.umb.edu/lawrence_blum/courses/290h_09/readings/bauman_intro.pdf> .

Monday, 10/26 ... **The Great Divergence**

Immanuel Wallerstein: “The West, Capitalism, and the Modern World System,” *Review (The Ferdinand Braudel Center)* 15, no. 1 (Fall 1992): 561-619.

Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton, 2001). Available as e-book on library website

Monday, 11/3 ... **The Peoples Without History**

Pekka Hamalainen, *The Comanche Empire* (Yale 2009). Available as e-book at RCL.

Monday, 11/10... **Constructed Nationalism.**

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 2006. Available as e-book at RCL

Monday 11/17 ... **In Defense of Modernity and Empire.**

Niall Ferguson, *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British Order and the Lessons for Global Power* (Basic Books, 2004). Available as e-book on RCL website.

Monday, 11/24 ... **Narrative and Experience**.

David Carr, “Experience, Temporality and History.” *Journal of the Philosophy of History* 3 (2009): 335-354.

Excerpts (to be announced) from Hayden White, *Metaphistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (e-book available on River Campus Libraries site).

Natalie Zemon Davis. *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France*. Stanford University Press. (Must purchase hard copy).

Monday 11/30

**Environmental History**: Worster, Donald. *Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the 1930s.* Oxford University Press, 1979. Available as e-book on RCL website.

Monday 12/7

**Gender History:** Scott, Joan. *Gender and the Politics of History*.  Columbia University Press, 1999. Available as e-book on RCL website.

**FACE TO FACE AND ONLINE INSTRUCTION**

As we have a big enough classroom, all students have the option of attending every class in perrson. If you choose that option, please stick with it, unless you become ill and have to quarantine, or leave town, etc. We all will follow the university rules to prevent the spread of COVID.

Students can also elect to attend online, synchronously. In this case you will join our in-person sessions by Zoom (there is a link on the course website, click through “Access Tools” or “Tools”, then through “Zoom Meeting Manager.” There you will see link for the class on a given date. When you enter the meeting, you’ll first be sent through a waiting room. I will then “admit” you to class.

If you require online asynchronous instruction, we will conduct discussion on the Blackboard site. I will provide more details if this is necessary.

**GRADING**

The class is a seminar – i.e most of our time will be devoted to discussion of the readings. You need to complete reading assignments before class on the date they are assigned in the syllabus. Thirty percent of your grade is based on your participation in class discussion, and intelligent participation is not possible without completing the reading. In a course enrolling 7-8 students, everyone must contribute or things will fall flat and little learning will take place.

Before every class (other than the first), you are to write a paper of about 5 pages double-spaced responding to the readings due that day. Each paper should summarize the central argument(s) in each of the readings for that week. It should also (even if only briefly) reference earlier readings. Look for earlier readings that the week’s reading might challenge, build on or parallel. You might also compare different arguments in a single week’s reading. Overall the point is to learn how to identify the core arguments of secondary historical literature, and how to summarize debates among historians (i.e. “historiography”). Avoid summarizing the readings (but definitely consider arguments therein) or the historical narratives they provide. I have read these and I am your audience.

There will be thirteen of these papers. Together they will constitute 70 % of your grade for the course. In calculating your average grade on these papers I will eliminate your two lowest grades (including papers you do not turn in).

At the beginning of each class we will briefly go over the most important themes of the previous week’s discussion.

**TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS**:

All papers **MUST** be emailed to me at [matthew.lenoe@rochester](mailto:matthew.lenoe@rochester) in ***MS Word*** , double spaced. I need MS Word so that I can provide you feedback using the “Track Changes” function. I will not accept papers in any other format. I also do not accept papers via Google Drive. Only as files attached directly to emails.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR READING.** For a number of discussion classes there are several different readings assigned. Keeping track of these different items for the class discussions is one of the bigger challenges of class discussion. I would recommend noting down for yourself the date and authorship/provenance of each reading so you can place each in context and differentiate one from another during class discussions.

**Academic honesty:** All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. *I will not accept Paper One from students who have not signed the “Acceptance of Academic Honesty Policy” on the course Blackboard site.*

**I DO NOT TOLERATE CHEATING OR PLAGIARISM (PRESENTING SOMEONE ELSE’S SCHOLARLY WORK AS YOUR OWN). I WILL PURSUE THE UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINARY PROCESS AGAINST STUDENTS WHO PLAGIARIZE OTHERS’ WORK. AT A MINIMUM, STUDENTS WHO PLAGIARIZE WILL RECEIVE A “0” ON THE ASSIGNMENT IN QUESTION.**

You are required to read the American Historical Association’s “Defining Plagiarism” at <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/plagiarism-curricular-materials-for-history-instructors/defining-plagiarism> before the second class meeting.

**Students with disabilities:**The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the [Office of Disability Resources](http://www.rochester.edu/college/disability/index.html) at: [disability@rochester.edu;](mailto:disability@rochester.edu;) (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall

**REQUIRED BOOKS**

Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.  Penguin abridged edition, available as hard-copy or Kindle from Amazon.

Max Weber. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.* Available as e-book on the RCL website.  
  
  
Pierre Goubert, *The French Peasantry in the Seventeenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986 (second edition).  Must purchase hard-copy of this edition.  
  
  
Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.  Vintage Books, 1995.  Must purchase hard copy of 1995 Vintage edition.  
  
  
Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton, 2001). Available as e-book on the RCL website.  
  
  
Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 2006. Available as e-book on the RCL website.  
  
  
Niall Ferguson, Empire: *The Rise and Demise of the British Order and the Lessons for Global Power* (Basic Books, 2004). Available as e-book on RCL website.  
  
  
Natalie Zemon Davis. *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France.*  Stanford University Press, 1990. Must purchase hard copy of 1990 edition.  
  
  
Donald Worster. *Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the 1930s*. Oxford University Press, 1979. Available on RCL website as e-book.  
  
  
Joan Scott. *Gender and the Politics of History*.  Columbia University Press, 1999. Available as e-book on RCL website.