

## HIS 510: Historiography



### Course Information:

History 510-01, Fall 2022 (CRN 81458). Mondays 2:00-4:50. Room: SOE 106

### Instructor Information:

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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 11-12, Thursdays 11-12 and by appointment

### Description:

#### What is Historiography?

Historiography is an integral component of advanced historical thinking and writing. Unlike many nonacademic definitions of 'history', which typically imagine that history is 'merely' about establishing what happened, to engage in historiographical thinking is to recognize that 'establishing what happened' entails interpretation. To a degree, this concept – that the writing of history changes as society and historians change their interests, assumptions, and biases – is, of course, unproblematic. It might seem obvious that a monk writing about the world around him in the middle of the twelfth century should present 'what happened' differently, and with different explanations of why or how those things happened, than would a putatively objective, secular academic historian of the 21st century. Fair enough. And yet even among our putatively 'objective'

modern historians, a substantial range of often divergent interpretative approaches exists. Historians often differ about such things as: 1) what questions are pertinent to ask about the past; 2) what primary sources are valid and useful to use in interpreting the past; 3) what meta-scale assumptions about human nature and societal development are useful (or not) in helping explain past events; and 4) whether – or which – epistemological approaches to knowledge in general can be used to help explain the past. The ways in which historians differ and agree over these (and other) fundamental issues concerning how we approach the writing of history constitute the field of historiography.

Putting aside the famous line, ‘Everyman his own historian’ (the title of a lecture presented by Charles Beard to the American Historical Association in 1931), which, if taken to its fullest might be taken to imply that the historiographer’s task is infinite and therefore impossible, it is conventional for those who study the history of writing about history to lump historians uneasily together according to the ‘schools’ or ‘methods’ that they practice. In most cases ‘school’ is probably too rigid a word (although there are exceptions, such as the Annales school), since even those who agree on some basic methodological approaches are likely to differ in other ways, but it allows us to come to grips with some of the main trends in historical writing since the professionalization of the field in the middle years of the 19th century.

### Our Approach to Historiography

As a result, our course will devote each week to a different approach, method, or school of historical writing (choose the term that you prefer!). After an initial week in which we think broadly about the philosophy of history, we examine the development of new approaches and theories as they emerged from c.1875 to the present. Among the approaches (or schools, or methods) we will examine include the Annales movement, Marxism, history from below and radical history, the influence of cultural anthropology, gender, material culture, nationalism, constructions of the other, trans-nationalism, and post-structuralism.

It hardly be noted that I have no agenda in this class, at least when it comes to preferring one methodology to another. For sure, I have a method that I employ in my own work, and my tendencies may well become evident in discussion, but the purpose of this class is make students aware of the breadth of possible theoretical and methodological approaches to the writing of history, and not to teach you that one is ‘right’ and the others wrong. Your goal should be to think hard about each approach, recognize its strengths and weaknesses, and (later, in your other classes) employ those approaches with which you are most comfortable when you set out to conduct your own research into the past. In a word, our course aims to open your eyes to the necessary reality that professional history requires some degree of interpretative method, and to expose you to a sampling of those methods so that you can better classify your own tendencies.

Given all these goals, it is important to remember what you will be asked to do and not do in this class. This is NOT a class about content. Our primary goal will not be to master ‘what happened’ in any era or region. Our goal will be to read representative examples of different historiographical approaches and ask two interlinked sets of questions: first, what is the argument of the author, and how successful was it? What sources did the author employ? What sources did he/she not employ? With what other historians or schools of historical writing does the author seem aligned? These questions are about the internal logic of the book’s argument. To do so, obviously, we must read ‘about what happened’, but you will not be asked to remember the details of what happened in, say,

12th-century France or Colonial America. Instead, you will be asked to identify and evaluate the argument of the author and to consider why it is successful or unsuccessful (that is, whether it is persuasive or not).

The second set of questions involves classifying the book or reading according to its historiographical, or methodological, approach: again, does the author favor a certain category or class of sources? Does the choice of type of sources simultaneously reveal information about what the author finds important in the past? Would other sources have produced different histories? That is, what does the author find to be important about the past – politics? Progress? Explaining the origins of what we believe in the present? Social Justice? Exposing bias? Finally, with which other historians, past or concurrent, does the author seem to agree and/or disagree? What does the answer to that question tell us about his/her alignment in the cosmos of historiographical approaches to the writing of history?

Since this is not a ‘content’ course in the normal undergraduate sense, our course may require that you read our books somewhat differently. You must be concerned first and foremost with identifying the author’s stated (or unstated) purpose and/or agenda in writing. Close behind this will fall the argument of the author’s work. One of our tasks will be to evaluate the success of this argument, so it is worth getting used to the process of reading analytically; don’t get bogged down in the minutiae of the details offered by each author, for we are really unconcerned with the specifics. Rather, pay close attention to the argument, the evidence offered to support that argument, and the assumptions around which the argument (and the choice of evidence) is based. In a word, you will be learning to “gut” or “fillet” a book; it sounds inelegant, and it is, but it is an invaluable skill. It involves reading rapidly (but carefully) a large number of pages, skimming the details but keeping your eyes open for the argument, holes in reasoning, blatant (or not-so-blatant) assumptions, historiographical alignments, and so on.

### **UNCG Covid Policies**

As we return for Fall 2022, all students, faculty, and staff and all visitors to campus are required to uphold UNCG’s culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. While face-coverings are optional in most areas on campus, individuals are encouraged to wear masks. All individuals and visitors to campus are asked to follow the following actions:

- Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene.
- Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19.
- Staying home when ill.
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill.
- Completing a self-report when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, testing positive for COVID-19, or being identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive.
- Staying informed about the University’s policies and announcements via the COVID-19 website.

Students who are ill, quarantining, or isolating should not attend in-person class meetings, but should instead contact their instructor(s) so alternative arrangements for learning and the submission of assignments can be made where possible.

As we continue to manage COVID-19 on our campus, we are following the lead of the local health department and we will adjust our plans to balance student success, instructional requirements, and the hallmarks of the collegiate experience with the safety and wellbeing of our campus community.

### Required Books

1. Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Harvard UP, 1983). ISBN: 978-0674766914. \$30, or pdf on canvas.
2. Jill Lepore, *The Secret History of Wonder Woman* (Vintage, 2015) ISBN: 9780804173407. \$16.
3. Robin Fleming, *Britain After Rome: the Fall and Rise, 400-700* (Penguin, 2011). ISBN: 9780140148237. \$14.
4. Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou: Promised Land of Error* (Vintage Books, 1979. Reprint Georges Braziller, 2008). ISBN: 9780807615980. \$19.
5. Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: a Global History* (Vintage, 2015) ISBN: 9780375713965. \$15.
6. J.R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914* (Cambridge UP, 2010) ISBN: 9780521459105. \$22.
7. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, 2nd edition (Vintage, 1995). ISBN: 9780679752554. \$16
8. Sarah Maza, *Thinking About History* (University of Chicago Press, 2017). ISBN: 978-0226109336. \$20
9. Priya Satia, *Time's Monster: How History Makes History* (Belknap Press, 2020). ISBN: 978-0674248373. \$27.

### Other Required Readings:

The remainder of the readings on the syllabus will be placed in pdf form on our Canvas site.

### Student Learning Outcomes

A student who successfully completes this course will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate important works of modern scholarship both orally and in writing
2. Conduct evidence-based discussions of scholarship in a professional, collegial manner
3. Locate, assess, and communicate reviews and other subjective analyses of the assigned readings
4. Develop a profile of the professional elements of a given sub-field of historical study
5. Utilize print and electronic resources to assemble a short bibliography
6. Identify and analyze a range of methodological approaches to historical writing

### Teaching Methods and Course Requirements

#### A. Teaching Methods:

The course is taught as a seminar in which all participants critically analyze joint readings. The instructor takes a semi-Socratic approach, suggesting (when needed) topics and questions for discussion, and filling in historiographical background when necessary. The point of discussion is to assess the arguments of the assigned readings and to evaluate them as representatives of one or more of the methodologies employed by historians since 1900. All written assignments should be submitted as .doc or .docx files to Canvas.

## B. Requirements

### 1. General Participation in Discussion (15%) (Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 5)

As a seminar, the course demands participation from all students. I recognize that much of the material may be unfamiliar to some of you; despite this reasonable point, I still expect students to take an active and frequent part in the discussion. If you find that you are not saying almost anything (one interjection per meeting, say), you are likely to receive a C for this part of the course grade. Grades in the A and B range are only awarded to students who speak regularly and participate in discussion by considering and responding to the comments of others (professor and students). I am less concerned with *\*what\** you say than in seeing you make a decent effort to orally analyze the reading and offer some sort of reasoned explanation for your analysis. (Okay, I *am* also interested in *what* you say, but still ....)

### 2. Oral Presentations: (10% total, 10% each) (Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3)

Each week one of you will open our discussion with a brief (10 minute) presentation that outlines the argument of the as well as the methodological and/or historiographical alignments of the author.

You have free rein to develop the presentation as you like. Still, I'd like to see most of the following addressed:

1. A very brief mini-biography of the author (as much as can be gleaned from the text, from reputable sources on the web, etc.)
2. Your sense of what the central argument of the book is
3. Whether or not you found the argument to be persuasive, and why or why not you found it persuasive
4. A brief highlighting of 1-3 specific passages that you find particularly instructive in elucidating the author's argument
5. Your sense of the scholarly reception of the book. You should consult reviews in scholarly journals to aid you here
6. An explanation of how the book fits into (or doesn't?) the category of historiography (as indicated by the title for the week on the syllabus). You should quickly outline the features of that type of historiography and indicate how (or if?) the work in question epitomizes that category. If uncertain about this, please consult with me in advance of class.
7. At least three lines of inquiry or questions for the group to pursue in discussion

Along with your presentation you should distribute a 1-page handout summarizing your presentation, with whatever relevant points about the book and/or author you wish to share with us (some biographical details, relevant quotations, your questions for the class, etc.). If you lack access to a printer, I can make copies ... provided you get me the file at least an hour before class.

**Nota Bene:** The actual oral part of the presentation **should NOT** feature you reading your handout. Summarize your points succinctly and clearly, and do so in a confident, professional way (eye-contact, spontaneous speech [i.e., not reading notes], etc.).

If there are multiple readings assigned on a given week, students should consult with the instructor about which is most suitable for presentations.

### **3. Four Analytical Essays** (40%, 10% each) (Student Learning Outcomes: 1, 6)

These are short (3-5 pages in length; minimum 1000 words) essays that invite you to analyze the argument and/or methodology of one of the core readings assigned for a particular class. You don't need to do outside reading for these essays, but you should use citations (footnotes) to the work(s) you are analyzing.

All students must write one of their four essays in response to one of the questions posed for the readings completed up to September 12; essays will be due at the next class meeting (September 19). After that, I allow students leeway to choose when and for which readings they write the other three essays. The prompts/questions for each subsequent week will be posted in a document on blackboard. Essays are due the week after discussion of the readings in question (for example, essays on Marxism are due on September 26, the week after we discuss Marxism). It is your responsibility to schedule your writing in a responsible way. In the past students have made their decisions partly on the questions I ask (although I try to make them all equally 'doable'), partly on their reactions to the readings, and partly based on due-dates for other classes. Note: even if you don't intend to write about a given week's reading, you are still expected to fully participate in the oral discussion of that reading.

### **4. Scholarly Sub-Field Presentation** (10%) (Student Learning Outcomes: 4, 5)

Part of the process of 'doing historiography' is becoming familiar with some of the professional aspects of a given field. This assignment asks you to begin to assemble a profile of the professional historical aspects of a particular sub-field. Rather than the breadth of focus that the main course readings offer, this should allow you to investigate one sub-field in some depth. What sub-field should you choose? It's really up to you. Ideally it should be one in which you have some research interests, even if they are latent. If you already know which professor and which sub-field you are going to select for your 2<sup>nd</sup> year MA project, for example, then that sub-field might be a good choice. Alternatively, you could choose a topic that one of our readings has covered (or will cover). I will ask you to submit your chosen subfield to me a couple of weeks prior to the assignment due-date. Once you've established what sub-field interests you, you will identify the following elements of that field:

1. scholarly journals pertinent to the field
2. Networks and resources relevant to the field (scholarly societies/associations, list-servs, etc.)
3. Grants and fellowships available to persons working in the field
4. A sampling of archives important for historians working in the field
5. A list of 10-20 professional historians (whether working in universities or in non-university positions) who seem important to your field
6. A major debate that is either currently raging in the field, or one that has shaped the field in the past 25 years

For the assignment, you should compile this information in a power point, upload it to canvas, and be prepared to present your sub-field to the class. Presentations will take place (2 or so per week) after Fall Break.

### **5. Final Historiography Essay** (25%) (Student Learning Outcomes: 1, 5, 6)

You will write a 8-10 page final paper that assesses an historiographical topic or problem that interests you. You may choose to expand upon one of the methodological or topical issues we have

discussed in class, or you may wish to investigate an aspect of the sub-field you investigated for the Scholarly Sub-Field assignment. Either way, you should select 4-5 books (one of which can be something we've already read) and write an essay that identifies and evaluates the thematic or methodological issue covered by those readings. The essay should not take the form of a serial summary (i.e., of the sort 'author X says ...., author Y says ...., author Z says ....'). Instead you should identify a set of topical or methodological problems or issues that your readings examine, and should discuss how the set of readings collectively addresses those problems/issues. You should turn in a list of the items you plan to use by the last class. While you may certainly want to consult with me (and I'll be delighted to do so), you may also wish to consult with one or more other professors, especially the one with whom you may want to work (in the case that you follow up on your sub-field assignment).

### Grade Breakdown

Oral Presentation	10%
General Participation	15%
Four Analytical Essays	40% (10% each)
Scholarly Sub-Field Presentation	10%
Final Historiography Essay	25%

### Grading Scale

Grades are assigned as letter grades. These letter grades are equated to points as follows:

A 93-100	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62
B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F 59 or lower

### Academic Integrity Policy

By submitting an assignment, each student is acknowledging their understanding and commitment to the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work for the course. Refer to the following URL:

<https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/>.

### Accommodations Policy

UNCG seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must connect with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) in 215 Elliott University Center, (336)334-5440, oars.uncg.edu.

### Religious Observance Policy

It is expected that instructors will make reasonable accommodations for students who have conflicts due to religious obligations. Please make arrangements with the instructor in advance of any conflict.

For more information on UNCG's Religious Obligations policy, visit:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3\\_J3Uix1B4UeTV4Nk1vVFJoVFE/view?resourcekey=0-zRdXEmUA6rRI2RzKqo6u3g](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3_J3Uix1B4UeTV4Nk1vVFJoVFE/view?resourcekey=0-zRdXEmUA6rRI2RzKqo6u3g)

### **Attendance Policy for University-Sponsored Events**

Regular class attendance is a responsibility and a privilege of university education. It is fundamental to the orderly acquisition of knowledge. Students should recognize the advantages of regular class attendance, accept it as a personal responsibility, and apprise themselves of the consequences of poor attendance. Instructors should stress the importance of these responsibilities to students, set appropriate class attendance policies for their classes, and inform students of their requirements in syllabi and orally at the beginning of each term.

### **Health and Wellness Statement**

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience.

You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive.

For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> or reaching out to [recovery@uncg.edu](mailto:recovery@uncg.edu).

### **Other Policies:**

1. Attendance is critical in this course. If you miss more than 1 class without explanation, I will take some sort of disciplinary measures. If you miss 4 classes, you will automatically fail.
2. All course materials must be completed to receive a grade. You can't skip a paper and still pass. In addition, I am giving you substantial leeway in scheduling your own due-dates. Don't make me mad by piling them all up at the end of the semester!

## **SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS:**

**Week 1. August 15: NO CLASS (UNCG Classes only begin on 16 August)**

**Week 2. August 22: Introduction to the Course, plus What is history?**

Canvas: E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (Knopf, 1961): chapters 1 (pp 1-35), 2 (pp. 36-69), 4 (pp. 112-143), and 5 (pp. 144-176)

Canvas: G.R. Elton, *The Practice of History* (Fontana, 1969; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Blackwell, 2002), 1-80.

Canvas: Peter Novick, "Introduction: Nailing Jelly to the Wall," in Novick, *That Noble Dream: the 'Objectivity Question' and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge UP, 1988), 1-17



### Week 3. August 29: Thinking about History

Sara Maza, *Thinking About History* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 2017)

Canvas: Peter Burke *History and Social Theory*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1<sup>st</sup> ed., Cornell UP, 1993; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Cornell UP, 2005). (1<sup>st</sup> edition available on canvas), selections TBA

### Week 4. September 5: LABOR DAY (No class)

### Week 5. September 12: Social History and the Annales Movement

Canvas: Peter Burke, *The French Historical Revolution: the Annales School, 1929-2014*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1990; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Stanford UP, 2015), 1-6.

Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou: Promised Land of Error* (Vintage, 1979), pages vii-xvii, 3-68, 120-135, 139-203, 277-326. Note that there is an index of families and individuals in the back, in case all the Clergues get confusing! [there is a pdf at z-library]

Canvas: Leonard E. Boyle, "Montaillou Revisited: *Mentalité* and Methodology," in *Pathways to Medieval Peasants*, ed. J. Raftis (Toronto: PIMS, 1981), 119-40.

Canvas: Sample testimonies from the register of Jacques Fournier (primary sources, albeit in Eng. Translation)

### Week 6. September 19: Marxism and Culture

**DUE: first essay (on a prompt for either Week 2, Week 3 or Week 5).**

Canvas: Matt Perry, *Marxism and History* (Palgrave, 2002), 1-46, plus 160-170 for reference

Canvas: E.P. Thompson, preface to *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), in *The Essential E.P. Thompson* (New York: the New Press, 2001) pp. 3-8

E.P. Thompson, "[Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism](#)," *Past & Present* 38 (1967): 56-97.

Canvas: Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll* (Vintage Books, 1976), 3-49, 285-324, 585-621, plus notes

### Week 7. September 26: Anthropology and History

Canvas: Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretative Theory of Culture," in Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 3-30

Canvas: Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York, 1984), pp. 3-104, 257-263

Canvas: Roger Chartier, "Texts, Symbols and Frenchness," *Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985): 682-695

Canvas: Darnton, "The Symbolic Element in History," *Journal of Modern History* 58 (1986): 218-234.

### **Week 8. October 3: Gender and Sexuality**

Canvas: Joan Scott, "Women's History" and "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," pp. 15-51 in Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, rev. ed. (Columbia UP, 1999).

Canvas: Joanne Meyerowitz, "A History of 'Gender'," *American Historical Review* 113 (2008): 1346-1356.

Regina Kunzel, "[The Power of Queer History](#)," *American Historical Review* 123, no. 5 (2018): 1560-1582

Jill Lepore, *The Secret History of Wonder Woman* (New York: Vintage, 2015), selections TBA (we'll read most of it)

### **Week 9. October 10: NO CLASS (FALL BREAK)**

### **Week 10. October 17: Microhistory**

#### **DUE: Student Presentations of Sub-Fields**

Canvas: Giovanni Levi, "On Microhistory," in Peter Burke, *New Perspectives in Historical Writing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 2001), 93-113

Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Harvard UP, 1983).

Canvas: Robert Finlay, "The Refashioning of Martin Guerre," *American Historical Review* 93 (1988), 553-571.

Canvas: Natalie Zemon Davis, "On the Lane," *American Historical Review* 93 (1988), 572-603.

Film: *Return of Martin Guerre* [clips to be shown in class]

## 11. October 24: Material Culture

### **DUE: Student Presentations of Sub-Fields**

Optional: Canvas: Karen Harvey, "Introduction: Practical Matters, in *History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, ed. Karen Harvey (Routledge, 2009), 1-23

Canvas: Giorgio Riello, "Things that Shape History: Material Culture and Historical Narratives," in *History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, ed. Karen Harvey (Routledge, 2009), 24-46

Robin Fleming, *Britain after Rome* (2011), most of the book

## Week 12. October 31: Power, Post-Structuralism and Post-Modernism

### **Due: Student Presentations of Sub-Fields**

Canvas: Keith Jenkins, "Doing History in the Post-Modern World," in Jenkins, *Re-Thinking History* (Routledge, 1991), 59-70 and 75-77.

Canvas: Pierre Bourdieu, "Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field," in Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: on the Theory of Action* (Stanford UP, 1998), 35-63.

Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: the birth of the Prison*, tr. Alan Sheridan (original French edition 1975; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vintage Books edition, New York, 1995), excerpts TBA

Film Clips: Foucault vs. Chomsky (to be shown in class)

## Week 13. November 7: Environmental History

### **DUE: Student Presentations of Sub-Fields**

Canvas: William Cronon, "The Uses of Environmental History," *Environmental History Review* 17 (1993): 1-22

Canvas: Naomi Sykes, "Zooarchaeology of the Norman Conquest," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 27 (2004): 185-197.

J.R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914* (Cambridge UP, 2010)

**Week 14. November 14: Race and the Other**

Canvas: Robert Bartlett, "Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31 (2001): 39-56.

Canvas: William C. Jordan, "Why 'Race'?" *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31 (2001): 165-173.

Canvas: Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2018), TBA.

Canvas: Nancy Shoemaker, "How Indians Got to be Red," *American Historical Review* 102 (1997): 626-644.

Canvas: Jill C. Bender, "Rebels, Race and Violence: Mid-Victorian Colonial Conflicts," in Bender, *The 1857 Indian Rebellion and the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2016), p. 106-142

**Week 15. November 21: Global History and/or Transnational History**

Canvas: Akira Iriye, "The Rise of Global and Transnational History," in *Global and Transnational History: The Past, Present, and Future* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1-18.

Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: a Global History* (reprint, Vintage Books, 2015)

**Week 16. November 28: Why History Matters**

**Due: Bibliography of books to be used in final essay**

Possible: Lynn Hunt, *History: Why it Matters* (Polity, 2018), pp. TBA

Priya Satia, *Time's Monster: How History Makes History* (Belknap Press, 2020)

**Wed. November 30: LAST DAY OF SEMESTER****Week 17. December 6: DUE: final historiography essay**

### Some Suggestions for Critical Reading and Writing

Learning how to read, analyze, and write about historical literature in a critical way is the main objective of this course. Keep the following in mind as you read and write about the books and articles this semester:

- a. Check the date and place of publication (don't be fooled by reprints or later editions). How are these important to an understanding of the book? Consider a book on medieval Germany written by an Englishman in 1943.
- b. Read the author's introduction or preface and/or acknowledgments. Whom else does he/she know, or with whom and with what types of historical writing does he/she choose to associate his/her work? To whom is he/she indebted? Whom does he/she consider as an opponent? Does the author state his/her purpose in writing the book? No author is an island, and very few are truly original; most authors are indebted either personally to someone else or methodologically to a school or approach.
- c. Pay careful attention to the author's use of sources. To ascertain this, you will need to be aware of his/her footnotes and/or bibliography, even if you do not read every single reference (indeed, you probably shouldn't read every reference). How does the selection and use of sources inform the author's historical interpretation? Does the author use a single source [a treatise, a chronicle, an inquest]? A single category of sources [parish records, letters, memoirs, legal sources, etc.]? Many different types of sources? Does he/she make use of literary sources? Statistical sources? Police records? Are all sources equally reliable? Would use of another kind of source altered his/her conclusions?
- d. Does the author make clear what is (are) his/her thesis (or theses) in the book or article? That is to say, can you discern if an argument is being made? Or, is the book pure narrative? [be careful, for even narratives can have agendas and/or theses] If there is no apparent argument, is this a problem? If there is an argument, does it fit into some larger historiographical debate? Or, does it fit into or alongside some major historical or ideological theory?
- e. Does the author bring to his/her analysis a particular method or approach? In some weeks, you may well read works on the same subject from diametrically opposing methodological perspectives. While the tendency may be to believe that one is "right" and the other "wrong", we will find that it is more useful to simply try to uncover, analyze, and criticize the methods being used, and to express an opinion about which method seems to offer a better, or more important, understanding of the topic in question.
- f. To what sort of audience is the book or article addressed? Other scholars? A general readership? Students? How do considerations of audience affect an author's selection and use of sources?
- g. Is the work in question a monograph, based primarily on original research? Or is it a synthesis that integrates new material with older ideas? Or some combination of the two?