Department of International History  
Academic year 2014 - 2015

Information and History  
HI028 - Autumn - 6 ECTS

Course Description

Information may be accumulated or lost; it can be safeguarded or debased; it can confer power or undermine it. It is therefore an actor of history in its full right. This course provides a perspective on the role of information as a historical actor. Beyond emphasis on information and transparency as disembodied concepts and the companion narratives of the progress of the information economy as driven by technological factors, the course underscores the richness of historical processes associated with information. At the heart of the seminar is a reflection on the ownership of information, its operation, the rise and fall of infrastructures to store and circulate information, as well as the relevance of political processes as affecting, and being affected by, information. The lenses adopted are those of key historical debates such as colonialism and imperialism, state building and the development of administrative capacity, international competition and the projection of power, the rise of humanitarianism and humanitarian organizations, archives and the politics of memory.

Syllabus

Information and History

Colonial Knowledge and Control

Measurement and Government

Registries and Inquisitions

Mapping
(and/or his http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~sj6/AndersonCensusMap.pdf

What is an insider?

Media Manipulation

Secrets and Conspiracy:
David Kahn, Codebreakers: A Comprehensive History of Secret Communication from Ancient Times to the Internet, New York: Scribner

Information in Diplomacy:

Information Crises:
C.A. Bayly, “The information order, the Rebellion of 1857-9, and pacification”, in Empire and Information, Intelligence gathering an social communication in India, 1780-1870. Flandreau Marc and Vincent Bignon, “The price of media capture and France’s interwar information crisis”, (forthcoming).
The Politics of Memory:
Combes, Sonia, *Archives Interdites*.

Archival Theory