

Department of International History

Academic year 2019-2020

Histories beyond Nation HI019 – Autumn – 6 ECTS

Monday 16h15-18h00 (S1)

This seminar attempts to understand how histories may contribute to ‘forgetting’, as well as recovering, the making, breaching, and enclosing of categories and boundaries in the last two centuries. It is motivated by ongoing mobilizations in many parts of the world around competing narratives and subjectivities of entitlement and loss. It is consequently about power and perspective, and alignments and realignments between power in its various forms and associated sensibilities of (dis-)possession. Towards this broad end, we will attempt to view trajectories of modern politics, memory, and historical scholarship in interactive frames, in particular the forming and deforming of empire, nation, and other possible political communities and containers over the last two centuries. Could the fraught, conflict-ridden, topsy-turvy politics of our time be a blowback against how solidarities and tensions along crisscrossing lines of race, religion, class, and gender were mobilized and manipulated by liberal-despotic European colonial, international, and ‘domestic’ political systems? Can historians engage and make a difference?

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Evaluation

This is a revised version of the 2018-19 syllabus. It may be updated further before the start of the semester.

Evaluation comprises three main elements:

1. **Paper and presentation (50%):** MA students write individual or joint papers (3000 words or 5000 words max). PhD students will write individual papers not exceeding 4000 words. More information in class, also see **Week 6** for walk-in hours to discuss your paper topics, etc.

Milestones and deadlines (all deadlines are midnight):

 - a. Paper topic and preliminary bibliography: 7 October
 - b. 1000-word outline and bibliography: 1 November
 - c. Complete first draft: Saturday preceding the presentation
 - d. Papers will be presented and discussed 9 and 16 December. More details will follow.
 - e. Completed final versions: 24 December
2. **Two reading responses (25%): maximum 750-words**, reviewing and reflecting on the class readings of the preceding weeks. **Deadlines (midnight): 11 November and 2 December**
3. **Class participation (25%):** this will be based on two components: (a) participation in the two class discussions (**25 November and 2 December**—themes to be decided in class, suggestions welcome), and (b) diligent attendance, reading, and classroom participation.

Schedule and Readings

Week 1, September 16

Inductions/no class

Week 2, 23 September

Introduction (led by Jiajia Liu)

Week 3, 30 September

Pasts and politics

Carol Anderson, *White Rage: The unspoken truth of our racial divide* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 'Prologue: Kindling'

[Richard Evans, 'Peterloo was the massacre that led to a new democratic era', *Guardian*, 16 Aug. 2019](#)

Times editorial on the Peterloo massacre, 3 Aug. 2019 (paywall/PDF available on Moodle).

Week 4, 7 October

Monumentalizing memory

Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), chapter 1
Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the production of history* (Boston: Beacon, 1995), chapter 2

[Monumentalizing the Confederacy, Report of the Southern Poverty Law Center](#)

Week 5, 14 October

Guest seminar: Historical memory in contemporary India

Professor Neeladri Bhattacharya, formerly Professor of History, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; Visiting Professor, Ashoka University, Delhi/NCR

Week 6, 21 October

Erasing Haiti

Susan Buck-Morss, 'Hegel and Haiti', *Critical Inquiry* (26: 4, 2000), pp. 821-65

Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, chapter 3

Walk-in hours for paper consultation:

Professor Balachandran

- TBA

Jiajia Liu

- TBA

Week 7, 28 October

Reading, paper research, and debate preparation week (there will be no formal class meeting this week. The instructors will however be available for walk-in hours to discuss your paper proposals as per the schedule above.)

Week 8, 4 November

Slavery and freedom

W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction: An essay toward a history of the part which black folk played in the attempt to reconstruct democracy in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1935), chapter 27

David Roediger, *Seizing Freedom: Slave emancipation and liberty for all* (London: Verso Press, 2014), Introduction and chapter 1

Anderson, *White Rage*, chapter 1

['Black America made our founding ideals come true', *NYT*, 14 Aug. 2019](#)

Week 9, 11 November

Liberal mythologies

Lydia H. Liu, *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World making* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), chapter 2

Lowe, *Intimacies of Four Continents*, chapter 4

[‘Slavery and US politics in 2019’, NYT, 14 Aug. 2019](#)

Week 10, 18 November

Empires

Karuna Mantena, *Alibis of Empire: Henry Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 2010), chapter 2

Paul A. Kramer, ‘Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule between the British and United States Empires, 1880–1910,’ *Journal of American History* (88: 4, 2002)

[‘The Religion of Whiteness Becomes a Suicide Cult’, NYT, 30 Aug. 2018](#)

Week 11, 25 November

Class discussion 1

Theme TBD

Week 12, 2 December

Class discussion 2

Theme TBD

Week 13, 9 December

Presentations

Week 14, 16 December

Presentations and wrap-up