HI 800: European Historiography
Fall 2018, Prof. Phillip Haberkern
Wednesday, 2.30-5.15
Rm. B06 in 226 Bay State Rd.
Office Hours: 10-12 M/F, or by appointment

Course Description

This course is intended to be an introduction for graduate students to both a series of major events in European history and the historiographical methods that scholars have used to analyze it. The course will move chronologically over the course of the semester, with each week also zeroing in on a particular mode of historical analysis. Some of these modes are, quite frankly, dated; the Marxist interpretation of the French Revolution and Weber's positivist interpretation of the Reformation have fallen out of fashion. They have also, however, laid the groundwork for most modern analytical approaches. As such, they are worth revisiting and interrogating for their utility along with their faults.

Along with this content-focused emphasis in the course, we will also spend the semester working on certain aspects of your professionalization as students. The weekly workload in this class is not entirely realistic, so we will work explicitly together on strategies for how you can manage and organize massive amounts of reading and information over a semester. Assignments in this class are also meant to introduce you to certain forms of scholarly discourse and presentation that will become central to your graduate study. You will write book reviews, provide historiographical summaries of a given field, and give a twenty-minute oral "conference paper" on a topic of your choice. Over time, writing in these genres will become routine for you, but during this course we will explicitly develop your familiarity with their (often unspoken) parameters and expectations.

A final note: this class is structured as a seminar, and you will be expected to attend every session and participate in our discussions. You cannot be successful in this course if you are not willing to interact with your peers and contribute substantively to the conversation. Granted, there will be weeks when you are busy with other coursework and weeks when you hate the reading. Still, your consistent engagement and effort are absolutely necessary so that we can build a vital learning community. During our weekly meetings we will also engage in a variety of activities together, whether dissecting primary sources that are relevant to the topic or critically reading other articles and reviews. There will be weeks where I ask you to bring in or do other small assignments, and for those meetings I will email you by Monday evening with particular requests.

Course Requirements

Over the course of the semester, you will be expected to submit four written assignments:

1) Two book reviews (approx. 900-1100 words) of assigned course readings; these will be submitted at the beginning of the class session during which we discuss the book that you have reviewed. We will discuss expectations for reviews during the first couple of weeks of class, and you can also find good models in: *American Historical Review*, *English Historical Review*, *Past & Present*, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, and *The Journal of Modern History*. These can typically be found by typing the name of a book into JSTOR.

2) A historiographical overview on any topic or methodology that we will discuss during the course of the semester (approx. 2000-2500 words) that dives deeper into the given topic than our readings for that week. I would suggest that you think of this overview as a section within a larger article or book introduction – it need not be exhaustive, but should sketch out the main arguments and trajectories in a given historiographical field while highlighting the most important changes in the field and paths for future scholarship. We will also look at successful models of this type of writing together in class. This essay may be turned in at any point during the semester, but it is due at the latest by *****DEC. 20th***.**
3) A conference paper on a topic of your choice that will be given in class during our last two sessions. Your paper will be part of a panel of 3-4 papers put together by your professor, and should be written out as you plan to deliver it. The presentations will be 20 minutes in length (about 2500-3000 words of body text; footnotes should be extra), and your grade will comprise an evaluation of both the oral and written versions of the paper. These papers should be historiographical in nature (not unlike the other essay), and you must consult with the professor about your topic and approach to it.

The assignments in the class are weighted as follows:

Book reviews: 10% each
Historiographical overview: 20%
Conference paper: 30%
Class participation: 30%

Course Readings

Many readings for the course are online, and these are listed in the course schedule as such. Along with these readings, you will need to procure a number of books. Most are available online in used copies or through the library. I did not ask the BU Bookstore to stock them, as I am quite confident that you can find them much cheaper elsewhere. The following books are required of all students over the course of the semester:

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Emmanuel LeRoy Ladurie, *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error* (e.g. George Braziller, 2008)
Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (e.g. Penguin, 2002)
Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil* (Routledge, 1994)
Steve Shapin, *The Social History of Truth* (U. of Chicago Press, 1995)
Georges Lefebvre, *The Coming of the French Revolution* (e.g. Princeton UP reprint, 2015)
Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse* (Johns Hopkins UP, 1986)
Edward Said, *Orientalism* (e.g. Vintage, 2014)
Alexis Peri, *The War Within* (Harvard UP, 2018)

Note: for Ladurie, Weber, Lefebvre, and Said, you may procure other editions; they've all been published many, many times. The editions listed here were just reasonably priced versions readily available on Amazon.

Academic Conduct

Students are expected to comply with the spirit and letter of the CAS Academic Conduct Code (available at: http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/undergrad-resources/code). Any findings of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of "F" for the semester. While I do not expect any cases of academic misconduct to occur, dishonesty or plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form.

Course Schedule

Note - readings for the semester are coded as follows:

BB – available on the course Blackboard site in the "Content" section;
O – available online through the BU library website or through databases such as JSTOR;

9/5 – The Idea of Europe: For our first meeting, we will think about the ways in which our subject for the semester – namely, Europe – has shifted and evolved over time. Has England always been European? What about Russia, or Turkey? Or Goa and Cape Town? By examining cultural as well as geographical definitions of Europe, we'll (hopefully) establish some parameters for the semester ahead.

> **Readings**: Introduction and chs. 1 & 2 in *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union*, ed. A. Pagden (2002) (O).

9/12 – "Motionless" Middle Ages? Although most of our topics will cover Europe from 1500 until the present, we will begin by examining peasant cultures in medieval France through the lens of the *Annales* School. These French historians drew attention to the substrata of human culture, so we'll begin by thinking about the light their work sheds on the structures of rural society.

> **Readings:** Emmanuel LeRoy Ladurie, *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error*; idem, "Motionless History," *Social Science History* 1 (1977), 115-136 (O); and Georg Iggers, "France: the Annales," in *Historiography in the Twentieth Century,* 51-64 (BB).

9/19 – The Reformation, Economy, and Society: One of the most influential social science scholars of the twentieth century was Max Weber, a German sociologist who sought to construct rules for a truly universal history. For this week we will examine his work on the Protestant reformations and their impact on the economic and social structures of modern Europe, and then see how Weber's oft criticized work continues to influence historiography.

> **Readings:** Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*; Brad Gregory, "Manufacturing the Goods Life," from *The Unintended Reformation* (2012) (O); and Peter Ghosh, "History and Theory in Max Weber's 'Protestant Ethic,'" *Global Intellectual History* 3 (2018), 1-35 (BB).

9/26 – Hunting Witches and Women in Early Modern Europe: The late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries witnessed what many popular historians have called the "women's holocaust" – the witch hunts. For this week we will examine how historians have employed the tools of gender analysis and psycho-history to understand this phenomenon of mass persecution.

> **Readings**: Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*; Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91 (1986), 1053-1075 (O); and Natalie Davis, "Women on Top," in eadem, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (1975), 124-151 (O).

10/3 - Is Small Beautiful? On Microhistory: We will switch it up a bit this week, with everyone reding two essays together, but different people then reading different monographs to examine the breadth of topics covered by the genre of microhistories. These engaging narratives have been all the rage for the past thirty years, and together we will explore the limits and opportunities of history written about "typical exceptions."

> **Readings:** Ed Muir, "Introduction: Observing Trifles," in *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe*, ed. E. Muir and G. Ruggiero (1991), vii-xxviii (BB); Carlo Ginzburg, "Microhistory: Two or Three Things I Know About It," *Critical Inquiry* 20 (1993), 10-35 (O); and ONE of the following microhistories –
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> Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath* (2001)
> Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms* (1980/1992)
> Sarah Nalle, *Mad for God* (2001)
> Wolfgang Behringer, *The Shaman of Oberstdorf* (1998)
> Thomas Robisheaux, *The Last Witch of Langenburg* (2009)
> Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, *Trent 1475* (1992)
> (NOTE: I'm open to other medieval/early modern microhistories as well, upon consultation)

10/10 – The Social History of Ideas: How do practitioners in a given field determine what is true? That is the question we will seek to answer this week as we use the social history of the scientific revolution as a lens through which we can view the development of a "new" intellectual history in the last several decades. What makes this history new (and what constituted the old) will also be a consideration as we explore the impact of sociability on scientific facts.

> **Readings**: Steve Shapin, *The Social History of Truth*; Robert Darnton, "Intellectual and Cultural History," in *The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States*, ed. Michael Kammen (1980) (O); Darrin McMahon, "The Return of the History of Ideas?" and John Tresch, "Cosmologies Realized," in *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History*, ed. D. McMahon and S. Moyn (2014) (O).

10/17 – The Digital Enlightenment: Digital humanities are all the rage right now, but how does the application of big data allow us to understand or visualize something new about historical phenomena? We will explore answers to this question during our session this week by looking at how correspondence maps and geographical considerations have changed our understanding of the Enlightenment.

> **Readings**: Charles Withers, *Placing the Enlightenment*, Introduction and Pt. 1 (O); and Dan Edelstein et al., "Historical Research in a Digital Age: Reflections from the Mapping the Republic of Letters Project," *AHR* 122 (2017), 400-424 (O).

10/24 – Class Consciousness and Revolution: The French Revolution is one of the great watersheds in European history. For this week, we will examine the classic, Marxist interpretation of this revolution and the most influential responses to it, all in order to analyze the role of class consciousness and capitalism in historical investigation.

> **Readings**: Georges Lefebvre, *The Coming of the French Revolution*; François Furet, "Interpreting the French Revolution" and Keith Michael Baker, "On the Ideological Origins of the French Revolution," both in *The French Revolution: The Essential Readings*, ed. R. Schechter (2001), 31-51 and 52-74 [BB].

10/31 – Is History just Narrative? For our discussion this week, we will take a literary turn to explore how cultural theory and criticism has informed a strain of scholarship that analyzes history writing as a form of literature in its own right and interrogates historians as (un)self-conscious artists. In discussing this scholarship, we will try to explore the insights and limitations of viewing historiography as literature.

> **Readings**: Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse*; all of the essays from the forum on intellectual history and narrative in: *AHR* 94/3 (June 1989), 581-653 (O).

11/7 – Europe's Others: For every West there must be an East, and vice versa. This was the central insight of Edward Said's Orientalism, a remarkably influential book that looked at the creation of "the Orient" by generations of authors, artists, and scholars. We will examine Said's argument about the construction of the East in our class this week, and dip our toes into how Said's insight has been expanded, modified, and challenged in the ensuing decades.

> **Readings:** Edward Said, *Orientalism;* Dipesh Chakrabatry, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for 'Indian' Pasts?" *Representations* 37 (1992), 1-23 (O); and Joseph Massad, "Orientalism as Occidentalism," *History of the Present* 5 (2015), 83-94 (O).

11/14 – First Person History: Using ego documents to do history is tricky; few people are reliable narrators, so how can we use their recollections to reconstruct events and understand the larger forces that shape events? We will read about the siege of Leningrad during WWII for our meeting this week, and we will use a very recent book by BU professor Alexis Peri as an entry point into the discussion of how autobiographical texts can serve as the foundation for historical narratives.

> **Readings**: Alexis Peri, *The War Within*; Philippe Lejeune, "How Do Biographies End?" *Biography* 24 (2001), 99-112 (O); and Felicity Nussbaum, "Towards Conceptualizing a Diary," in *Studies in Autobiography*, ed. J. Olney (1988), 128-140 (BB).

11/21 – NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING

11/28 - Memory, History, and the Holocaust: In our last meeting of the semester, we will explore the increasingly blurry boundary between history and memory – is the distinction between these meaningful, or just a historian's conceit? To seek answers to this question, we will examine the Holocaust, an event that has challenged the public's and magisterium's abilities to remember and to (theoretically) learn from the past.

> **Readings**: Amos Funkenstein, "Collective Memory and Historical Consciousness," *History and Memory* 1 (1989), 5-26 (O); Aleida Assmann, "Transformations between History and Memory," *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 75 (2008), 49-72 (O); and selected essays from Saul Friedlander, ed., *Probing the Limits of Representation* (TBD, but BB).

12/5 & 12/12 – Conference Paper Presentations

12/20: FINAL DAY TO SUBMIT HISTORIOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEWS