

## **HH3001 Historiography: Theory and Methods**

Semester 2, AY 2018/19; Academic Units: 3  
Venue: LHS-TR+40  
Time: Thursdays, 13:30-16:30  
Course Instructor: Assistant Professor ZHOU Taomo  
Office: HSS 05-22 (Please email me to make an appointment)  
Email: [tmzhou@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:tmzhou@ntu.edu.sg)

### **I. Course Description:**

Do historians uncover the truth, organize the facts and formulate possible causal explanations or just tell stories that sell? Can history be written “as it actually happened”? Are all human histories always provisional and conditional? How is a reconstruction of the past possible given that historians cannot rethink the thoughts of the dead or relive their lives? Are historians unfairly imposing the questions of the present to the past? Is the writing of history ultimately a power game that ensures the dominance of those who possess it? In a world in which an ever-growing chorus of voices is heard, what are the criteria by which a historical work can be held as valid? With the coming of the digital age in humanities and social sciences, will history ultimately perish as a discipline and profession? Building on the basic skills acquired in HH 1001: What is History, this course offers a more advanced introduction to the theories and methodologies underpinning our craft.

### **II. Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the course, you (as a student) would be able to:

1. Identify major methodological developments in the English-language literature in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
2. Compare and contrast the major historical approaches.
3. Synthesize and engage in various theoretical debates.
4. Articulate compelling, evidence-based, and well-reasoned arguments in written and oral form.
5. Formulate original historical arguments and explanations that effectively deploy primary and secondary source evidence.

### **III. Course Components**

Except for the introduction in the first week and the presentations in the last two weeks, we will spend our seminars according to the following schedule:

13:30-14:20 Lecture by the Instructor

14:20-14:30 Break

14:30-15:30 Presentations on Recommended Books by the Students

Each student will pick a book ahead of time from the “Book Review & Presentation Options” section of each week. If you are interested in books outside of the listed selection, please consult the instructor beforehand.

The **book critic** has two responsibilities:

- 1) Submit a 500-to-800-word **scholarly review of the book** of your choice through Turnitin 5pm (17:00) on Wednesday during the week he or she has signed up for;
- 2) In class the next day, deliver your findings in a **10-minute presentation**. **PowerPoint slides** are compulsory.

15:30-15:40 Break

#### 15:40-16:30 Debate Moderated by the Students

Each student will bring to class a “**Position Paper**” summarizing his or her position on the week’s debate topic. This paper consists of an opening sentence plus 50 words or less. In the opening sentence, each student takes an unequivocal position in the affirmative or the negative. In position papers for Week 2, for example, every student should open by saying either, “Yes, history is closer to science than to art.” or “No, history is closer to art than to science.” Hard copies of position papers need to be handed in at the end of every class.

To launch the debate each week, three or four students will act as **Debate Moderators**. The **Debate Moderators** have two responsibilities:

- 1) Prepare a **Debate Moderator Sheet** and upload it to the “Discussions” section of NTULearn by 5pm (17:00) on Wednesday during the week he or she has signed up for. In class, the hardcopies of the Debate Moderator Sheet should be distributed (please print out 6-7 copies, one for each table). This sheet should contain quotations from the week’s required readings and questions formulated in response to these readings. Both questions and quotations should be chosen for the purpose of stimulating discussion surrounding the debate topic of the week.
- 2) Open discussion in class by making a brief (5 minutes) **oral statement** in which the moderators identify the topics that should be taken up in that session. Ordinarily, the moderators’ statements will be based on the required readings, the instructor’s lecture, other students’ presentations, and their own list of questions and quotations.

**It is extremely important for the book critics and debate moderators to honor their commitments. As a general rule, cancellations are not accepted.** If urgent circumstances prevent a student from fulfilling his or her duty, one should inform the instructor as early as possible. The student must find someone to replace his or her role for that week.

**IV. Assessment** (Please refer to a separate handout for instructions & the grading system)

**Active Participation (10%).**

Weekly position papers as well as engagement in debates will be evaluated throughout the semester.

**Performance as Book Critic (15%).** Each student will serve once in the semester as the book critic. Written reviews, PowerPoint slides and oral deliveries will be evaluated.

1. A written review 500-800 words, due 5pm on the Wednesday during the week you have signed up for. In this review, you are expected to:
  - a. Summarize its thesis argument/contents in your own words;
  - b. Identify its theoretical approach or position it in the broader literature;
  - c. Relate the books under review to the week's debate topic and compulsory reading;
  - d. *Evaluate* the methodology as applied in the work: is there anything specific about this work that deviates from the broader approach with which it is associated (e.g. Marxist, gender or postmodernist history)?
2. Oral delivery of the book review (10 mins of presentation & brief Q&A in class). The assessment will be based on:
  - Depth of analysis;
  - Quality of PowerPoint slides/visual aid;
  - Verbal communication skills.

**Performance as Debate Moderator (10%).**

Each student will serve once in the semester as debate moderator, on a topic different from his or her presentation. The moderators will be evaluated as a group.

1. Debate Moderator Sheet: One-page of quotations and questions, due 5pm on the Wednesday during the week you have signed up for. The quotations should be drawn from the required readings on the week and the questions should be formulated in response to the readings as well as the debate topic of the week. Please refer to sample debate moderator sheets on the NTULearn.
2. In Class Moderation: The assessment will be based on:
  - The quality of the questions raised;
  - Verbal Communication skills;
  - The ability to organize class discussion in engaging and orderly fashion;
  - Strengthen of group collaboration and the degree of synergy.

**Research Essay Proposal (15%).**

Each student will submit one piece of research essay proposal (800 words) to Turnitin by 5pm (17:00) on Monday, March 11, 2019.

The research essay proposal should contain the following elements:

1. Statement of the essay question (this is not the same as an essay topic or subject area and needs to take the form of a *question*).

2. Summary of background research conducted to date, noting: i) the key issues or points of debate in the secondary source literature; ii) the available primary sources for the topic.
3. Any anticipated limitations in the available primary source evidence.
4. The theoretical approach or approaches you will take in the essay.

The background research and theoretical approach should be fully referenced in footnotes, using the *Chicago Manual Style Guide* on the NTULearn.

### **Presentation of Research Project (10%).**

Each student will deliver a presentation (**5 minutes maximum**) on his/her research project in class during weeks 12 or 13.

Your presentation should address the following:

1. Research question.
2. Why are you studying this topic?
3. What sources are you using? (And what research have you done so far?)
4. What is your overarching argument?
5. What methodology are you applying/using?
6. Are there any other interesting findings from your research thus far?

The presentation should be logically structured—you do not need to address the above 6 elements in the order above. Your presentation should also be succinct and presented in a polished and engaging manner. After the presentation, there will be a brief Q&A session.

**Final Research Paper (40%).** Each student is will submit one piece of written work no less than 2,000 words and no more than 3,000 words (excluding footnotes and bibliography) to Turnitin by 5pm (17:00) on **Friday May 3, 2019**.

The research paper can represent an introductory chapter to a student's final year project (FYP) or one of the chapters for their thesis. The essay should:

- Present a clear research question and thesis argument;
- Analyze the major points of debate in the secondary literature on the subject and highlight how their approach is similar to and/or different from that of other historians;
- Draw on relevant historical methodology/ies to frame the research question, approach and/or argument;
- Be based on both primary and secondary source research.

### Grading System of the Final Research Paper

- 1) Thesis (30%)
  - a) Does the essay have a thesis (making a specific claim about the topic/materials), or does it stop at stating a descriptive topic?
  - b) Is the thesis original? Does it go beyond the analysis given in the secondary materials?
  - c) Is the thesis reasonable and focused?

- d) Does the introductory paragraph show what is significant or interesting about the thesis (set it in a proper context)?
- 2) Structure (25%)
  - a) Does the author offer a clear outline at the beginning of the essay?
  - b) Do arguments in different sections of the paper make sense? Are they convincing? Do they support the thesis?
- 3) Evidence (25%)
  - a) Does the author substantiate his or her points?
  - b) Is the evidence appropriate to the points the author is making?
  - c) Is the author interpreting the evidence in a reasonable way?
  - d) Is the author ignoring alternative interpretations or important counter-evidence?
  - e) Is the author citing his or her sources correctly?
- 4) Style, Grammar, Punctuation (20%)
  - a) Citations should strictly follow the Chicago Manual of Style
  - b) Is the writing precise and grammatically correct?

### **Academic Integrity**

Candidates are cautioned against misquoting from sources and plagiarism. Exact statements and arguments lifted from the writings of specialists and placed in the text must be put within quotation marks. Otherwise, paraphrase. Candidates have no excuse and cannot feign ignorance of plagiarism, which in one definition is rendered as —using someone else’s work as if it were your own without appropriate acknowledgement. It may be in the form of one sentence or whole paragraphs, and it can come from the internet, books, journals, or the writings of other students. To ensure that candidates do not fail their course because of plagiarism, the instructor may routinely and randomly request candidates to submit the notes that they have taken (in whatever form) with the essays they have written. These will be checked against the written texts.

### **Late Policy**

Penalty for lateness of papers: ½ grade lost for every day of lateness. For example, an “A” paper arriving on May 4 would receive an “A-.” If it arrived on May 5 it would receive a “B+” and so on.

### **V. Reference Book**

Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1994). [E175.A648T Outpost](#)

### **VI. Course Schedule:**

#### **Week 1 (January 17): Introduction**

Housekeeping: *Assignment of presentation & debate moderating topics.*

#### Required Readings:

- Peter Claus and John Marriott. “Proof and the Problem of Objectivity.” Chap. 1 in *History: An Introduction to Theory, Method, and Practice* (Routledge, 2011), 1-23. [NTU Learn](#)

- Georg Iggers. "Introduction." In *Historiography in the Twentieth Century*, 1997, 1-19. [NTULearn](#)

Further Reading:

- E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (London: Palgrave, 2001). [D16.8.C311 Outpost](#)
- John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History* (Oxford University Press, 2004). [NTULearn](#)

**Week 2 (January 24): History as Linear I: Scientific History and the Idea of Modernity**

Debate Topic: History is closer to science than to art.

Required Reading:

- Fernand Braudel, *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism*, translated by Patricia M. Ranum (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977). [NTULearn](#)

Further Reading:

- Georg Iggers, "France: The Annales," Chap. 5 in *Historiography in the Twentieth Century*, 51-64. [NTULearn](#)

Book Review & Presentation Options:

- Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (New York: Vintage Books, 1953). [D13.B651H Outpost](#)
- R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956). [D13.C711 1956 1961 Outpost](#)
- William H. Sewall, *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). [E-book via NTU Library](#)
- Jo Guldi and David Armitage, *The History Manifesto* (Harvard University Press, 2014). Open access book.
- E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (London: Palgrave, 2001). [D16.8.C311 Outpost](#)
- John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History* (Oxford University Press, 2004). [NTULearn](#)

**Week 3 (January 31): History as Linear II: Marxist Historiography vs. Modernization Theory**

Debate Topic: Historians' mission is to document and facilitate the world's progress towards the modern.

Required Readings:

- Appleby, Hunt and Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History*, pp. 52-90. [NTULearn](#)
- E.P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present*, No. 38 (Dec., 1967), pp. 56-97. [NTULearn](#)

Further Reading:

- E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963). [NTULearn](#)
- Geoff Eley. “Marxist Historiography.” Chap. 4 in *Writing History: Theory and Practice*, 63-79. [NTULearn](#)
- Philipp Schofield. “History and Marxism.” Chap. 12 in *Making History*, 180-191. [NTULearn](#)

#### Book Review & Presentation Options:

- Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1968). [E-book](#)
- Karl Marx, “The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,” in Terrel Carver ed., *Marx Later Political Writings* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 31-127. [E-book via NTU Library](#)
- Theda Skocpol, *State and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979). [HSSL HM283.S628](#) or borrow from instructor
- Bradley Simpson, *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S.-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968* (Stanford University Press, 2008). [HSSL E183.8.15S613](#)

#### **Week 4 (February 7): Linear History in Crisis: Postmodernism and the Linguistic Turn**

Debate Topic: There can be no stable, knowable past because change is constant and contesting visions of “reality” have failed to create a consensus.

#### Required Readings:

- Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1995. [NTULearn](#)
- Appleby, Hunt and Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History*, Chapter 6, pp. 198-237. [NTULearn](#)

#### Further Reading:

- Caroline Hoefflerle. “The Linguistic Turn, Postmodernism, and New Cultural History.” Chap. 8 in *The Essential Historiography Reader*, 209-247. [NTULearn](#)
- Peter Burke. “From Representation to Construction.” Chap. 5 in *What Is Cultural History?* Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2008, 77-101. [NTULearn](#)
- “The Challenge of Poststructuralism/Postmodernism.” Chap. 12 in *The Houses of History*, 297-325. [NTULearn](#)

#### Book Review & Presentation Options:

- Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975). [D13.W584](#) [Outpost & WGWL](#)

- Lydia H. Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture and Translated Modernity—China, 1900-1937* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995). [PL2302.L783 Outpost & WGWL](#)
- Robert Cribb, Helen Gilbert and Helen Tiffin, *Wild Man from Borneo: A Cultural History of the Orangutan* (University of Hawaii Press, 2014) [HSSL QL737.P96C928](#)
- Andrew Coe, *Chop Suey: A Cultural History of Chinese Food in the United States* (Oxford University Press, 2009) [NTULearn](#)

### **Week 5 (February 14): Postcolonialism**

Debate Topic: Historians have the moral responsibility to address the wrongs committed by the white against the people of color.

#### Required Reading:

- Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003 [1978]). [NTULearn](#)

#### Further Readings:

- Robert C Young. *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*. Oxford, UK; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001. [NTULearn](#)
- Caroline Hoefferle. “World Histories.” Chap. 9 in *The Essential Historiography Reader*, 248-281. [NTULearn](#)

#### Book Review & Presentation Options:

- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 2008). [HSSL GN645.F214](#) or borrow from instructor
- Rachel Leow, *Taming Babel: Language in the Making of Malaysia* (Cambridge University Press, 2016). P119.32.M4L589 HSSL
- Marcus Rediker, *Slave Ship: A Human History* (Viking, 2007). HT1322.R317 HSSL

### **Week 6 (February 21): History Makes a Nation**

Debate Topic: Sovereign nation is the indispensable analytical unit for understanding twentieth century world history.

#### Required Readings:

- Benedict R’O. G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), pp. 1-8, 67-82, and 155-162. [NUTLearn](#)

#### Further Readings:

- Appleby, Hunt and Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History*, chapter 3 & 4, pp. 91-159. [NTULearn](#)

#### Book Review & Presentation Options:

- James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (Yale University Press, 2009). [E-book via NTU Library](#)
- Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: The History of a Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994). [HSSL DS563.9.T486 or borrow from the instructor](#)
- Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). [HM585.I62 Outpost](#)

### **Week 7 (February 28): Gender and Sexuality**

Debate Topic: Well-behaved women seldom make history.

#### Required Reading:

- Joan W. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988). [NTULearn](#)
- Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (Vintage Books, 1991), Introduction. [NTULearn](#)

#### Further Reading:

- Peter Claus and John Marriott. "Feminism, Gender and Women's History." Chap. 10 in *History: An Introduction to Theory, Method and Practice*, 196-214. [NTULearn](#)
- Joan W. Scott. "Women's History." Chap. 3 in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 43-70. [NTULearn](#)

#### Book Review & Presentation Options:

- Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990). [HQ1075.L317 Outpost or borrow from instructor](#)
- Barbara Watson Andaya, *The Flaming Womb: Repositioning Women in Early Modern Southeast Asia* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2006). [NTULearn](#)
- Dorothy Ko, *A Revisionist History of Footbinding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). [HSSL GT498.F66K75 Outpost](#)
- Vina A. Lanzona, *Amazons of the Huk Rebellion: Gender, Sex and Revolution in the Philippines* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009). [NTULearn](#)

### **Recess Week**

### **Week 8 (March 14): History without Heroes: The Everyday Life of Ordinary People**

Debate Topic: Detailed studies on the everyday experience of ordinary people prevent us from seeing the big picture.

#### Required Reading:

- Emmanuel LeRoy Ladurie, *Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French Village*, translated by Barbara Bray (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980 [1978]). [NTULearn](#)

Further Reading:

- Giovanni Levi. "On Microhistory." Chap. 5 in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 97-119. [NTULearn](#)
- Peter Burke. "The Moment of Historical Anthropology." Chap. 3 in *What is Cultural History*, 31-50. [NTULearn](#)

Book Review & Presentation Options:

- Carol Ginzburg, translated by John and Anne Tedeschi, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) [HSSL BR877.F74G493](#)
- Suzy Kim, *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013). [HSSL DS935.55.K49](#) or [borrow from the instructor](#)
- Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia* (Penguin Books, 2007). HN523.F471 Outpost
- Svetlana Alexievich, translated by Keith Gessen, *Voices from Chernobyl: The Oral History of a Nuclear Disaster* (London: Picador, 2006). [TD186.5.B35A366](#) [Outpost](#) or [borrow from the instructor](#)
- Anita Chan, Richard Madsen, and Jonathan Unger, *Chen Village: Revolution to Globalization* (University of California Press, 2009). HN733.5.C454cv HSSL

**Week 9 (March 21): Class cancelled due to conference travel of the instructor**

**Week 10 (March 28): Memoirs and Autobiographies**

Debate topic: "I" am an unreliable narrator of my own story.

Required Readings:

- Ben Yagoda, *Memoir: A History* (Riverhead Books, 2010), chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10 and 11. [NTULearn](#)

Book Review & Presentation Options:

- J. D. Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of A Family and Culture in Crisis* (Harper Press, 2016). [HD8073.V37H649](#) [Outpost](#)
- Jun Chang, *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China* (Harper Collins, 1991). [DS774.C456](#) 2003 [Outpost](#)
- Ernesto Che Guevara, *Motorcycle Diaries: Notes on A Latin American Journey* (Ocean Press, 2003). [NTULearn](#)

**Week 11 (April 4): Global History**

Debate topic: Compared to the past, nowadays geographic divisions are less relevant.

Required Readings:

- C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004). [NTULearn](#)

- C. A. Bayly, Sven Beckert, Matthew Connelly, Isabel Hofmeyr, Wendy Kozol, and Patricia Seed, “AHR Conversation: On Transnational History,” *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (2006): 1441-1464. [NTULearn](#)

Further Reading:

- Peter Claus and John Marriott. “Global Histories.” Chap. 12 in *History: An Introduction to Theory, Method and Practice*, 233-253.
- Jürgen Osterhammel. “World History.” Chap. 5 in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, 93-112.
- G. Iggers and Edward Q. Wang, *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (Harlow, UK: Pearson Education, 2008).

Book Review & Presentation Options:

- Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (Penguin Books, Reprint edition, 1986). [NTULearn](#)
- Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (Vintage Books, 2015).
- Peter Frankopan, *The Silk Road: A New History of the World* (Vintage, 2017).  
[Ebook via the library](#)

**Week 12 (April 11): Presentations**

**Week 13 (April 18): Presentations**