

HISTORY 590: COMPARATIVE HISTORY

Empires in a World Historical Context

Seminar Syllabus, (Course # 6293), CSULB, Spring 2021

Tuesday, 6:30-9:15 p.m., online

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Office hours: Wednesday 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. & Thursday 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.

History Department Bulletin Board: <https://padlet.com/profdabel/8bx0cbx8sjw6mgil>

Content and Objectives

This graduate seminar focuses on the comparative history of empires in the context of World History. It challenges the more conventional approach of examining the history of empires predominantly as a relationship between the political and socio-economic history of the metropolis and the peripheries. The readings provide multiple possible explanations and interpretations of how empires emerged, operated, flourished and faltered. The scholarly approaches include comparative examinations that include some other imperial entities in the ancient, medieval and modern period. The empires in consideration contain characteristics that offer specific possibilities for comparison for they present remarkable similarities and surprising differences.

The main objective of this seminar is to familiarize you with the historiography and history of empires between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries, although earlier empires come into the picture for comparative purposes. The period during which empires attempted to morph themselves into nation-states began during the second part of the nineteenth century and led to the complicated events of the twenty-first century. We will examine the history of change and continuity during this era. We will read and discuss the debates pertaining to political, social and cultural modernity in relationship to comparative history of empires. The articles assigned will help us draw comparisons. You will notice that there is a great deal of borrowing despite well-known rivalries among these empires. I recommend that you make a note of specific features of each empire you study that lend themselves to be compared. Our goal is to identify and make sense of historical significance of similarities and differences among these empires.

Expected Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to

1. Evaluate theoretical, conceptual, and comparative approaches to empire throughout history,
2. Demonstrate understanding of the early twentieth-century history of empires,
3. Utilize primary and secondary sources in order to help gain a better grasp of empires in comparative perspective,

4. Learn to produce original materials, demonstrating scholarly oral and written skills,
5. Gain the skills to use conceptual methods such as periodization and interpretation
6. Think critically about the readings, lectures, and peer comments,
7. Improve oral and written communication skills with peers and professors.

These outcomes will be assessed by weekly class discussions, discussion leadership, response papers, final essay, reflective essay, and oral presentations. See the specific assignments below.

Organization and Requirements

I will expect you to complete all the assigned readings for the day, before you come to the seminar. You should be prepared to discuss the readings and participate in the group presentation project. All the written assignments are due at the beginning of class. **I will deduct points for late papers, and** give incompletes only if there is a case of documented family or medical emergency (see below). For incompletes, you must make arrangements with me in advance. **To pass the class, you will complete all the assignments: two essays, seminar paper, oral presentation, and class participation.**

The Significance of the Syllabus

Enrollment in this course implies acceptance of all rules, policies, and requirements of this class. The syllabus serves as your contract for the course. Students are responsible for meeting the course guidelines and assignments and for seeking clarification if necessary. I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus if I deem them necessary. Students are responsible for keeping with those changes. Ignorance or absence is not an excuse.

Required Reading

1. Peter Fibiger **Bang** and Dariusz **Kołodziejczyk**, eds., *Universal Empire: A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in Eurasian History*, Cambridge University Press, 2012.
2. Kate **Brown**, *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*, Oxford University Press, 2015.
3. Maya **Jasanoff**. *Edge of Empire, Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East 1750-1850*, Vintage Books, 2006.
4. Darlene Clark **Hine** and Jacqueline **McLeod**, eds., *Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora*, Indiana University Press, 2000.
5. Jeffrey M. **Pilcher**, *Food in World History*, Routledge, 2017.

Required Assignments

1. **Seminar Participation (15%):** As this is a seminar course, your participation in every class meeting is essential and required. In addition to arriving in class each day and on time, your participation grade is also based on your contributions to class discussion. Your regular, informed, and full participation in class discussion is required and essential to a successful seminar. You must attend class, be fully prepared to discuss all readings, engage in all in-class exercises, and submit all required material at the beginning of class as required. Attendance without participation will be insufficient and will be reflected in grades.

2. Leading Discussion (15%):

- a. **Introductory presentation:** each week, a student will be responsible for leading the seminar with an introductory presentation of **no more than ten minutes**.
- b. **Assign an article:** the leaders will find and assign **an article on comparative history or world history** a week before their presentations.
- c. **Monographs:** they will provide **discussion questions latest 5:00 p.m. on Sunday before their presentations** for the assigned monographs in order to facilitate and lead discussion. Every student must lead discussion once during the semester.

3. Writing Assignment Requirements (65% in total):

All written assignments, except response papers, must be submitted through **BeachBoard to Dropbox** to ensure the originality of the presented written work. I will not grade assignments that have not been submitted to Dropbox before class meets. Please submit one file of a complete assignment that includes all relevant parts, e.g., bibliography, title page, etc.

This is a graduate-level course. The written work you submit should be of the highest quality. All essays should be free of grammar, spelling, typographical, and form errors. Although there are no readings assigned from Strunk and Turabian, you must consult and employ both when writing and revising. Regularly consult Strunk's *The Elements of Style*. Each assignment in this course—including peer review and oral presentation of work—replicates a habit of mind, process, or product of a professional historian. This approach extends to professional integrity and even formatting practices. All papers should follow a standard format (typed, 12-font, double-spaced, 1" margins, black ink), and have a title, introduction, thesis, supporting paragraphs, conclusion, bibliography, and footnotes. Paginate your essays and staple pages together. No late papers will be accepted (unless your absence falls under university regulations concerning excused absences). Papers submitted without correct citation form will not receive credit. Historians use the *University of Chicago Manual of Style*, which is condensed in Kate Turabian, such as *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Assignment-specific guidelines may be found on BeachBoard. (Note: There is more than one Turabian set of guidelines, so if you consult the citation examples on the CSULB library website, be sure you are using the correct Turabian model.)

- **Response Papers (25%)**

You are responsible for **five** response papers (three page, double-spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins) to the week's readings. You must provide the thesis/argument of the book/articles; discuss its sources in relation to the study's argument, analysis and originality; elaborate on the quality of the arguments and evidence; and refer to the reading(s) in the context of other course readings. You may choose when during the semester to write your response papers.

- **Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (10%)**

This will serve as the reading list for your final paper. The proposal should be two to three pages. The annotated bibliography has no page requirement but should include all relevant readings from the course for your topic as well as at least ten additional journal articles and monographs. The annotated bibliography must demonstrate not only knowledge of the sources in terms of argument, contents, and so forth but also include discussion of the place of the work in the historiography of the subject.

- **Final Seminar Paper (20%)**

You may write a research (based on primary and secondary sources) or historiography (based on secondary sources) paper. The paper must demonstrate knowledge of the topic, argue effectively, and support arguments with evidence. It must be based on the themes of this course and have a comparative or connected histories approach. The paper of 17-20 pages must be well structured, well written, and well supported. It must have footnotes and bibliography appropriate to the discipline of history, that is, *Chicago Manual of Style*. See quick online guide:

http://www.chicomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

The process of research and writing includes selection of paper topic by ninth week and research proposal with annotated bibliography in the eleventh week. (Consult rubric on BeachBoard.) I will not accept a final paper unless all of these requirements have been met on due dates.

- **Reflective essay on comparative history (5%)**

Oral Presentation of Final Paper (10%)

You will present your paper topics **during the last week of class**. The presentations should not be less than 10 minutes or longer than 15 minutes. You should introduce the topic and present the questions and conclusions of the essay.

GRADING PERCENTAGES:

Seminar Participation	15%
Discussion Leadership	15%
Response Papers	25%
Proposal & Annotated Bibliography:	10%
Seminar Paper	20%
Oral Presentation:	10%
Reflective Essay:	5%
Total:	100%

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

Week One: January 19: Introductions: Comparative and World History Fields

- Levine, Philippa. "Is Comparative History Possible?" *History and Theory* 53 (October 2014): 331-347.
- Grew, Raymond. "The Case for Comparing Histories," *American Historical Review* 85, 4 (Oct., 1980): 763-778
- Kocka, Jürgen. "Comparison and Beyond." *History and Theory* 42, no. 1 (2003): 39–44.

Week Two: January 26:

- Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard. "Comparative History – A Contested Method," *Historisk Tidskrift* 127, 4 (2007): 697-714.
- Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard, & Jürgen Kocka. "Comparative History: Methods, Aims, Problems." In *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (2004), 23-39.
- Halperin, Charles. "Comparative History in Theory and Practice." *American Historical Review* 87, no. 1 (1982): 123–143.
- Stein, Sarah Abrevaya. "Black Holes, Dark Matter, and Buried Treasures: Decolonization and the Multi-Sited Archives of Algerian Jewish History," *AHR Roundtable, American Historical Review*, 120/3 (June 2015): 900-919.

Week Three: February 2:

- Bain, Bob. "Building an Essential World History Tool: Teaching Comparative History." In Heidi Roup, ed. *Teaching World History: A Resource book*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1997.
- Wiesner-Hanks, Merry. *Historical Comparisons* (Washington, DC: College Board & American Historical Association, 2007).
- Reynolds, Susan. "Empires: a problem of comparative history*." *Historical Research* 79, no. 204 (2006): 151–165.
- Stein, Sarah Abrevaya. "Protected Persons? The Baghdadi Jewish Diaspora, the British State, and the Persistence of Empire" *American Historical Review*, 116/1 (February 2011): 80-108

Week Four: February 9:

- Pomper, Philip. "The History and Theory of Empires." *History and Theory* 44, no. 4 (2005): 1–27.
- Burke, Edmund. "Toward a Comparative History of the Modern Mediterranean, 1750–1919." *Journal of World History* 23, no. 4 (2012): 907–939.
- Edgerton-Tarpley, Kathryn. "Tough Choices: Grappling with Famine in Qing China, the British Empire, and Beyond." *Journal of World History* 24, no. 1 (2013): 135–176.
- *Universal Empire*, chapter 1

Week Five: February 16:

- *Universal Empire*, chapters 2-7

Week Six: February 23:

- *Universal Empire*, chapters 8-13

Week Seven: **March 2:**

- *Edge of Empire*, chapters 1-4

Week Eight: **March 9:**

- *Edge of Empire*, chapters 5-9

Week Nine: **March 16:**

- *Food in World History*, chapters 1-6

Week Ten: **March 23:**

- *Food in World History*, chapters 7-13
- **Research proposals are due!**

Week Eleven: **March 30: Spring Recess (No class)**

Week Twelve: **April 6:**

- *Crossing Boundaries*, parts 1 & 2
- **Annotated bibliography is due!**

Week Thirteen: **April 13:**

- *Crossing Boundaries*, parts 3 & 4

Week Fourteen: **April 20:**

- *Plutopia*, parts 1 & 2

Week Fifteen: **April 27:**

- *Plutopia*, parts 3 & 4

Week Sixteen: **May 4 (last day of class):**

- Khoury, Dina Rizk, and Dane Kennedy. "Comparing Empires: The Ottoman Domains and the British Raj in the Long Nineteenth Century." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 2 (January 01, 2007): 233–244.
- Drayton, Richard. "Where Does the World Historian Write From? Objectivity, Moral Conscience and the Past and Present of Imperialism." *Journal of Contemporary History* 46, no. 3 (2011): 671–685
- Cummings, Sally, and Raymond Hinnebusch. "Empire and After: Toward a Framework for Comparing Empires and Their Consequences in the Post-Imperial Middle East and Central Asia." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 27, no. 1 (2014): 103–131.
- **Final Version of the Seminar Papers are due!**

Week Seventeen: **May 11**

Reading:

- **Self-reflective essays are due!**

Class Policies

Academic Integrity and Honesty

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will not be tolerated. They are violations of university regulations.

All students will be held to a high standard of academic integrity, which is defined as "the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception." Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students.

The university defines plagiarism as "the act of using the ideas or work of another person or persons as if they were one's own, without giving credit to the source... Acknowledgement of an original author or source must be made through appropriate references, i.e., quotation marks, footnotes, or commentary. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following: the submission of a work, either in part or in whole, completed by another; failure to give credit for ideas, statements, facts or conclusions with rightfully belong to another; in written work, failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, a sentence, or even a part thereof; or close and lengthy paraphrasing of another's writing or programming."

(http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/catalog/2009-2010/academic_information/cheating_plagiarism.html)

All acts of academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action. All written assignments for the course must be submitted electronically through Beach Board to Turnitin.com in order to ensure the authenticity of the presented written work. **A single act of cheating or plagiarism by a graduate student will result in a failing grade in the course, regardless of other graded course assignments.** All plagiarism cases will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs and, depending on the severity of the case, further disciplinary actions may be taken, including suspension and expulsion, based on University policy. For more information, please see <http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/research/our/information/policies/cheating/>.

Student responsibilities: In this course, as in others, each student is in charge of and responsible for his/her own education. In other words, what one gets out of this course is dependent on what one puts into it. This includes grades. In other words, grades are not negotiable. I am here to help in any way that I can.

Religious observances: In order to reschedule an assignment deadline due to a religious observance, please inform me in writing in the first two weeks of class.

Withdrawal from the course: It is your responsibility to withdraw properly from classes.

Students with disabilities: If you have a documented disability and require additional time or other help for assignments, you must obtain verification from the Disabled Students Services

Office located in Brotman Hall. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor in advance of the need for accommodations of a university verified disability. Tel. 562-985-5401.

Absences: All absences will be noted, and habitual absence will affect the final grade. University Attendance Policy PS 01-01 defines excused absences as 1) illness or injury to the student; 2) death, injury, or serious illness of an immediate family member or the like; 3) religious reasons (California Educational Code section 89320); 4) jury duty or government obligation; 5) University sanctioned or approved activities (such as athletics). If in doubt, please read the CSULB attendance policy:

http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/grad_undergrad/senate/documents/policy/2001/01/.

Please contact me immediately if a situation arises that forces your absence from class. If I do not hear from you, I will consider your absence unexcused. I do not respond to e-mails in which a student asks what he/she missed because of an absence. If you miss a class, you may wish to ask a classmate to bring you up to speed.

Tardiness: Consistent tardiness will not be acceptable and will result in a grade deduction. You need to let me know ahead of time if you are going to be late. If you are late to class beyond twenty minutes of class time, I will consider you absent for the day.

Submitting Assignments: All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day assigned.

Incompletes. University policy allows incompletes only in cases of emergency and only when 2/3 of the assignments have been completed.

“Shared Community”: Discriminatory statements of any kind negate the education process and will not be tolerated. This course adheres to the University’s “Principles of Shared Community,” which states, “members of the CSULB community have the right to work and learn in an environment free of discrimination... CSULB is committed to creating a community in which a diverse population can learn, live, and work in an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the rights and sensibilities of each individual, without regard to economic status, ethnic background, political views, or other personal characteristics or beliefs.”

<http://www.ccpe.csulb.edu/ContinuingEd/policies.aspx?PID=24>

Technology and Resources

Each student must acquire an e-mail account if he/she does not already have one. For those who do not, information is available at

http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/academic_technology/thd/email/beachmail/. Make sure you have your csulb.edu email directed toward your preferred email address in order to receive class news via BeachBoard. I will contact you through BeachBoard by using the email address on record. It is your responsibility to make the appropriate change immediately after the first class. Each student must also acquire a PIN number to order materials through Interlibrary Loan Services. This may be done at any library terminal on campus by going through “View My Library Record.”

Writing and skill development resources are available through the Department's Graduate Student Writing Tutors. Their office hours are available at the Department office. Also available: Writing and skill development resources are available through Writer's Resource Lab (LAB-206, 985-4329, <http://www.csulb.edu/colleges/cla/departments/english/wrl/>) and LAC (Horn Center 104, 985-5350, http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/grad_undergrad/lac/).