Departament d'Humanitats i
Institut Universitari d'Història Jaume Vicens i Vives

Master's Degree in World History

PROGRAMME FOR THE COURSE MODULE

Title: Topics and Narratives in World History

Code: 31836

Type: Obligatory Course

Number of Credits (ECTS): 5 ECTS

Language: English

Professors: Stephen Jacobson, Sandra Montón, Linda Jones, Ana Delgado

Descriptor: This module will focus on major themes that constitute the grand narratives of World History taking place over the *longue durée*. Topics include: the Great Divergence; the origins of globalization; climate change; minorities, race, and ethnicity; gender, power, and identities; and alimentation and consumption. We will consider examples from a range of geographical regions, including Europe, North and South America, Islamic Eurasia, North Africa, and China and Southeast Asia. The time period covers the sweep of history beginning with the origins of humankind, continuing with neolithic and agricultural and industrial revolutions, and culminating with contemporary globalization and the twenty-first century. From year to year, the topics and readings may shift in order to incorporate some of the recent debates and scholarship within the field.

General and Specific Competencies:

General Competencies:

1. To develop critical perspectives with respect to historical interpretations of the past.
2. To complement historical analyses with other methodologies from the social sciences.
3. To employ comparative methods in order to gain additional perspectives on historical debates.
4. To recognize the ways in which global and world history challenges and questions interpretations of phenomena, which have been previously examined from a national, regional, or local perspective.
5. To elaborate grand narratives of long duration that cross political, geographical and temporal frontiers.
6. To provide students with experience in constructive peer review, presentation skills, and essay writing.

Specific competencies:

1. Analysis of the paradigmatic theories of the Great Divergence debate.

2. Analysis of demographic, ecological, economic, and political-institutional approaches to historical development and sustainability.

3. Analysis of the development of western gender systems, and the influence of gender on the writing of history.

4. Analysis of how race and ethnicity have defined and shaped the status of minorities over time.

5. Analysis of how religious, gender, and ethno-racial difference have been perceived from different cultural perspectives in history.

6. Analysis of food as a part of human experience including its roles as sustenance, commodity, cultural artifact and signifier of gender, ethnicity, and status.

7. Analysis of the relationships among food, connectivity, identity, and power in world history.

Programme:

1. Introduction to the Course
2. The Great Divergence
3. Minorities, Race, Religion, and Ethnicity
4. Gender, Power and Identity
5. Global Food and Foodways

Methodology:

Each session will consist of one-hour lecture and one-hour seminar and class discussion. The extra 15 minutes will be dedicated to organizational matters.

Evaluation Criteria:

Over the course of the semester, each student will have to hand in seven brief essays (approximately 6.000 characters with spaces) that summarize, analyse and critique the text (or texts) assigned for the present week. Each essay must be handed in by the end of the class session. As there are 12 sessions, students will not hand an essay in the first session and in four other sessions. There is no final project.

When writing a paper, it is recommended that students take into account: (1) the main thesis of the reading or readings; (2) why the research issue is important; (3) methodology; (4) how different types of evidence (written documents, demographic or economic data, archaeological sources) are used to support the central thesis; (4) weak points (i.e. not enough empirical support; logical jumps); (5) debatable points.

One way to gain a perspective on such short essays is to peruse book reviews in historical journals. In these, the reviewer generally summarizes the argument, outlines the methodology, reviews the evidence, and highlights weak and debatable points.

The final Grade will be calculated according the following rubric:

a. Preparation and Participation: 30 percent.
b. Essays: 70 percent

Schedule (with obligatory readings)

Session 1. The Great Divergence: Economy (30 September)

Jan de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behaviour and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1-237.

Session 2: The Great Divergence: Ecology and Geography (7 October)

Kenneth Pomeranz, "Political Economy and Ecology on the Eve of Industrialization: Europe, China, and the Global Conjuncture," *American Historical Review*, 107, no. 2 (2002): 425-446.

P.H.H. Vries, "Are Coal and Colonies Really Crucial? Kenneth Pomeranz and the Great Divergence," *Journal of World History*, 12, no. 2 (Fall 2001): 407-46.

Jan de Vries, "The Great Divergence after Ten Years: Justly Celebrated Yet Hard to Believe," *Historically Speaking: The Bulletin of the Historical Society,* 12, no. 4 (2011): 13-15.

Session 3. The Great Divergence: Climate (14 October)

Geoffrey Parker, *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change & Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century*, 1 - 113 (Part I, chp. 1-4), 244-290 (Part II, chp. 9), 484-506 (Part III, chp. 16), 612-667 (Part V, chp. 21, 22), 686-697 (Epilogue).

Kenneth Pomeranz, "Weather, War, and Welfare: Persistence and Change in Geoffrey Parker's Global Crisis," J.R. McNeill, "Mauder Minimum and Parker Maximum," and Jack Goldstone, "Climate Lessons from History," *Historically Speaking: The Bulletin of the Historical Society,* 14, no. 5 (2013), 29-39.

Session 4. Conceptualizing Religious and Ethnic Alterity in the Western and Islamicate Worlds (21 October)

Bo Strath, *Europe and the Other, Europe as the Other* (Bruxelles; New York: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2000), pp. 1-32, 67-86, 113-122. Read for lecture

Maya Shatzmiller ed., *Nationalism and Minority Identities in Muslim Societies* (Ontario: McGill-Queen's Press, 2005), pp. 3-21, 59-84. Read for lecture

David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2013), Introduction, pp. 1-12; Chapter 5, "Jews and Power in Medieval Europe," pp. 183-216. Read for discussion

Session 5. Racism, Ethnicity, and Colonialism (28 October)

Marc Bell, *Racism and Equality in the European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), chapter 1. Reading for lecture

Erik Tangerstad, "'The Third World' as an Element in the Collective Construction of a Post-Colonial European Identity," in Strath, *Europe and the Other,* pp. 157-193 Reading for lecture

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978), Introduction and pp. 31-49. Reading for lecture

Edward Said and his critics:
Said, *Orientalism*, chapter 1 and chapter 2, "The scope of Orientalism," pp. 31-110. Reading for discussion

Daniel Martin Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, pp. 3-28, 237-305. Reading for discussion

Session 6. From Mudejars to Muslims in the West (or Western Muslims?) (4 November)

Brian A. Catlos, *Muslims in Latin Christendom, c. 1050-1614* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 1-17, 163-227, 281-308. Reading for lecture.

Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 3-11, 144-173, 200-223. Reading for lecture.

Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), chapter 1, "The headscarf controversies," pp. 21-41, chapter 2, "Racism," pp. 42-89, and chapter 3, "Secularism," pp. 90-123. Reading for discussion.

Session 7. Gender, Power, and Identity: A Genealogy of the Gender System in the Western World (11 November)

Joan Wallach Scott (1986), "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," in *American Historical Review***,** 91 (5): 1053-1075.

Session 8. Gender, Power, and Identity: Values and Interests Behind the Writing of History (18 November)

Almudena Hernando, "How Archaeology Has Legitimized a Patriarchal Society," in *Recovering Archaeology. Beyond the Tropes of Modernity*, ed. Alfredo González Ruibal (Routledge: London, 2013), 155-67.

Session 9. Gender, Power, and Identity: Maintenance (25 November)

Diane Gifford-González, "Gaps in Zooarchaeological Analyses of Butchery: Is gender an issue?" in *From Bones to Behaviour: Ethnoarchaeological and Experimental Contributions to the Interpretation of Faunal Remains*, ed. J. Hudson (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University, 1993), 181-99.

Session 10. Local Food and Global Foodways: Analysing Migration, Colonialism and Empire through Food (2 December)

Martin Jones, *et al*, "Food Globalization in Prehistory." *World Archaeology*, 43, no. 4 (2011): 665-675.

Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Viking, 1985.

Session 11. (9 December) Historical Perspectives on Food, Foodways, and Identities

Arjun Appadurai, "How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India." *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 30, no. 1 (1988): 3-24.

Nathan MacDonald, "Chewing the Cud: Food and Memory in Deuteronomy," in *Not Bread Alone: The Uses of Food in the Old Testament* (2008)*,* 70-99.

Session 12. The Politics of Food (16 December)

Michael Dietler, "Theorizing the Feast: Rituals of Consumption, Commensal Politics, and Power in African Contexts." *Feasts: Archaeological and Ethnographic Perspectives on Food, Politics, and Power* (2001): 65-114.

Enrique C. Ochoa, "Political histories of food." *The Oxford Handbook of Food History* (2012): 23.

Complementary Bibliography (by themes):

1. Great Divergence

Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (London: Penguin, 2011)

Brian Fagan, *The Great Warming: Climate Change and the Rise and Fall of Civilizations* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008)

Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: Cine, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000)

Jean-Laurent Rosenthal and Roy Bin Wong, *Before and Beyond Divergence* (Cambridge: Harvard, 2011)

Peer Vrees, *State, Economy and the Great Divergence* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015)

2. Minorities, Race, Religion and Ethnicity

Leila Ahmed, *A Quiet Revolution: The Veil's Resurgence from the Middle East to America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011)

Martin Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization* (London: Free Association Books, 1987)

Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982)

Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*, reprint ed. (London: Oneworld Publications, 2009)

Winthrop D. Jordan, *The White Man's Burden: Historical Origins of Racism in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974)

Joane Nagel, *Race, Ethnicity, and Sexuality: Intimate Intersections, Forbidden Frontiers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003)

3. Gender, Power, and Identity

Almudena Hernando, *La fantasía de la individualidad* (Buenos Aires: Katz, 2012)

Francesca Bray, *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997)

R.S. Cowan, R.S., *More Work for the Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* (Basic Books: New York, 1985).

Sandra Montón-Subías, and María Sánchez-Romero eds. (2008), *The Archaeology of Maintenance Activities* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2008).

Sandra Montón-Subías, and Sandra Lozano Rubio, "La arqueología feminista en la normatividad académica" *Complutum* (2012)

4. Global Food and Foodways

Rebecca Earle, *The Body of the Conquistador: Food, Race and the Colonial Experience in Spanish America, 1492–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Sarah R. Graff, and Enrique Rodríguez-Alegría, eds., *The Menial Art of Cooking: Archaeological Studies of Cooking and Food Preparation*. (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2012)

Sidney W. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and The Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996)

Jeffrey Pilcher, Jeffrey 2012, *The Oxford Handbook of Food History,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012)

Jakob A. Klein, and Anne Murcott, *Food Consumption in Global Perspective: Essays in the Anthropology of Food in Honour of Jack Goody*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014)

Katheryn C. Twiss, *The Archaeology of Food and Identity* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2007)