THE GRADUATE CENTER
Ph.D. PROGRAM IN HISTORY

History and Theory II
(HIST 72300)
Fall 2019

Professor Samira Haj
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Wednesday, 4:15-6:15

Course Description:

The question of the relationship of theory to history is laden with problems. While it is obvious that historians carry their research in archives, it is not obvious what analytical frameworks historians utilize to make sense of the past, its relationship to the present and its relevance to the future if any. Nor, for that matter, is the question of what is particularly historical about the Archives in specific or History as a discipline in general. The objective of the seminar is to explore more deeply the theoretical and analytical concerns that have haunted historians since History established itself as a discipline. The course is de facto thematically organized as well as interdisciplinary, which by implication means that it will be drawing on different bodies of knowledge, including philosophy, political theory, anthropology, with possibly some written narratives and accounts drawn from the field of history itself.

This course is a follow-up of the first History and Theory seminar and is a continuation rather than a repeat. While it might cover similar themes in more depth, it will not repeat the reading material covered in the first seminar, except when its necessary. The course is therefore open to students that have already taken the first and to all other students interested in the topic.

Course Requirement:

1) Weekly responses and presentations: 50%
Students will be divided into groups and each group will be expected to write a short paper explicating the weeks reading and raising questions relating to it. These papers should be sent out to all members of the seminar the evening before the seminar meets. Regardless of the group leading the discussion, all students must be fully prepared and participate in the weekly discussions.
2) Final Paper: 50%
Student are expected to write a final term paper of approximately 20-25 pages in length. The paper can be either written in the form of a historiography or a research paper that touches on the theme discussed in class. Students must discuss the topic of their papers in advance with me. The paper is due at the end of term.

Tentative Reading list:
David Carr, Experience and History: Phenomenological Perspective on the Historical World.
Francois Hartog, Regimes of Historicity.
Jacques Derrida, Specters of Marx.
Michel Le Certeau, The Writing of History.
Michael Roth, Memory, Trauma, and History.
Paul Ricoeur, Memory, History and Forgetting.
Hayden White, The Practical Past.
Marc Nichanian, (Gil Anidjar trans.), The Historiographic Perversion.
Enzo Traverso, Left-Wing Melancholia: Marxism, History, and Memory.
Giorgio Agamben, Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience.
Weekly Readings: Open to Change

**Week 1:** Introduction

**Week 2 (Sept 4th):** Pondering the “Historical”?
Reading:

**Week 2 (11th):** Is History a Philosophy or Science?
**Required:**

**Recommended:**

**Week 3 (18th):** History & Literature
**Required:**
- Hayden White, *The Practical Past*, assign chapters

**Week 4 (25th):** Conditions of Possibility
**Required:**
Reinhardt Koselleck, *Sediments of Time: On Possible Histories, Part 1 & 2* (pp. 3-177)

**Recommended:**
Koselleck, “Space of Experience” and “Horizon of Expectation”: Two Historical Categories” in Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time”.

**Week 5 (Oct 2nd):**
**Required:**
Koselleck, -----------, Part 3 (177-267).

**Recommended:**

**Week 6 (9th):** No Class

**Week 7 (16th):** No Class

**Week 8. (23d):** Historical Condition
**Required:**
- Hayden White, *The Content and the Form*, chapter 7 (His reading of Ricour)

**Week 9 (30th):** Presentism
**Required:**
Francois Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*, Introduction, (1-21) and Orders of Time 2 (97-204).

**Recommended:**
Kerwin Lee Klein, “On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse” in *From History to Theory* (112-138).

**Week 10 (Nov. 6th):** History and Memory
**Required:**
- Enzo Traverso, *Left-Wing Melancholia: Marxism, History, and Memory*..
Recommended:
Derrida, *Specters of Marx*.

**Week 11 (13th)**  Trauma and History I
**Required:**
- Michael Roth, *Memory, Trauma, and History: Living with The Past*.

**Week 12 (20th)**  Trauma & History II
**Required:**
- Marc Nichanian (Translation by Gil Anidjar), *The Historiographic Perversion*.

**Week 13 (27th)**  No Class (Thanksgiving Week)

**Week 14 (Dec. 4th)**  History and Experience
**Required:**
- Giorgio Agamben, *Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience*.
- David Carr, *Experience and History: Phenomenological Perspective on the Historical World*, selected chapters.
**Recommended:**

**Week 15 (Dec 11th)**  Text, Discourse, and Genealogy
**Required:**
- Hayden White, *The Content and the Form*, chapter 5 (his reading of Foucault’s antihumanism)