

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
Department of Anthropology

ANTH 108b
History, Time, and Tradition

Spring Term 2007
Tu Fri 3:10-4:30 p.m.

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Office Hours: Tu 2:00-3:00, Th 1:00-2:00, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This class is an interdisciplinary investigation of the relationship between cultural representations of the past, systems for measuring time, and the construction/preservation of tradition. After exploring the analytical and methodological role of the temporal dimension in various disciplines, we turn to comparing the cultural construction of the past in particular social and historical contexts. A diachronic look at changing notions of time and the past in Western culture provides the foundation for selected comparative cases from Mesoamerica, South America, Austronesia, and Africa that illustrate the multiple linkages between social organization, temporal consciousness, and historical representation. The creative manipulation of the past is examined in readings dealing with the invention of tradition, the embodiment of the past in monuments museums, and collective processes of remembering and forgetting.

READINGS: Class time will be devoted to detailed, critical discussion of the assigned readings. The readings listed below represent the maximal assignments; the list will be modified to fit the interests of the students in the class. There are three paperback textbooks for the class. In addition, all the assignments from books are on reserve at the library. Some of the readings that are available as PDFs are posted on WebCT.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: There are four graded requirements for this course (1) an 6-page mid-term essay on an assigned topic printed at the end of this syllabus (20%); (2) regular attendance and active, informed participation in class discussion, including several short in-class presentations (20%); short in-class quiz dealing with Units 6-9 (20%); (4) a final research paper (12-15 pages long) on a topic selected in consultation with the instructor (40%). Students who miss more than three classes will be subject to a one letter grade deduction. Assignments are due on the date assigned; unexcused late work will be subject to a one-third letter grade deduction.

TEXTBOOKS: The following paperback textbooks are available for purchase at the bookstore:

- 1) Peter Nabokov, A Forest of Time.
- 2) Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger, eds, The Invention of Tradition.
- 3) Marshall Sahlins, Islands of History.

SPECIAL NOTE: If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

PART ONE: HISTORY ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES

Unit 1: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Temporal and Historical Narrative

- 1) Stephen J. Gould, "Evolution and the Triumph of Homology, or Why History Matters," American Scientist 74 (1986): 60-69. PDF
- 2) Roland Barthes, "The Discourse of History," The Rustle of Language, pp. 127-40. PDF
- 3) Carlo Ginzburg, "Roots of a Scientific Paradigm," Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method. PDF
- 4) Hayden White, "Interpretation in History," New Literary History 4:2 (1973): 281-314. PDF
- 5) Roman Jakobson and Krystyna Pomorska, "Dialogue on Time in Language and Literature," Poetics Today 2:1a (1980): 15-27. PDF
- 6) Paul Ricoeur, "Narrative Time," Critical Inquiry 7:1 (1980): 169-190. PDF

Unit 2: Historians Look at History

- 1) Wilhelm von Humboldt, "On the Historian's Task," History and Theory 6:1 (1967 [1821]): 57-71. PDF
- 2) Carl Becker, "What Is the Historical Fact?" Western Political Quarterly 7 (1955): 327-40. PDF
- 3) R. G. Collingwood, "History as a Re-enactment of Past Experiences," The Idea of History, pp. 282-301.
- 4) Fernand Braudel, "History and the Social Sciences: The Longue Duree," On History, pp. 64-82. PDF
- 5) Reinhart Koselleck, "History, Histories, and Formal Structures in Time," Futures Past, pp. 92-104.
- 6) Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for "Indian" Pasts?" Representations 37 (1992): 1-26. PDF

Unit 3: The Place of History in Anthropological Theory

- 1) Mary Helm, "Time, History, and the Future of Anthropology," Ethnohistory 25 (1978). PDF
- 2) Thomas Trautman, "The Revolution in Ethnological Time," Man 27 (1992): 379-97. PDF
- 3) E. E. Evans-Pritchard, "Anthropology and History," Essays in Social Anthropology, pp. 46-65.
- 4) Claude Levi-Strauss, "Time Regained," The Savage Mind, pp. 217-244, 257-69.
- 5) Marshall Sahlins, "Other Times, Other Customs: The Anthropology of History," Islands of History, pp. 32-72. PDF and TEXTBOOK
- 6) Richard J. Parmentier, "Signs of History, Signs in History," The Sacred Remains, pp. 11-15. PDF

PART TWO: COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN SOCIETY AND HISTORY

Unit 4: History, Time, and Memory in the Western Tradition: Ancient to Medieval

- 1) M. I. Finley, "Myth, Memory, and History," History and Theory 4 (1964-65): 281-300. PDF
- 2) Arnaldo Momigliano, "Time in Ancient Historiography," History and Theory PDF
- 3) Marc Brettler, "Memory in Ancient Israel," Memory and History in Christianity and Judaism (ed. 4) Michael A. Signer), pp. 1-17. PDF
- 4) Francois Hartog, "The Invention of History: The Pre-history of a Concept from Homer to Herodotus." History and Theory 39 (2000): 384-395. PDF
- 5) Maurizio Bettini, "Mythos/Fabula: Authoritative and Discredited Speech," History of Religions 2006: 197-212. PDF
- 6) Jacques Le Goff, "Merchants' Time and Church's Time in the Middle Ages," Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages, pp. 29-42. PDF

Unit 5: History and Time in the Western Tradition: Renaissance to Modern

- 1) Anthony Grafton, "Dating History: The Renaissance and Reformation of Chronology." *Daedalus* (Spring 2003). PDF
- 2) Sabine MacCormack, "Universals and Particulars: Themes and Persons," *On the Wings of Time*, pp. 1-28. PDF
- 3) Elizabeth Eisenstein, "Clio and Chronos: An Essay on the Making and Breaking of History-book Time," *History and Theory*, 6 (1966): 36-64. PDF
- 4) David Landes, "Clocks and the Wealth of Nations," *Daedalus* Spring (2003). PDF
- 5) E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism." *Past and Present* 38 (1967): 56-97. PDF
- 6) Frederic Jameson, "The End of Temporality," *Critical Inquiry* 2003: 695-718. PDF

Unit 6: The Structure of History in Oceania

- 1) Sahlins, *Islands of History*, chs. 1, 4, 5. TEXTBOOK
- 2) Valerio Valeri, "Temporal Forms of Society: Chronological and Subjective Time, Mythical and Historical Time among the Huaulu (Eastern Indonesia), *Fragments from Forests and Libraries*, pp. 311-331. PDF
- 3) Richard J. Parmentier, "Diagrammatic Icons and Historical Processes in Belau." *American Anthropologist* 87 (1985):840-852. PDF
- 4) Richard J. Parmentier, "Models of Transformation of Belauan Polity," *The Sacred Remains*, pp. 127-196.

Unit 7: Oral Tradition and Ethnohistory in Africa

- 1) Jan Vansina, "Deep-down Time: Political Tradition in Central Africa." *History in Africa* 16 (1989): 341-362. PDF
- 2) Thomas Spear, "Oral Traditions: Whose History?" *History in Africa* 8 (1981): 165-81. PDF
- 3) T. O. Beidelman, "Myth, Legend, and Oral History," *Anthropos* 65 (1965): 74-97. PDF
- 4) Wyatt MacGaffey, "Oral Tradition in Central Africa," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 7:3 (1974): 417-426 PDF

Unit 8: Mythic Narrative and Calendrical Time in Ancient Mesoamerica and South America

- 1) Anthony Aveni, "The Interlocking Calendars of the Maya," *Empires of Time*, pp. 185-252.
- 2) Nancy Farriss, "Remembering the Future, Anticipating the Past: History, Time, and Cosmology among the Maya of Yucatan," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 29 (1987): 566-93. PDF
- 3) Sabine MacCormack, "Pachacuti: Miracles, Punishments, and Last Judgment: Visionary Past and Prophetic Future in Early Colonial Peru," *American Historical Review* 93 (1988): 960-1006. PDF
- 4) Wayne Elzey, "The Nahua Myth of the Suns," *Numen* 23 (1976): 114-135. PDF

Unit 9: Myth, History, and Narrative in Native North America

- 1) Peter Nabokov, *A Forest of Time*, chs., 1, 2, 5, 6. TEXTBOOK
- 2) Calvin Martin, "Ethnohistory: A Better Way to Write Indian History." *Western Historical Quarterly* 9:1 (1978): 41-56. PDF
- 3) Alfonso Ortiz, "Some Concerns Central to the Writing of 'Indian' History." *The Indian Historian* (Winter 1977).

PART THREE: THE PAST EMBODIED

Unit 10: The Invention of the Past

- 1) Bernard Cohn, "The Past of an Indian Village," Comparative Studies in Society and History PDF
- 2) Edward Shils, "Tradition," Comparative Studies in Society and History 13 (1971): 122-159 PDF
- 3) Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland," The Invention of Tradition (ed. E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger), pp. 15-41. TEXTBOOK
- 4) David Cannadine, "The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the 'Invention of Tradition', c. 1820-1977," The Invention of Tradition, pp. 101-164. TEXTBOOK
- 5) Bernard S. Cohn, "Representing Authority in Victorian India," The Invention of Tradition, pp. 165-210. TEXTBOOK
- 6) Terence Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa," The Invention of Tradition, pp. 211-262. TEXTBOOK

Unit 11: The Sedimentation of History in Monuments and Museums

- 1) Alan Radley, "Artefacts, Memory and a Sense of the Past," Collective Remembering (ed. David Middleton and Derek Edwards), pp. 46-59. PDF
- 2) Alois Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin." Oppositions 25 (1982): 21-51. PDF
- 3) Alban Bensa, "Time, Objects and Identities: The Destiny of Kanak Art," People and Things (ed. Monique Jeudy-Ballini and Bernard Juillerat), pp. 289-309.
- 4) Wu Hung, "Tiananmen Square: A Political History of Monuments," Representations 35 (1991): 84-117. PDF
- 5) Eric Gable and Richard Handler, "Public History, Private Memory: Notes on the Ethnography of Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, USA." Ethnos 65:2 (2000): 237-252. PDF
- 6) Richard J. Parmentier, "Institutional Regimentation of Touristic Experience," Signs in Society, pp. 134-142.

Unit 12: Remembering and Forgetting as Collective Processes

- 1) Jan Assmann, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity" (2001). PDF
- 2) Susanne Kuchler, "Malanggan: Art and Memory in a Melanesian Society," Man 22 (1987): 238-255. PDF
- 3) Michael Rowlands, "Remembering to Forget: Sublimation as Sacrifice in War Memorials." The Art of Forgetting (ed. Adrian Forty and Susanne Kuchler), pp. 127-145. PDF
- 4) Debora Battaglia, "The Body of the Gift: Memory and Forgetting in Sabarl Mortuary Exchange." American Ethnologist 19 (1992):3-18. PDF
- 5) Oakdale, "History and Forgetting in an Indigenous Amazonian Community," Ethnohistory 48 (2001): 381-401. PDF
- 6) Edward T. Linenthal, Preserving Memory, pp. 192-227.

Midterm Essay Assignment

We began the semester with three units in which readings from several disciplines (history, art history, anthropology, paleontology, linguistics, etc.) addressed the relationship among "history," "time," "memory," and "tradition." Of course not every author was concerned with each of these four related topics and certainly not every author used these four terms in the same way. For your midterm essay, pick three authors who represent at least two different disciplines (i.e., don't pick three historians or three

anthropologists). First, present a carefully constructed account of how each of your chosen authors views the relationship among these four terms; if one or more of the terms does not seem to play a role in their article, explain why it might not be relevant (or perhaps why it should be relevant but wasn't discussed by the author). Second, in light of the readings in Unit 4 and 5, which attempt to trace the "prehistory" and "history" of historiography in the Western tradition, discuss for each of your three authors the following question. To what degree does the author seem to emerge from the context of the Western cultural tradition of thinking about history, time, memory, and tradition, or to what degree is the author bucking against that very tradition? To summarize the assignment: I am asking you to write about degree to which scholarly reflection on history, etc. is embedded in the historical experience of the society in which that reflection takes place.

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