HISTORY AND THEORY:
Comparative Imperialisms
History 703

Spring 2006
Wednesdays 1:20-3:20
5245 Humanities Building

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Course Description
This course will explore the nature of modern imperialism. We will examine this complex phenomenon from a number of methodological and comparative historical perspectives. The course will begin with a series of provocative and influential theoretical readings, followed by an intensive focus on the history of Japanese and American imperialism – two imperial “latecomers” – in the late 19th and 20th centuries.

The course will seek to accomplish four primary aims, among others. First, we will develop a firm and critical grounding in some of the most influential theoretical perspectives on the study of imperialism. Second, we will historicize these theories by examining different empirical approaches to the study of imperialism. Third, we will focus on Japan and the United States for the sake of building historical expertise in these crucial cases. Fourth, we will use our deep knowledge of the Japanese and U.S. cases to contemplate how one might study imperialism in other chronological and geographical contexts. In the end, we will analyze the phenomenon of imperialism as comparative international history.

Weekly Response Essays
Each week by 4:PM on the Tuesday before class, all students should send a short response essay to the course email list. This response essay should include 3 basic paragraphs. The first paragraph should summarize the key arguments in the readings and their significance. The second paragraph should analyze how the week’s readings relate to other course and outside texts. The third paragraph should offer the student’s critical assessment of the week’s readings: What was most persuasive? What was least persuasive? Which are the issues and questions that need more attention? What kind of new research do the readings inspire?
Annotated Bibliography Assignment
During the first half of the semester each students should, in consultation with the professors, choose a topic “case study” for further research. Students can examine a theoretical or empirical topic raised in the course (e.g. Orientalism or the occupation of Japan). They can also examine a related theoretical or empirical topic, especially topics from other regions of the world, not addressed in the course.

On March 22 students should submit an annotated bibliography on their chosen case study. The annotated bibliography should include at least seven substantial secondary sources, and at least two primary sources. The annotated bibliography should offer one paragraph describing each source, and its relevance for the historical case study. Please bring these annotated bibliographies to class in hard copy.

Case Study Paper, Final Assignment
On May 3, each student should submit a polished, footnoted, and analytical research paper on his/her chosen case study. The papers should provide a rigorously defended argument about an important theoretical and/or empirical question in the historical study of imperialism. The papers should draw deeply on the annotated bibliographies submitted and critiqued earlier in the course. The papers should cover 15-17 pages. Please bring these final case study papers to class in hard copy.
Book List
(Books available at the University Bookstore)


Readings with ** are part of the course pack available through the Humanities Copy Center.
Course Schedule

1/18  Introduction and overview

1/25  Classical Theories of Imperialism

2/1   The Imperialism of Free Trade and its Critics

2/8   Orientalism and its Critics

2/15  The Cultural Turn

2/22  Diplomacy, Economics, and Empire: Japan

3/1   Diplomacy, Economics, and Empire: The United States

3/8   Internationalism and Imperialism: Japan

3/15 SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS
3/22 Internationalism and Imperialism: The United States
Frank Ninkovich, *The United States and Imperialism* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), all;

*Annotated Bibliographies due in class.*

3/29 Imperial “Frontiers:” Japan
**Mariko Tamanoi, ed., *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), 1-52, 82-149, 184-206;

4/5 Imperial “Frontiers:” The United States

4/12 The U.S. Occupation of Japan

4/19 The U.S. Occupation of Western Europe

4/26 Imperialism and the Cold War: East Asia

5/3 Imperialism and the Cold War: A Global Perspective

*Case Study papers due in class.*