2019-20
MPhil Module List
MPhil in American History

The American Carceral State
Dr Heather Thompson

Drawing from a sampling of the most important scholarship on the American carceral state, this module asks students to consider, critically, how historians should define the carceral state, how we should understand its origin story, and how we should think about the relationship between the “carceral state” and the American state itself. In the process of studying the history of American carceral state, this module will also encourage students to revisit current scholarly understandings of other major developments in American history—everything from the abolition of slavery, to the rise of American welfare state, to protest movements in America, to the origins of urban crisis, to the rise of the New Right, to the impact of deindustrialization, to the role of privatization in America, Immigration in America, and more. Whether a student is inherently interested in the history of crime, punishment and prisons or not, this module will get them thinking about the historical problems they are interested in, in new ways. This module asks students to read a book, and several articles, a week. It also offers a supplemental reading list for students who would like to study the issues raised in this module in more depth.

Colonial America
Dr Sarah Pearsall

What, where, and when is colonial America, exactly? And how and why does it matter? As recently as twenty years ago, “Colonial America” usually meant the thirteen British colonies on the eastern coast of North America in the years from 1607-1776. Much has changed in the last few decades, though. This class considers the ways this concept has been redefined, as well the transformation put in motion by contact, trade, and settlement in early modern America. Undeniably, colonization and settlement in North America brought all kinds of people, from all kinds of places, together, in new ways. The movement of people, plants, microbes, and animals resulted in devastating loss, giddy-ing riches, creative re-alignments, and, arguably, the creation of modern worlds. This
course will explore some of those contacts, and the ways they have shaped the American experience. What happened when previously disparate groups found themselves in contact in this world? How did colonialism function in these encounters? How should historians understand the nature of colonialism and its place in American history? How has colonial America grown and changed in the hands of historians of the last few decades? Readings will include some classic works but will also engage with new literature: books, articles, journal special issues, podcasts, and even hashtags (#VastEarlyAmerica).

The History of Capitalism in the United States
Dr Emma Teitelman

Since the 2008 economic collapse, historians have revived debates about the development of capitalism in the United States, approaching older questions with new urgency and analytical perspectives. As these literatures underscore, capitalism is not an autonomous or natural system but rather is embedded in culture, institutions, social relations, and history. Is this story of American capitalism one of continuity or discontinuity? What are its major points of rupture and what do they teach us about capitalism as a particular political-economic form? Historians have approached these questions in different, often conflicting ways. This MPhil option will introduce some of these key historiographical debates, especially as they relate to capitalism’s historical contradictions and moments of transformation. We will consider, among other questions, how historians have understood the relationship between capitalism, slavery, and emancipation; the consolidation of corporate capitalism; the unevenness of capitalist transformation, especially in relation to race, gender, and the family; and the changing role of the state in social and economic life, including the rise and fall of the American welfare state in the twentieth century. Readings will open up theoretical and methodological questions about how to analyze the history of capitalism, beginning in the first two weeks with definitions of capitalism itself.

Methods and approaches in U.S. Cultural History
Dr Julia Guarneri

Since the 1980s, cultural historians have dramatically shifted the landscape of academic U.S. history. Subjects once considered outside the bounds of serious study—such as popular fiction, social dance, or television—have become legitimate topics in their own right, and historians of all stripes now routinely turn to cultural sources. As we read both recent and classic texts in the field, we will ask: how does our overall picture of U.S. history change when we acknowledge and incorporate cultural forms? What difference does it make when we locate some of the United States’ most fundamental institutions and events—plantation slavery, corporate capitalism, the Cold War—within American culture?

MPhil in Early Modern History

Absolutism, Monarchism and State Formation in Early Modern Europe
Dr David Smith

This MPhil option encourages students to explore the wide variety of ways in which historians have tried to understand the nature of monarchical states in early-modern Britain and Europe. The course will consider how far this was a distinctive period in the development of such states, and the extent to which it was characterized by continuity or change. The classes will examine some of the different concepts and models that historians have evolved to understand monarchical states and state formation, and consider whether the term ‘absolutism’ is more of a help or a hindrance to gaining such an understanding.

The first class will offer a general introduction to the range of interpretations and methodologies that are found in the vast historiography on this subject. The remaining six classes will focus in turn on institutional approaches; intellectual approaches; the emergence of the fiscal-military state; the nature of the confessional state; the significance of iconography and the visual arts; and the nature of the ceremonial and ritual that surrounded monarchies in the early-modern period. The course integrates British and European themes, and each class will be built around two or three key books or articles, at least one of which is primarily British in focus, and at least one primarily European in focus. Students will be expected to become familiar with these assigned readings, and to present to the group on the readings assigned for one of the classes.

The Book
Mr Scott Mandelbrote

This course will look at how books were made in the early modern period and how as an artefact they tell us far more about themselves than can be found simply by reading
them. The seven classes are likely to include topics such as: ‘Introduction to the History of the Book’; ‘Manuscripts and Early Modern Culture’; ‘Printing in the Hand Press Era’; ‘Descriptive Bibliography’; ‘Early Modern Bookbindings’; ‘The History of Libraries’; and ‘The Book Trade’.

The module will be taught in a series of weekly classes of ninety minutes, led by the convenor and with a number of invited speakers or demonstrators. There will be opportunities to see how books were printed and to study techniques of book-binding, as well as to consider topics such as the transition from manuscript to print, the histories of libraries and the early modern book trade, and the history of reading practices. Those taking the course will learn how to make an accurate, bibliographical description of an early modern printed book.

It is expected that senior officers in the University Library and other Cambridge Libraries will be involved in teaching this module, and that those taking the module will have an opportunity to visit a number of College libraries.

**Global Early Modernity?**

Dr Helen Pfeifer

Flows of capital and of labor, exchange of ideas and commodities, destruction of environments, expansion of empire: is this the face of globalisation in our own time, or in earlier centuries as well? This MPhil Option examines how and to what end historians can conceive of a ‘global early modernity’. It investigates the analytical frameworks and the historical processes that have made the period 1400-1800 appear to be a new, global age.

The course begins with a discussion of concepts, periodisation, and geography. We will consider the histories of and assumptions behind the projects of ‘global’ and ‘early modern’ history, especially the influence of the social sciences. But we will also study how these concepts have changed as historians studying various parts of the world have adopted and adapted them. Have global frameworks helped us to ‘provincialise’ Europe, or have they allowed European expectations to colonise other historiographical fields?

Subsequent classes will address the political, economic, social, and cultural developments seen as foundational to global early modernity. How did early modern transformations differ from nineteenth- and twentieth-century ‘globalisations’? What role did empires play in forging early modern global connections? How did travel and exchange affect local cultures? As we examine these arenas, we will discuss various approaches to global history (comparative, connected, microhistorical, material, etc.), and the methodological challenges of each.

**Poverty, Disease and Medicine in Britain, 1500-1800**

Dr Samantha Williams

This course covers the history of poverty, disease and medicine broadly defined between 1500 and 1800. It will not provide a conventional ‘history of medicinal advances or gadgets’ but will provide a history of all manner of medical practitioners, as well as infirmary, dispensary and hospital provision. Despite tripartite divisions between physicians, surgeons and apothecaries there was an active ‘medical market place’ during this period. The course will place the development of the medical ‘profession’ within the context of high mortality rates from a wide range of diseases in the early modern period. The extent of poverty will be assessed, as well as the extent of welfare provision (including medical assistance) for the poor through the Old Poor Law. We will also consider charitable provision, such as almshouses and voluntary hospitals.

**Visual and Material Culture**

Professor Ulinka Rublack

Historians have based their enquiries on the interpretation of texts for such a long time that the importance of material culture and visual cultures has only recently come into their view. The early modern period was an age of expansion, increasing trade and consumption, global encounters, religious reform and new ideas about natural philosophy. All of these had an impact on the material life of early modern men and women.

This course examines how we can analyse this rich reservoir of remains and produce original research based on it. It will introduce you to important approaches to the study of material and visual cultures in our period, and pick up on themes which relate to your particular research interests. The sessions will span theoretical work and zoom in to examine individual artefacts. Close-looking can reveal how objects such as clocks and paintings had a “social life” – they symbolised aspirations, were integral to personal relationships, and changed with use, damage and repair.

During the course we will visit collections around Cambridge including the Fitzwilliam Museum. Class topics will include the agency of objects, objects and ideas, materialities, objects and senses, and connected material histories.
MPhil in Economic and Social History

African Economic History
Professor Gareth Austin
This option explores the economic history of Sub-Saharan Africa, currently one of the liveliest fields of new research in the whole of economic history, focusing upon (a) theories, methods and sources and (b) key debates. We assess the uses and limitations of different kinds of sources, consider how to get the most from a range of quantitative and qualitative methods, and explore external and internal, institutional and resource-based explanations of the region's relative poverty today. The specific historical issues are examined in broadly chronological order, from c.1700 to the present. Within that, recurrent themes include the long transition away from land abundance and labour scarcity; gender, labour coercion, and welfare; cultures and the market; state formation and state behaviour; entrepreneurship, adaptation and innovation; economic growth and the question of industrialization. Prior knowledge of economic theory or African history is not required. The overall aim is to enable students to develop their critical understandings of the evidential foundations of the major interpretations of the subject, and to equip those who plan research in this or related fields with analytical tools for the purpose.

British Currency and Credit Markets since the Seventeenth Century
Dr Anthony Hotson
The history of London's money and credit markets is one of intermittent crises interspersed with successive attempts to find ways and means of stabilising the system. The currency reforms of the eighteenth century and the banking ones of the nineteenth were followed by a period of remarkable confidence in London's financial institutions that lasted until the 1960s. Recent scholarship has emphasized the importance of the Bank of England's role as lender of last resort, and its modern extension, deposit insurance, and the deregulation that started in 1971 created a financial structure that disregarded the great currency crisis of 1695.

Health, Politics, and Economic Growth since 1750
Professor Simon Szreter
Most developed countries have experienced dramatic increases in health during the last two centuries, associated with the economic growth of the modern period. This paper examines more closely the relationship between economic growth and health according to the detailed historical record. The richly-documented British case will provide a central focus but comparative material will be considered. The course will explore the complexities of the relationship between economic growth and health, and the need to understand the crucial role of social institutions and political conflict in determining health outcomes for populations participating in rapid economic change. Students will be encouraged to pursue contemporary implications of policy relevance.

Inequality: a global history
Dr Pedro Ramos Pinto and Dr Poornima Paidipaty
From the Occupy movement to the Millennium Development Goals, inequality has re-emerged as a central topic of debate. But how inequalities between countries, groups and individuals have appeared, evolved and been challenged throughout history is seldom debated. This course will bring together economic, social and political perspectives in exploring how unequal outcomes (such as income, health or capability) have been created, sustained and challenged across the globe and throughout History. This will involve an economic history of distribution and development, intersected with a history of ideas about equality and inequality, and with a social history of the categories that sustain difference, including (but not limited to) gender, race, and religion.
This course will introduce students to the debates, conceptual tools, and empirical findings that are central to issues of labour and gender in the long run. The great majority of people have spent and still spend most of their adult lives working. The type of work they did/do, the training they received, how and if they were/are remunerated, all depend to some degree on their sex. Taking a thematic approach, we will look at the many ways in which that influence varied over time and place, and at the long-term patterns in structures of work and remuneration. Discussion of female labour force participation rates, wage rates, and the cultural valuation of work will be incorporated throughout the eight weeks.

Dr Amy Erickson

Institutions and Development
(Taught in collaboration with the MPhil in Development Studies)

Dr Shailaja Fennell

This paper explores the role of institutions in human development. The course is devised using a wide canvas with the intention of exploring the manner in which institutions have been conceptualised and analysed across individual disciplines in the social sciences. The lecture course brings together theoretical perspectives alongside both historical and current evidence on the interrelations between institutional structures and social and economic actions. The course undertakes an institutional analysis drawing on concepts and frameworks provided by the disciplines of economics, sociology, political science, law and anthropology. The lectures examine the institutions of the state, notably the role of the bureaucracy and judiciary; societal institutions such as NGOs and social groups, customary norms such as culture and caste that affect human development. Individual lectures explore institutions such as the market, firm and the state, examine the perspectives of different academic schools such as New Institutional Economics, Marxism, Human Development and Capability theory on institutional changes, and give due consideration to how key development concerns such as poverty, environment and education can be examined through an institutional lens.

Issues in Women’s (and Men’s) Work, 1300-2000
Dr Amy Erickson

In the early modern period, language and power were connected in a variety of ways. According to their rank, status, and gender, individuals were meant to speak (or remain silent) in socially appropriate ways in order to preserve ‘harmony.’ States were sensitive to and sought to police ‘subversive’ language in order to maintain their authority. But such ideals – with their emphasis on order and stability – were not always realizable. Furthermore, to the extent that they valorized stasis, they were ill-suited to a world that was undergoing significant change. In this period, socio-economic developments generated new (and sometimes pejorative) ways of thinking about the relationship between social position and speech. Travel, imperial expansion, and trade – in both goods and people – created new opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and conflict.

In this module, we shall think about language and its relationship to the power structures of the early modern world. How did language reflect, reproduce, and generate tensions within existing social and political hierarchies? To what extent did it facilitate the creation of new ones over the course of the period, particularly in imperial and colonial contexts? Is it possible to reconstruct the ‘voices’ of marginalized social groups that left little trace in the historical record? And what sorts of sources might enable us to go about answering these questions in the first place?

‘Late Development’: the uneven spread of industrialization in Asia, Africa and Latin America.
Professor Gareth Austin

Both qualitative and quantitative historical approaches will be considered. For more than a century, efforts have been made to understand women’s labour as part of the economy ‘more broadly.’ This course examines how successfully those efforts have been integrated into the ‘mainstream’ narrative and the gender issues affecting the way in which we tell economic stories about development, industrialisation, inequality, and institutions. Students will gain an understanding of the current state of debate, historical methods in the study of labour, and of the fundamental importance of labour in shaping social as well as economic structures, and cultural identities.
and changes in their domestic and international political contexts, and (more briefly) discuss the social and cultural dimensions. Not least, we consider the interactions of economies with their physical environments. While the weekly seminars will be framed comparatively, students may focus on individual regions or countries for their essays. The overall aim is to enable students to acquire a critical understanding of the key concepts, empirical methods, and evidence adduced in the debates on this theme.

MPhil in Medieval History

Medieval Manuscript Studies
Prof. Tessa Webber, with Dr Debby Banham

This unit provides an introduction to the use of medieval manuscript evidence, drawing upon the rich manuscript collections of the Cambridge colleges, University Library and Fitzwilliam Museum. Modern editions are an incomplete and sometimes misleading lens through which to examine the texts that were composed, copied, handled, read and heard during the Middle Ages. First-hand analysis of medieval manuscripts brings us closer to the ways in which their contents were encountered by medieval audiences, and contributes to our understanding of both the significance of those texts to those by whom and for whom they were produced as well as the practical means by which literature, knowledge and ideas were transmitted. This unit will provide instruction in the analysis of the physical structure of manuscripts, the identification of their contents and the forms of evidence for their place of origin and history of ownership and use, and the scholarly conventions of manuscript description. The manuscripts studied will range in date from the eighth to the fifteenth centuries but there will be a particular focus upon those containing texts that record or were used to mark the passage of time: from chronicles and historical narratives to saints’ lives, sermon collections and liturgical calendars. For students not on the Medieval History MPhil, this Option is only suitable for students who already have a basic level of Latin and medieval palaeography (equivalent to the level attained by students who have taken the Medieval History MPhil Core Course in Latin and Palaeography).

The Byzantine Empire: continuity and crisis from Justinian I to Basil II
Prof. Peter Sarris

Byzantium was an empire whose rulers prided themselves on the ideological, cultural and religious continuity of the East Roman state and on Constantinople’s direct legacy from the Roman Empire of antiquity.

Beneath the rhetoric of imperial continuity, however, it was also a world which underwent profound crisis in the seventh and eighth centuries caused by escalating warfare with the Sasanian empire of Persia and the nascent power of Islam.

This option provides students with the opportunity to study how the medieval empire of Byzantium both preserved and re-cast its late antique political, cultural and religious heritage. At the same time, it aims to introduce students to the key auxiliary skills necessary for advanced work in Byzantine studies by studying the transition from late antiquity to the age of the Macedonian emperors through the specific types of evidence on which the Byzantinist must rely.

The classes will deal in turn, therefore, with processes of continuity and crisis as revealed by the evolution of Byzantine historiography, hagiography, numismatics, sigillography, epigraphy and archaeology, legal sources, and Byzantine art and architecture. In addition to studying Latin, those without Greek should consult the option leader for advice about language instruction.

Religion and Power
Dr Carl Watkins

Once thought of as the ‘Age of Faith’, recent work on the middle ages has demonstrated how complex and variegated belief could be. The exploration of the intersection of religion – being bound by the law of faith – and power highlights crucial aspects of medieval society. This 8-week course will explore a number of conjunctions of religion and power, spanning from the highest to the lowest in medieval society. The terrain covered will fall mainly within the central and later middle ages, and will focus mostly on Catholic Europe, whilst also including Christian relations with and understandings of Judaism and Islam. The primary aim of this module is to encourage students to explore the different ways in which medieval religion intersected with aspects of social, political and cultural power in the period. Through these explorations, we will engage with the fundamental nature of ‘religion’ in the medieval past - its boundaries, its core functions, its claims upon groups and individuals – and the various different ways in which medievalists have approached, practically and conceptually, medieval Christendom and its discontents. There will be a deliberate bias towards ‘religion’ as experienced by the laity rather than only the ecclesiastical or spiritual elite.

Each week will focus on a particular area of analysis, using this to explore both interpretive arguments and different bodies of primary source material. The module as a whole does not (and could not) aim to cover ‘all’ of medieval religion: the point rather is to focus on particular areas that will illuminate wider issues methodologically, and which introduce students to a variety of perspectives and types of sources.

Law and Society
Prof. John Arnold

The primary aim of this module is to encourage students to think about the issues
This course examines a number of areas in which nineteenth-century Britons were condemned as non-modern and were pejoratively labelled ‘Victorian’. So what did we mean when we speak of ‘modern’ Britain? Is ‘modernity’ a meaningful concept? The result has been a series of disciplinary ‘turns’ – imperial, transnational, global, post-colonial. Focusing especially on the history of race and empire, this MPhil option will introduce students to some of these historiographical debates and in light of recent calls to decolonise and diversify what counts as ‘British’ history.

The course will be centred each week on class discussion of recently published scholarship at the cutting edge of the field. The final session will offer an opportunity to reflect on the term’s reading with a discussion of the promises and pitfalls of studying modern British history in a ‘global’ frame. The provisional seminar programme covers topics including slavery and emancipation; emigration and the creation of the ‘Angloworld’; race, science and population; migrants and regions in the first half of the twentieth century; migration and identity in Britain post-1945; activism, anti-racism and the politics of...
‘race’; and humanitarianism, decolonisation and the creation of a post-imperial ‘legacy’.

**Sexuality and Gender in Modern Britain**

Dr Lucy Delap

This MPhil option aims to introduce students to a range of methodological and critical approaches in the history of gender and sexuality, through examination of a series of case studies spanning roughly 1850-2000. Through seminar debates and examination of sources, students will explore how questions of gender and sexuality have been framed, approached and presented in recent scholarship. This option will provide a strong grounding in some emerging and innovative fields of historical inquiry, including queer history, parenting and childhood and histories of war. The two opening sessions will look at theoretical developments and ways of framing the history of sexuality and of feminism. A further five classes will explore different facets of the history of sexuality and gender, and a final class will allow students to present their assessed work ahead of submission. Assessment will be based on a 3-4000 word essay on a question of the student's own devising; support will be provided in framing a suitable question. The word limit does not include bibliography, footnotes and any appendices.

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**MPhil in Modern European History**

**Europe on the Move: Central Europe in the twentieth century**

Dr Celia Donert

This course explores national, transnational, and international perspectives on the history of migration and displacement in Central Europe during the twentieth century. From the collapse of the European land empires after World War I through the creation and destruction of the Nazi empire, the Cold War, and into the post-socialist present, the movement and management of populations has been connected to questions of statehood, sovereignty, citizenship, and statelessness. Drawing on political, social, and cultural history, the module considers the experiences of migrants, refugees, travellers, and traffickers not as marginal, but rather as central to our understanding of modern Central European history. The course is taught by means of eight two-hour seminars, which will consist of an introduction, student presentations on selected readings, and group discussion.

**The Modern Mediterranean**

Dr Arthur Asseraf and Dr Fernanda Gallo

Do the people living along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea have more in common with each other than with those living inland in Africa, Asia, and Europe? Since Fernand Braudel (1949), some historians have argued that we need to move away from a focus on land and place the sea at the centre of our historiographical practice. Yet this project is not without controversy – some have argued that writing Mediterranean history erases the very important differences and inequalities between people of the northern and southern shores. Even the most ardent partisans of Mediterranean history would argue that this unified space stopped to exist in the modern era, when the forces of nationalism, capitalism, and globalization destroyed the life that the people around the sea once shared.

Taking as its focus the rupture of the 19th century, this MPhil option will explore these historiographical debates through a variety of different themes. Recent years have seen a flurry of exciting works in the field of Mediterranean history that have revisited the Mediterranean as a category of historical analysis. By looking at a region that is often portrayed as a contact zone between different cultures, we will develop a critical look at the division between ‘European’ and ‘World’ history. As such, the course will be helpful not only to students interested in Southern Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, but to any students interested in transnational history and in problems of scale, as debates over the Mediterranean have influenced the history of other maritime spaces.

Each two-hour session will draw on select historiographical case-studies from around the Mediterranean basin, accompanied by student presentations on supplementary readings. This combination will give students a broad view of the space around the sea, moving from the straits of Gibraltar to the Suez Canal, stopping in cities, from Tunis to Salonica, on islands, in straits, on ships and into people’s homes. The final session will allow students to present their work in progress on their essays and to open up discussion on contemporary dynamics in both academic and geopolitical constructions of the Mediterranean.

**The Soviet Union and Russia since 1970**

Dr Mark Smith

It seems axiomatic that Vladimir Putin has created the great international crisis of the last decade, as Europe and the West have faced a ‘resurgent Russia’, a ‘neo-Stalinist state’, and an ‘unlimited kleptocracy’. What does recent history teach us about whether this is true and what these labels mean? In this Option, we visit first of all the lost world of late socialism, asking how the classic questions of Soviet history can apply to the 1970s and 1980s. Our most detailed work is on the dynamic and dramatic era of Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms. Finally, we interrogate the continuities and changes that have run across 1991 towards the transformations of the Yeltsin and Putin eras. Our aim is to understand the very recent past as an historical era, and thereby to probe the methods, sources, uses and limitations of contemporary history as a sub-discipline. Some of the themes and ideas of the convenor’s recent book, The Russia Anxiety, will be open for
debate in class, as will his current research into the last decades of Soviet history.

**Year of Revolt: 1968 in Europe**  
Dr Hanno Balz

In this course we will take a closer look at the dramatic events of 1968 in Europe – a year of social and political revolts, generational conflicts, and cultural activism – as well as their long-term consequences. The central focus of the course lies on Western Europe (France, West Germany, Italy) as well as on the theoretical, political and cultural backgrounds of the respective movements. The two-hour seminars will discuss primary and secondary texts as well as other sources and will also include student presentations on selected readings.

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**The Caribbean in World History**  
Dr Hank Gonzalez

The initial site of European overseas colonization, and the earliest destination for Africans in the transatlantic slave trade, the Caribbean region was the central nexus for the emergence of the modern world capitalist market. As the earliest point of contact in the 'Columbian exchange' of crops, peoples, diseases, and animal species, the birthplace of the Atlantic sugar plantation complex, and the so-called ‘cockpit’ of strategic conflict between European powers, the Caribbean is a natural point of focus for scholars of political economy, race, colonialism, ecology, and culture. This course traces the strategic global conflicts and key economic processes that have tied the Caribbean region to Western Europe, West Africa, and North America. Beginning with Spanish conquest and European inter-imperial conflict, this course covers the Haitian Revolution by which the initial site of European colonization gave rise to history's first postcolonial nation. The course goes on to cover the emergence of U.S. hegemony in the Caribbean basin, the development of Caribbean nationalism, the Cuban Revolution, and the rise of neoliberalism. From Cuba's Castroist dictatorship, to Haiti's neoliberal 'failed-state', to the colonial holdovers of Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe and Martinique, Caribbean societies have followed very different trajectories notwithstanding their shared histories of colonization, slavery and sugar.

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**Empires in Comparative Perspective**  
Professor Saul Dubow

An understanding of the historical formation of empires and their impact on the present is crucial to our comprehension of the contemporary world. In this course we shall examine a number of imperial formations, selected from around the world, with particular attention given to empires with broad regional and temporal spans. Comparisons will be drawn between different kinds of empires, their emergence, transformation, and demise. Political, intellectual, social and cultural perspectives on empire help to define the questions we shall formulate and address.

This course draws on the exceptional range and depth of expertise in the Cambridge World History Subject Group. After an introductory session on conceptual definitions of empire, the course proceeds on a weekly basis with presentations by experts in their fields. These classes may include a focus on the Portuguese and Spanish empires as early modern European maritime formations; an examinations of the land-based Ottoman and Russian empires; the modern French and British Empires; the colonisation of Africa and Asia after c.1800; African empires, settler colonialism, informal colonialism and company colonialism; contemporary American imperialism and China overseas. The course will thus offer students a means to understand rival and connected empires in comparative perspective. Analytical and conceptual problems are highlighted throughout. Students are encouraged to enter into debate with expert tutors; in this manner you will help to shape our collective exploration and understanding of the rich materials.
understand the multiple trajectories that the transition towards wage labour has taken. This course also contributes to the ongoing efforts at decolonizing the curriculum by approaching larger processes such as capitalism, patriarchy, race, and the modern state, through the experiences of the labouring classes of most of the world.

There will be eight seminars of two hours each. The first hour will include lectures from the convenors and invited faculty members. The second hour will be a discussion with the class on the readings set for the week.

Print Cultures in World History
Dr Ruth Watson

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries were witness to a proliferation of various forms of print and writing, produced for eager, locally grown audiences. All sorts of texts, including serialised novels, newspapers, pamphlets, tracts, local histories, self-help booklets and vernacular literature became available for public consumption. Taking these printed and written sources as its starting point, this MPhil option course focuses mainly on African case studies, but also draws on comparative examples from South Asia, the Arab world and the United States. We will explore the innovative textual and visual forms that emerged, and the new vocabularies and narratives that readers constructed through their engagement with literacy and print. Significantly, this engagement was not only focused within and across local communities, it also occasionally reached out to transnational and global networks. To this end, we consider print cultures in a comparative global framework and critically analyse the usefulness of concepts such as the ‘public sphere’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’.

This is the list of modules offered by the History Faculty for MPhil students starting in the academic year 2019-20. Modules in future years will vary dependant on the availability of teaching staff.