



Debate Chamber
8a Woodstock Road
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History Summer School 2010

University of London Union

Day 1

- 10.30- 12.00 **The Purpose of Historical Study**
An introduction to the purpose of historical study through the works of important historical thinkers (Comynnes, Marx, Nietzsche, Collingwood).
- 12.15- 1.15 **Classical Approaches to History: Rhetoric & Whig**
An illustration of the classical conceptions of the study of history from which students can engage in a critical discussion of their strengths and weaknesses. Do modern historians still use history for the purposes of political advice and/or for praise and blame?
- 2.00 – 2.15 **Annales & Social History (Lecture)**
The session aims to introduce students to the wide-ranging and influential twentieth century approach to history known as Annales.
- 2.15 – 3.45 **Social History Case Study: Witch Craft (Seminar)**
The study of Witchcraft is a paradigm example of social history as it is conducted in universities today. In small seminars, students will be introduced to famous studies of witchcraft and work through some of questions these raise.
- 3.45 – 4.30 **The Marxist Approach to History (Lecture) & (Seminar)**
Marxism remains an extremely powerful school of modern historiography, and one that students must engage with if they want to be able to participate in much modern historical dispute. Marx also remains one of the most frequently misunderstood and caricatured figures in the modern canon, and so this session will aim to give students the information and conceptual resources necessary to make a judgement on this matter for themselves.



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Day 2

10.30 – 12.45 Women and Gender in History

Students assess the recent development of the study of women and the role of gender in history. Through carefully selected sources they will encounter both religious and secular views of women and the role of women in society. Students will then critically engage with a response to these traditional conceptions through a work from the 15th century by Cristine de Pizan. In the second half of the session students will respond to an article which challenges the notion that there has always been a gendered division of labour; arguing that domesticity is a nineteenth century construction.

1.45 – 3.15 Structure, Agency and Leadership: The Cuban Missile Crisis

Modern historians often argue over whether an event was the result of individual action, or broader social structures? This question is often paraphrased as 'is the revolution inevitable?' This seminar will approach the issue through a case study of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Cold War. Students will examine a selection of primary and secondary sources, and attempt to decide whether course of the Crisis and its resolution were determined by the choices of Khrushchev and Kennedy, or part of a clash of ideologies and civilizations with its own historical momentum.

3.15 – 3.30 Narrative and Analysis in History (Lecture)

This lecture will introduce students to the problem in attaining 'truth' in history. This will focus on two (related) problems: the conscious will of the historian to manipulate evidence or reach a particular conclusion, and the unconscious influences on the way in which we write history.

3.30 – 4.30 Narrative and Analysis (Seminar)

If analysis is inevitably biased, is it possible to eliminate analysis from history? If true history is scientific analysis, is it possible to eliminate narrative? After discussing these issues, students will analyse the work of contemporary historians – including Schama and Simon Sebag-Montefiore – who blur the distinction between history and literature, and ask how they justify this.



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Day 3

10.30 – 1.00 The History of Ideas

Through the study of extracts from Machiavelli's *The Prince* and *Discourses* and Hobbes' *Leviathan* students will attempt to reconstruct past political ideas. We will examine in particular his concepts of political realism, human nature, utility and virtue, tyranny and civic religion.

2.00 – 3.15 Medieval History: Beyond Kings and Queens

This session offers an insight into the world of medieval history, in part to attempt to convince students of the value and insight that it offers to their broader historical understanding. Via an examination of one of the most famous historical sources, the 'Magna Carta', students will discover a rich and wide ranging variety of contemporary information regarding national identity, social structure, class, status, gender and international politics.

3.15 – 4.30 Cultural Explanations in History: The Cold War

This session aims to introduce students to the study of culture as a means of understanding historical events and change. Students will be introduced to divergent conceptions of culture offered by anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists and be encouraged to make their own judgements about which elements historians should adopt. In the last part of the session students will put to use this framework in order to study the cold war through a study of culture.