



Department of History
Crown Center for the Humanities
Lake Shore Campus
6525 N. Sheridan Road | Chicago, Illinois 60626
Phone 773.508.2221 | Fax 773.508.2153

FALL 2009

GLOBAL ISSUES IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

CHRONOLOGIES IN WORLD CIVILIZATIONS

HISTORY 299

MWF, 1:40-2:30, CC-141

Zouhair Ghazzal

Crown 547, MWF, 12:30-1:30

(and by appointment)

(773) 508-3493

zghazza@luc.edu

<http://www.zouhairghazzal.com>

This course organizes world historical cultures and civilizations in the last five centuries, since the 1500s, into meaningful analytical tropes. Since world history entails covering the entire planet over long periods of time, some preliminary organization would be more than welcome. There are several ways to examine “social units,” some of the most common, which have predominated lately in the social sciences, are those of nation, culture, and civilization. Even though nation is the most common tool for analyzing societies, it is nevertheless smaller than culture, and culture is a smaller unit of analysis than civilization.

The concept of “nation” is not very old, and is commonly coupled with the notion of “nation-state,” which in turn was an outcome of the emerging nineteenth-century European nationalisms. Out of the European medieval social and economic infrastructures gradually emerged the absolutist states of modern Europe. In the fourteenth century, at the time of the decline of the Holy Roman Empire and the demise of the Carolingians, only France had a viable centralized state with a sense of identity of its own, while England’s sophisticated political and legal infrastructure was too fractured to permit a cohesive state. Italy was divided into competing but prosperous city-states from which early modern capitalism was born and took hold of the Mediterranean basin. Fernand Braudel dubbed the prosperous Mediterranean period between 1450 and 1600 as “the long sixteenth century.” It was at that time that the capitalism of the Italian city-states (Venice, Genoa, Florence, and Napoli) was at its peak: the dissemination of the bill-of-exchange, and the institutionalization of private banks, had fostered the

ubiquitousness of monetary exchanges, placing Italy and parts of western Europe in a position of superiority vis-à-vis their main contenders, in particular the Habsburgs and Ottomans. But with the decline of the Italian city-states by the seventeenth century, the “center” of capitalism shifted further north to the Netherlands, and Amsterdam became the new world hegemonic center. Then by the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with the industrial revolution taking hold over parts of the continent, the center of capitalism has shifted once more to England, and London metamorphosed into the financial capital of the world economy. Finally, after two world wars, and the enormous effort deployed by the Anglo-Americans for the liberation of Europe from fascism, Nazism, totalitarianism and communism, the United States emerged from World War II as the major superpower, leading to yet another shift in world capitalism—this time in the direction of New York.

The concepts of “nation” and “nation-state” presumably consolidated in western Europe by the nineteenth century. It was at that time that parts of Europe were going through the industrial revolution, a process that transformed large chunks of the continent into a capitalistic mode of manufacturing, turning in the meantime segments of the peasantry into urban proletarians. At that time, only England and France were viable “nation-states,” while the “unification” of Italy and Germany came as an outcome of strained political and economic relations on the continent. Benedict Anderson has persuasively argued that “nations” are like “imagined communities” where a common “cultural” background is at work in the deep socio-economic infrastructures of society. In the case of Europe, the shift from Latin as the cultural language of the literati towards the vernacular languages, and the spreading of those “values” into the mainstream popular cultures through the tools of “print capitalism,” had de facto associated the emerging “cultures” with an implicit sense of “nationhood.” By the nineteenth century, the “nation-state” had already subsumed under the hegemonic state a notion of “culture” that was at the same time linguistic and tied to a specific “national” territory (e.g. French, English, Italian, Germanic, or Spaniard), combined with a notion of “nation” that was political. We can therefore see that in the case of Europe, each “nation-state” was managed from the ground-up: from the ubiquitousness of the vernacular cultures, to the omnipresent print capitalism, up to the state as the sole monopolizer of legitimate violence.

How useful are notions such as “nation” and “culture” for our purposes here—that of analyzing chronologies in world history? Interesting as they may be, and in spite of their historical significance, “nation” and “culture” are too small as units of analysis to serve any practical purpose when analyzing large societal frameworks spread over large geographical areas. In short, there are so many nations and cultures associated with them that it would be unpractical, based on such small units, to construct a world history for the last 500 years.

A better unit of analysis, from our perspective, would be the notion of “civilization.” From Max Weber to Braudel and Huntington, “civilization” has played a major role in delineating large cultural formations while framing them under a similar set of characteristics—what Weber labeled as “ideal types.” Since “civilization” is a broader unit of analysis than either “nation” or “culture,” the latter two categories, among others,

would be subsumed under the former. Thus, several “nations” might be classified as sharing similar “cultural patterns” or fitting under one “civilization.” The usefulness of civilization, therefore, lies in the fact that it is broad enough to serve as a heuristic tool for organizing various chronologies in world history, without, however, getting bogged down into individual national histories and their respective cultures. Not that nations and cultures will be ignored: we’ll try to organize them into civilizational patterns and see how that works.

How can we define a civilization, and what are its main characteristics? We’re obviously thinking here in terms of the broadest “patterns” possible, more specifically, of *cultural* patterns that would apply to a wide range of cultural, political, and socio-economic phenomena. Whenever we’ll be able to discern such global cultural patterns, we’ll classify each one under one particular civilization. For example, there are as many as twenty-four Arab “nation-states,” all of which are members of the Arab League, but which certainly would not all fit within a single cultural pattern. These nation-states have different “national” histories from one another, and the more we get to study them carefully, the more their cultural regional differences would become of relevance. Even the fact of being “Arab” and having a shared official “Arabic language” as a common feature is not enough to place all such societies into one common cultural pool. We could also move in the opposite direction and ask ourselves whether such societies would fit into broader patterns. That may seem paradoxical, given the fact that it seems hard at first glance to place the Arab nations into a single cultural map. But we may, however, argue differently, and postulate that they would all fit nicely if, for instance, we postulate that they’re all part of an “Islamic civilization.” There are over a billion Muslims today, and the Arabs do not exceed 25 percent of the Muslim world population at large. Moreover, postulating the existence of an “Islamic civilization” poses its own sets of problems: for instance, considering that Indonesia has the largest Islamic population (160 million), how would that country fit with India which has the second largest group of Muslims (100 million), or with Egypt and the rest of the Arab world?

There’s obviously no easy answer for such concerns, all of which are legitimate, and which will be addressed throughout the semester. Suffice it to say, that for our purposes here, we’ll be identifying “civilization” primarily, though not exclusively, with religion-as-world-view, or as a socio-economic cultural unit. From Weber to Braudel and Huntington to Fukuyama, civilizations have been postulated as limited in number, precisely because they’re for the most part identified with core religious beliefs, such as Judaism and Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Taoism and Buddhism. We’ll therefore begin our journey with that assumption and then refine it as we progress in our individual case histories. We need to remember that the notion of “civilization” was originally a nineteenth-century European concept, which limited civilization to the European continent only: only Europe was “civilized,” while the rest of the world was not. Admitting therefore that there are a multitude of world civilizations, and an even greater number of regional histories and cultures, was definitely a big step forward. But then the real challenge becomes to see how those civilizational, historical, and cultural differences, could be organized into meaningfully shared patterns.

Our démarche consists in being able to identify some common civilizational patterns. One cautionary note before we begin our long and difficult enterprise: the best work pursued thus far, on socio-economic, cultural and political structures, has been done on Western civilization (basically from the Greeks and Romans, Christianity, up to the present times via the Middle Ages: this is usually perceived, for better or worse, as one cultural unit despite major societal differences); much less is available—in a coherent way—on Third World societies.

Max Weber was one of those pioneering figures who opened new ways in comparing the West with other civilizations. Weber's perspective on world-civilizations is worth noting here, despite its rough edges, for several reasons. First, Max Weber understood the evolutionary process of *modern* Western civilization in terms of a dynamics of "rationalization" which affected the different "spheres" (political, social, economic, artistic and scientific, and religious) of the life-world (*lebenswelt*). "Rationalization" is an ambiguous concept which basically implies that the "rationality" of each one of the life-world "spheres" is "autonomous" on its own and is not affected by irrational impositions from other spheres (for example, post-Galilean science progressed by freeing itself from the religious world-views). Second, Weber, unlike Marx and "historical materialism," provided religion with a major constructive role in this evolution, one that touted on the economic. He saw in Protestantism and Calvinism crucial forces behind the logic of Western rationalization. Third, Weber conceptualized other non-Western civilizations for the purpose of comparing them to the *uniqueness* of the rationalization process in the West; such civilizational patterns were in turn modeled upon the major world-religions: Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and the Judeo-Christian tradition in particular (and within that tradition, he privileged Calvinism and Protestantism in the advent of post-Italian capitalism). Thus, *pace* the western hegemonic cultures, Max Weber constructed the properties of world-civilizations in parallel to the dominant world-religions.

Since then, there hasn't been any attempt of this magnitude, but there has been other noteworthy efforts regarding Western societies and civilizations. In his history of capitalism, Fernand Braudel sought common patterns, among Mediterranean European societies, in demography, population growth, food, dress codes, urbanism, the cities, the peasantry and popular cultures. (Chaudhuri's *Asia Before Europe* does something similar for what he defines as the "Indian Ocean"). Michel Foucault created for modern Europe the concept of *disciplinary society*, and Jürgen Habermas looked upon the "public sphere" as an essential phase in the process of inter-subjective communication and the formation of the democratic process.

To summarize: we will be looking, throughout this semester, at civilizational patterns and how they affected one another. We will have to discuss the internal dynamics of each civilization first; if we fail to do so, we will be exposed to seeing change only as a factor of European expansionism and world-capitalism.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

There are weekly readings that we'll discuss collectively in class. Your participation is essential for the success of the course. You may be asked to do presentations of individual chapters or topics.

In addition to the two-draft free-topic paper (see below the section on papers), you'll have to submit three interpretive essays based on our weekly readings: you'll receive sets of questions for each. *Each paper counts as 20 percent of the total. All interpretive essays are take-home and you'll be given a week to submit them. The purpose of the interpretative essays is to give you the opportunity to go "beyond" the literal meaning of a text and adopt interpretive and "textual" techniques. A failing grade in all interpretive essays means also a failing grade for the course, whatever your performance in the term-paper is. All essays and papers must be submitted on time according to the deadlines set below.*

First Interpretive Essay	20%
Second Interpretive Essay	20%
Final Interpretive Essay	20%
Term-paper: 2 drafts 10% each	20%
Presentations, Blackboard postings, and class attendance and participation	20%

- It is essential that you complete all readings on time, and that you come to class well prepared. **Always come to class with the required book:** we'll discuss all readings extensively.
- The first, second, and final interpretive essays are all based on our weekly readings. They all consist of a single essay for which you'll receive the appropriate questions at the dates below, and you'll submit them in class a week later.
- The question handouts will only be distributed in class—no email communication.
- For all five papers follow the procedures outlined below in the section on papers.
- Essays and papers are to be submitted only in class. Do not send any material as an attached e-mail attachment or by fax. Do not submit your papers outside the classroom.
- It's your responsibility to submit all essays and papers *in class* on time at the deadlines below. Late papers will be graded accordingly, and papers submitted a week after the deadline will be graded F.
- You must also submit, in addition to the printed hard copies, an equivalent electronic file of each paper in the digital dropbox on Blackboard.
- Each non-submitted paper will receive the grade of F, and your final grade will be averaged accordingly.
- The mid-term paper is a free-topic exercise based on a list of authors/books that you should begin researching as soon as possible.
- If you do not show up for one of the assigned presentations, you'll be graded F.

READINGS

The following readings and essays and their respective dates could be subject to change, pending on our progress throughout the semester. Changes will be announced beforehand on blackboard.

- Week 1: August 24/26/28
Introduction to Barrington Moore
- Week 2: August 31, September 2/4
Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Beacon Press, 1993), 0807050733.
- Week 3: September 9/11
Moore (continued)
- Week 4: September 14/16/18
Niall Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money: A Financial History of the World* (Penguin Press HC, The, 2008), 1594201927.
- Week 5: September 21/23/25
Ferguson (continued), and Fukuyama essay on world financial crisis (blackboard).

September 25: first interpretive essay

the questions for the first essay (Moore and Ferguson) will be distributed in class on September 25, and your essay must be submitted on October 7

- Week 6: September 28/30, October 2
Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism: Essays on the Islamic Republic* (University of California Press, 1993), 0520085035.
- Week 7: October 7/9
Abrahamian (continued)
- Week 8: October 12/14/16
Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (Viking Adult, 2008). 0670019704.
- Week 9: October 19/21/23
Ahmed Rashid (continued).

October 30: second interpretive essay

questions will be distributed in class on October 30, and essays submitted on November 6

- Week 10: October 26/28/30
Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 0816627932.
- Week 11: November 2/4/6
Appadurai (continued)
- Week 12: November 9/11/13
Discussion of modern Turkey based on two articles by Perry Anderson, to be posted on blackboard.

November 16: term-paper first draft deadline

- Week 13: November 16/18/20/23
Discussion of American neo-conservatism by Francis Fukuyama, posted on blackboard.

November 23: final interpretive essay, to be submitted on December 4

- Week 14: November 30, December 2/4

presentation of term-papers

**December 4: deadline for submitting term-papers
deadline for submitting final interpretive essay**

PAPERS

In addition to the three interpretive essays, which are based on our weekly readings, you must submit a term-paper in two drafts.

- Select first an author/book from the list below.
- You must select only *one* author, but you can select more than one listed text from the same author.
- Prepare a bibliography on the selected topic and *annotate* it. An annotation is a brief description of each source (see the annotated bibliography below).
- In the term-papers forum on Blackboard post a minimum 400-word synopsis.
- Once an author/text has been taken by another student, you're not allowed to sign for it again. You may, however, sign for another text by the same author. The principle is first come, first serve.
- You're not allowed to book an author/text without a synopsis, which must be posted by November 10 at the latest.
- The first draft is due on November 16 and counts as 10%.
- The second draft is due on December 4 and counts as 10% as well.

LIST OF AUTHORS/BOOKS

1. Kuhn, *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*
2. Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*
3. Marx, *Capital I*
4. Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals; Beyond Good and Evil*
5. The Koran
6. Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddima*
7. Confucius, *Analects*
8. Averroes, *Decisive Treatise*
9. Ghazali, *Deliverance from Error*
10. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*
11. Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*
12. Fukuyama, *Trust; Failed States*
13. Hobbes, *Leviathan*
14. Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*
15. Rousseau, *Social Contract*
16. Lenin, *The State and the Revolution; Capitalism in Russia*
17. Keynes, *Economic Consequences of Peace*
18. Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations; Who are we?*
19. Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*
20. Eisenstadt, *Japanese Civilization*
21. Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures; Religions of Java*
22. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish; Birth of the Clinic; Archeology of Knowledge; History of Sexuality*
23. Weber, *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism; Economy and Society*
24. Frazer, *Golden Bough*
25. Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques; Savage Mind; Structural Anthropology*
26. Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism; Human Condition*

27. Durkheim, *Division of Labor; Suicide; Elementary Forms of Religious Life*
28. Mauss, *The Gift*
29. Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground; Crime and Punishment*
30. Kundera, *Unbearable Lightness of Being; Art of the Novel*
31. The Federalist Papers
32. Tolstoy, *War and Peace; Anna Karenina*
33. Herzl, *Jewish Question*
34. Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*
35. Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*
36. Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents; Future of an Illusion; Interpretation of Dreams*
37. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*
38. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*
39. Albert Camus, *Myth of Sisyphus; Outsider*
40. André Malraux, *Human Condition; Voices of Silence*
41. Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*
42. Guthrie, *Dragon in a three-piece Suit*
43. Braudel, *Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World; Capitalism and Civilization; Writings on History*
44. Duby, *Three Orders of Feudalism*
45. Inalcik, *Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age*
46. Naquin, *Chinese Society in the Eighteenth Century*
47. Gellner, *Encounters with Nationalism*
48. Hobsbawm, *Century of Extremes; Age of Capital*
49. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*
50. Schama, *Embarrassment of the Riches; Citizens; Rembrandt*
51. Daniel Bell, *Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*
52. Elias, *Civilizing Process; Court Society*
53. Davis, *Return of Martin Guerre*
54. Chaudhuri, *Asia Before Europe*
55. Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*
56. Peter Brown, *The Body and Society*
57. Negri, *Empire*
58. Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire, A.D. 100-400*
59. Scott, Joan Wallach, *Gender and the Politics of History*
60. John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 5th ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. Intended for students and other writers of papers not written for publication. Useful material on notes and bibliographies.

December 4: FINAL DRAFT DEADLINE
submit your final draft with your preliminary corrected one

Keep in mind the following when preparing your preliminary and final drafts:

- once you've decided on an author/text and prepared a preliminary bibliography, post an abstract and bibliography of your topic on Blackboard <blackboard.luc.edu> (see

below). Your abstract of at least 400 words should include: (i) title; (ii) description; (iii) annotated bibliography; (iv) methodology (e.g. suggestions on how to read sources). **Your preliminary draft will not be accepted unless you've submitted an on-line abstract by November 10 at the latest.**

- preliminary drafts should be submitted on time, November 16.
- preliminary drafts should be complete and include footnotes and an **annotated bibliography**. (The Turabian reference above is annotated: it briefly spells what the book is about and to whom it might be useful.)
- do not submit an outline as a first draft.
- incomplete and poorly written first drafts will not be accepted, and you'll be advised to revise your first draft completely.
- if you submit a single draft throughout the semester, you'll receive F for 10% of the total and your final grade will be averaged accordingly.
- the oral presentation is an essential aspect of your grade; if you don't attend you'll be graded F for the paper.
- **your final draft should take into consideration all the relevant comments provided on your earlier draft:**
 - all factual and grammatical mistakes should be corrected, in addition to other stylistic revisions.
 - passages indicated as "revise" or "unclear" or "awkward" should be totally revised.
 - when specific additional references have been suggested, you should do your best to incorporate them into your material.
 - there might be several additional suggestions in particular on your overall assumptions and methodology. It will be up to you to decide what to take into consideration.
- **Submit the final draft with your preliminary corrected one.**
- if you're interested in comments on your final paper and interpretive essay, request an appointment by e-mail.

Please use the following guidelines regarding the format of your papers:

- use 8x10 white paper (the size and color of this paper). Do not use legal size or colored paper.
- use a laser printer or a good inkjet printer and hand in the original.
- only type on one side of the paper.
- should be double spaced, with single spaced footnotes at the end of each page and an *annotated bibliography* at the end (see bibliography below).
- keep ample left and right margins for comments and corrections of at least 1.25 inches each.
- all pages should be numbered and stapled.
- **a cover page should include the following: paper's title, course number and section, your name, address, e-mail, and telephone.**

ELECTRONIC FORUM

This course is listed on the Loyola Blackboard webpage to freely post messages and conduct discussions: login at <blackboard.luc.edu> and follow the instructions.

- You must post each week a message on national or world events.
- By the end of the semester each student should have posted 14 messages.
- Posted messages, presentations, and class attendance and participation count as 20% of the final grade.

SELECTED READINGS

Historiographical Methods *History & the Social Sciences*

The works of “social scientists” like Karl Marx, Max Weber, Durkheim, Michel Foucault, Habermas, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Pierre Bourdieu, Hannah Arendt, Norbert Elias, Georges Dumézil, and Sigmund Freud, had a tremendous impact on the writing of history throughout the twentieth century.

Jacques Rancière, *The Names of History: On the Poetics of Knowledge* (University of Minnesota Press, 1994). This is the best and most challenging book I have read in recent years which describes very aggressively the current status of the most recent historiographical methods. Rancière argues that Michelet was the real precursor to the *Annales* school (something that Lucien Febvre acknowledged and was the first to see clearly). First, Michelet was probably the first to have voluntarily stepped out from a pure history of kings and political events into some kind of “social history” and showed a great interest into this category which he broadly defined as “Le Peuple” (the people); second, Michelet was sensitive to the *document* as a starting point for his analysis: he created this unique method of reading *into* a document by creating his own narrative out of them and by listening to their silences. But Michelet could only create a dynamics out of a narrative where the Hobbesian Monarch does not play anymore the central role by transforming *France* as the real Subject of history—something that the *Annales* could not keep up with anymore. The *Annales* in fact transformed its historical “topics” into *objects* of research. In other words, France, for example, becomes an object of research like European feudalism or the Mediterranean. Thus by stating that every entity in the social world is worth being an object of scientific research, the *Annales* has ipso facto robbed traditional historiography, including that of Michelet, from its deepest foundations. Which leaves us today, towards the end of an eventful twentieth century, with a big problem: How can we rehabilitate the role of the subject—that is, *any* subject of democratic societies—in historical processes?

Hunt, Lynn, ed. *The New Cultural History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989. A collection of articles that discusses the new “cultural history,” a recent trend that focuses on the importance of language in understanding political and social trends—the “linguistic turn.”

Momigliano, Arnaldo. *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.

Palmer, Bryan D. *Descent into Discourse. The Reification of Language and the Writing of Social History*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

Reddy, William M. *Money and Liberty in Modern Europe. A Critique of Historical Understanding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. A critical study on modern historiographical trends related in particular to social and economic history.

Scott, Joan Wallach. *Gender and the Politics of History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. Wallach relates gender to history and language and thus joins the “linguistic turn” school that focuses on the importance of language in structuring social and economic movements.

B. H. Moss, “Republican Socialism and the Making of the Working Class in Britain, France, and

the United States: A Critique of Thompsonian Culturalism,” *Comparative Study in Society and History*, 35(2) 1993, 390-413. This essay is an attempt to analyze the impact that had Thompson’s *Making of the English Working Class* on studies of labor movements in France, England, and the United States, on the one hand, and the weaknesses of such “culturalist” analyses (as opposed to the Marxist and neo-Marxist) on the other. Moss concludes that what these studies have unknowingly confirmed is the traditional and Marxist view that socialism arises when intellectuals bearing collectivist ideas join with workers undergoing a process of proletarianization.

Carrard, Philippe. *Poetics of the New History: French Historical Discourse from Braudel to Chartier*. Parallax Re-visions of Culture and Society, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992. Excellent introduction to the *Annales* tradition in historiography. More broadly, Carrard shows that the discipline of history is now marked by fragmentation and that *histoire totale* (in the strong sense of the project) is dead.

Editorial. “Histoire et sciences sociales. Un tournant critique?” *Annales É.S.C.* 2 (April-March 1988): 291-293. A key editorial of the *Annales* in which a “crisis” in contemporary historiography was admitted for the first time and a rapprochement with the rest of the social sciences is now considered as essential for the writing of a new (more fragmented) history. The notion of “document” is also questioned and a more “textual” approach seem to be suggested. Some of the responses to this editorial have been collected in the special issue of November-December 1989 celebrating the 60th anniversary of the *Annales*.

Dominick LaCapra, *History & Criticism* (Cornell University Press, 1985). With essays on Ginzburg, *mentalité* history, and the history of criticism, LaCapra’s enterprise in providing a critical perspective on contemporary historiography is probably the best in US academia today.

Michel de Certeau, *L’Écriture de l’histoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), English trans. *The Writing of History*.

Romans & Early Christians

Peter Brown, *The Body and Society. Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (Columbia University Press, 1988). In nineteen chapters, and basing himself on original manuscripts, Peter Brown is very successful in describing attitudes of early Christians towards the body and sexuality. Augustine, in the last chapter, provides the *summa* of the endless variations of the early Christians and their errings: fulfillment (salvation) is only achieved in the “city of heaven.” What Christianity has introduced to the Greek and Roman world-views is the duality between mind and body, a dualism we still live with in different forms whether Cartesian or Freudian. The mind “controls” the body, its appetites and drives, hence the mind controls the body’s sexuality. To the early Christians, this meant sexual renunciation and virginity in order to preserve the integrity of the soul. Brown demarcates Roman sexuality from the Christian in his introductory chapters: Roman sexuality looks at women, slaves, and barbarians as inferiors, hence sex with women was riddled with anxieties and it was common for men to have sex with their slaves. Brown, however, does not see Christian renunciation as caused by Roman “tolerance” and he never provides his readers with a sharp answer to the historical causes of Christian asceticism. Instead, he portrays to us the variations of the Christian model, and, with this, a view of religion as an agglomeration of infinitesimal efforts comes up, or, in other words, how disparate views become public and create an institution—the Church. Brown also provides an account of a religion—Christianity—as a *social* movement with no state control. Brown, however, seems locked up in his texts and I would have wished more social history on the Roman family and marriage, the social roots of the early Christians, and the Church and its clergy. Brown’s tone seems also to belong to the 1980s, under the influence of Veyne and Foucault, which looks at sexuality as a discourse, or rather, as a discursive practice. Also by Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (California University Press, 1967), *The Cult of Saints* (Chicago University Press, 1981).

Arnaldo Momigliano, *On Pagans, Jews, and Christians* (Wesleyan University Press, 1987).

Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire, A.D. 100-400* (Yale University Press, 1984).

Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (Yale University Press, 1983).

Robert L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (Yale University Press, 1984).

Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (Harper & Row, 1986).

John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality* (Chicago University Press, 1980). Written as a contribution to “gay” history within a late twentieth-century political agenda, Boswell seems to have much more talent in “gay activism” than intellectual history and textual analysis in which he doesn’t seem much interested. If you don’t mind a cut-and-paste method in analyzing texts, then there’s a chance that you might like the Boswell style.

Medieval Europe

Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies. A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton University Press, 1957). In a first brilliantly written chapter, Kantorowicz argues that the King’s Two Bodies doctrine achieved its full maturity in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century England during the reign of Elizabeth I, but was much weaker in its development on the Continent. Briefly, what the King’s Two Bodies doctrine implied was that the King had two bodies, his own temporal body subject to sickness, passions, and death, and an immortal body, the “body politic,” which was constituted of all the bodies and souls of the subjects of the Commonwealth. The novelty was much less in the duality of the system than with the notion that the immortal part was the “body politic,” that is, it was made up of *all* the citizen’s wills and desires as *represented* by the Monarch. Needless to say that such a theory prepares for more elaborate Hobbesian and Lockian systems of representation. Having sketched what he calls the King’s Two Bodies “legal fiction” in its mature phase, Kantorowicz will devote the rest of his book to a reconstruction of the variations of the King’s Two Bodies doctrine since the eleventh century. The turning point here was the twelfth-thirteenth century, with Frederick II, when the King was not seen anymore as the impersonator of Christ but as the sole legislator of Positive Law. An overwhelming study which breaks up many academic barriers and which sees “legal fiction” as constructing “reality.”

Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory* (Chicago University Press, 1984 [1981 for the French Gallimard edition]). This is a *longue durée* history of the Purgatory, roughly from early Christianity till the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when the Purgatory has achieved a more or less completed structure (even in its poetic form through Dante). Le Goff, however, is eager not to make his history “evolutionary,” that is, he insists that the history of the Purgatory remains unpredictable despite early signs (with Augustine in particular) of a desire to *spacialize* something between hell and heaven. This creation of an additional space of judgment and repentance shall be expressed differently from one period to another, but by the thirteenth century one thing is certain: the Purgatory integrates well in the European societies where the judicial now plays a dominating and intermediary role between the “body politic” and “society” (or “civil society,” *civitas*). Le Goff’s method is very much “textual,” and even though he does well in integrating his material with the social trends of each period, one would have wished more social history, in particular for the thirteenth century when several things seem to come together: the political, religious, judicial, and economic.

Modern Europe: Populations, Material life & the Economy

Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds (New York: Harper & Row, 1973 [first French edition published in Paris by Armand Colin, 1949]). Picking up where Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre (his “Maître de thèse”), Braudel constructs a thesis around the Mediterranean as an object of study for what became the cult book of the *Annalists*: it’s not anymore Philip II who occupies the center of the stage, but the Mediterranean as a complex object of geography, economics, and cultures at the *age* of Philip II. Actually, Braudel dismisses the person of the King altogether as someone who was not even conscious of the importance of the Mediterranean: “I do not believe that the word Mediterranean itself ever floated in his consciousness with the meaning we now give it, nor that it conjured up for him the images of light and blue water it has for us.” With this, Braudel created a fundamental rule for both historians and social scientists: the historian does not have to identify with the “subjects” of history anymore—distance from what shines at the surface has become the golden rule (but wasn’t it so for Marx and Freud?). But the book, half a century later, has also aged tremendously: Braudel never took seriously the claim he has set up for himself and for the discipline of history as “La Reine des sciences sociales,” and he never borrowed much anyhow from the languages of the social sciences. The *Mediterranean* leaves us struggling with an array of questions concerning the role of the “subject” and “culture” in history.

Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (Blackwell, 1994). Originally published in Germany in 1939 in two

separate parts, *The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization*, *The Civilizing Process* sees the sixteenth century as the period which created a new set of courtly manners very different from the “uncivilized,” barbaric and violent Middle Ages: manners in which shame and individuality have become crucial. In order to explain this sudden shift, Elias develops a theory of state formation which conceptualizes the Absolutist states (the new “monopolies”) as having totally eclipsed the old Feudal states based on territorial divisions. Elias’ analysis combines what he calls the psycho-genetic and socio-genetic levels of human experience—another terminology for the Weberian notion of subjective and objective meanings of social action or the Freudian ego and super-ego split. In his conceptualization of European history since the Middle Ages, Elias departs from the Weberian thesis that Protestantism was one of the elements which made capitalism possible (in the *Civilizing Process*, the role of religion is not even debated—it is simply *absent*), and from Marxism which looks at superstructures as a “final-analysis-reflection” of economic infrastructures (Elias looks at state-formations as having a logic of their own).

Reddy, William M. *The Rise of Market Culture. The Textile Trade and French Society, 1750-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Scott, Joan Wallach. *The Glassworkers of Carmaux. French Craftsmen and Political Action in a Nineteenth-Century City*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974.

Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital* (1988).

Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge (Mass.), 1962).

Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy (1558-1641)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

Intellectual Movements in Modern Europe

Thomas S. Kuhn, *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago University Press, 1962).

Latour, Bruno and Steven Woolgar. *Laboratory Life: The Social Construction of Scientific Facts*. London: Sage, 1979. A book that belongs to what we now qualify as the new “anthropology of the sciences,” i.e. a discipline (or sub-discipline) that focuses on how the natural hard-core sciences are produced and manufactured within the laboratories, elite teaching colleges, staff recruitment, and the professional journals that transmit and conserve scientific knowledge. A big step from the “idealized” Khunian paradigmatic view of the sciences that became dominant in the last three decades.

Shapin, Steve and Simon Schaffer. *Leviathan and the Airpump. Hobbes, Boyle and the Experimental Life*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. In the line of the “anthropology” of Bruno Latour, this book tries to connect the political ideas of the father of “Absolutism” in the Anglo-Saxon world with those of the natural experimental sciences.

Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (1951). The enlightenment within a Kantian perspective. A book that remains a classic.

Peter Gay, *The Cultivation of Hatred. The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud. Volume 3* (New York: Norton, 1993). This is the third volume after “Education of the Senses” (1984) and “The Tender Passion” (1986), and is fed by some rich insights. Gay argues that the Victorians were prone to mix cruel aggression and ferocious erotic pleasure; thus our Victorian legacy is a struggle to deal with the joys of aggression. The book also ends with a subtle analysis of the development of “professionalism” and the way all these finer specialties became finely guarded. Unfortunately, the bulk of the book forgets from time to time such rich insights and the reader is left with a bunch of facts that ranges from the very obvious to the sophisticated.

Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms. The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Johns Hopkins, 1980). Ginzburg argues that the heretical thoughts of Menocchio, his sixteenth-century miller, were the effect of an old rural popular culture despite the fact that Menocchio was an avid reader of some medieval texts. In a footnote added later as a response to critics (pp. 154/5), Ginzburg claims a circularity—or complementarity—between elite and popular cultures. Looked upon retrospectively, two decades after the publication of the original Italian edition, which made a sensation, Ginzburg’s thesis on popular culture is neither convincing nor interesting. Going through Ginzburg’s 62 short partitions, one is more puzzled by the Church’s insatiable willingness to force Menocchio “confess” than by a popular culture which we can hardly see and perceive.

Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic. Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1971; reed., Penguin Books, 1991).

Denis Mack Smith, *Mazzini* (Yale University Press, 1995). The best biography available of one of

those whose contribution weighted the most on the events that led to the “unification” of Italy in 1860 under Victor Immanuel. Mazzini was described by Nietzsche as “the man I venerate most,” and denounced by Marx for “false sublimity, puffy grandeur, verbosity and prophetic mysticism.” But in fact Mazzini gave only grudging approval to unification as it actually happened, even after Venetia had been incorporated in 1866 and Rome in 1870. He had wanted Italy to be made from below, for it to be socialist and republican (in his particular senses of those words) and to be reconciled with the papacy. Mack Smith is also the author of *Cavour and Garibaldi 1860: A Study in Political Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 1954; 1985); *Garibaldi* (London: Hutchinson, 1957); *Victor Immanuel, Cavour, and the Risorgimento* (Oxford University Press, 1971); *Italy and Its Monarchy* (Yale University Press, 1990); *Mussolini* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981); *Cavour* (London: Methuen, 1985).

The French Revolution

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 1969. A great classic.

Alfred Cobban, *The Social Interpretation of the French Revolution* (London, 1964).

François Furet & Mona Ozouf, *Critical Dictionary of the French Revolution* (Harvard University Press, 1989). A “dictionary” of the French Revolution organized in thematic and biographic articles.

Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, 1990. Focuses on ideas and their “public” circulation before and after 1789.

Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, 1955. A great classic by the author of *Democracy in America*. Tocqueville was among the first to argue that much of what is usually attributed to the Revolution, namely the centralization of the state and its bureaucracy; the advancement of the “bourgeoisie” as a class, etc., were already part of the policy of the old monarchical regime.

Sewell, William H., Jr. *Work and Revolution in France. The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980. A classic on the French guilds, manufactures and labor force, and the first major historian to apply the Thompsonian problematic to France. An attempt to explain the rise of socialism and the making of the French working class. Sewell chose to highlight the culturalist theme and argued that “socialism” was essentially a cultural reconstruction of an eighteenth-century guild tradition of moral collectivism.

Sonenscher, Michael. *Work and Wages. Natural Law, Politics, and the Eighteenth-Century French Trades*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Robert Darnton, *The Literacy Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982).

Barry M. Shapiro, *Revolutionary Justice in Paris, 1789-1790* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), addresses the subject of political crime in the first year of the French Revolution.

de Baecque, Antoine. *Le corps de l'histoire. Métaphores et politiques (1770-1800)*. Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1993.

Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (University of California Press, 1992), analyzes the images and familial models that inhabited revolutionary France.

Islam & The Early Empires—General

The *Qur'ân* is the holy book of the Muslims (in all their different factions and sects) delivered by God in Arabic to the community of believers (*umma*) through the “medium” of the Prophet Muhammad in sessions of “revelation” (*wahî*). Thus Arabic is not only the language of the *Qur'ân* (and the Sunna), but also a divine language, the language of God. All translations of the *Qur'ân* are thus considered as illegitimate and inaccurate. There are several such “translations”/“interpretations” available. A classical one would be that of A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (Oxford University Press). For a recent “reading” of the *Qur'ân*, see Jacques Berque, *Relire le Coran* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1993).

R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History. A Framework for Inquiry* (Princeton University Press, 1991), is a long annotated and commented bibliography thematically organized. Recommended for all those looking at the best in the field for sources available in English, French and German. Some references to primary sources, mainly Arabic medieval sources, are also included. The problem with this “inquiry” is that it excludes from its field of investigation all publications in modern Arabic, as well as Turkish and Persian. In short, this book is an excellent tool for a primary survey on the status of the Middle Eastern Studies field in Europe and North America.

Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 3 vols. (Chicago University Press, 1974), is a landmark study on the “origins” of Islam and its historical evolution into empires. Recommended for those interested in Islam within a comparative religious and geographical perspective.

Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), is a complete fourteen-century history of Islamic societies. Chapters vary in depth and horizon. No particular focus—Tedious to read.

Bernard Lewis (ed.), *The World of Islam* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), is a thematically organized book with chapters on literature, jurisprudence, sufism, the cities, the Ottoman and modern experiences. Includes hundreds of illustrations and maps.

Watt, W. M., *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953); *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), both are classics describing the life of the Prophet and his first achievements in Mecca and Medina.

Franz Rozenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1952); 2d rev. ed., 1968.

Roy Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Princeton University Press, 1980), an excellent book, based on primary sources from Southern Iraq that describe the process and concept of *bay'a* in early Islamic thought.

Hugh Kennedy, *The Early Abbasid Caliphate: A Political History* (London: Croom Helm, 1981).

Jacob Lassner, *The Shaping of Abbasid Rule* (Princeton University Press, 1980).

Lassner, Jacob, *Islamic Revolution and Historical Memory: An Inquiry into the Art of 'Abbâsîd Apologetics* (American Oriental Series, number 66.) New Haven: American Oriental Society. 1986.

The History of al-Tabarî (State University of New York Press, 1989), is a multi-volume series of the translation of the “History” of Tabarî, one of the major historians and interpreters of the Qur’ân of the early Islamic and empire periods.

al-Shâfi‘î, *Risâla. Treatise on the Foundations of Islamic Jurisprudence*, translated by Majid Khadduri (Islamic Texts Society, 1987). Shâfi‘î was the founding father of one of the four major schools of Sunni jurisprudence and the *Risâla* contains some of his major theoretical foundations on the notions analogy, *qiyâs*, and the *ijmâ‘*, consensus of the community.

Martin Lings, *Muhammad. His Life Based on the Earliest Sources* (Rochester, 1983).

Newby, Gordon Darnell, *The Making of the Last Prophet: A Reconstruction of the Earliest Biography of Muhammad* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989).

Maxime Rodinson, *Muhammad* (Pantheon, 1971), is an interesting interpretation of the early Islamic period based on a social and economic analysis of the Arabian Peninsula at the dawn of Islam.

M. A. Shaban, *Islamic History. A New Interpretation*, 2 vol. (Cambridge University Press, 1971), is an attempt towards a new interpretation of the ‘Abbâsîd Revolution of the eight century as a movement of assimilation of Arabs and non-Arabs into an “equal rights” Empire.

Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence* (Cambridge, 1991). See also the great classic of Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950).

Ignaz Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law* (Princeton University Press, 1981).

Fred Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton University Press, 1981), reconstructs the early Islamic Conquests (*futûhât*) from a wealth of Arabic chronicles and literary and ethnographic sources.

Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago University Press, 1988), discusses the notion of “government” and “politics” in Islamic societies.

Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses. The Evolution of the Islamic Polity* (Cambridge University Press, 1980); id., *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* (Princeton University Press, 1987), questions the thesis concerning the “trade boom” in seventh-century Arabia.

Mahmood Ibrahim, *Merchant Capital and Islam* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), links the rise of Islam and the Islamic state with the emergence of a mercantile society in Mecca and views the Arab expansion as the means by which merchants consolidated their political ascendancy.

Ann Lambton, *Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia. Aspects of Administrative, Economic and Social History, 11th-14th Century* (The Persian Heritage Foundation, 1988).

Dominique Urvoy, *Ibn Rushd (Averroes)* (Routledge, 1991). Henry Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital* (Princeton University Press, 1960), is an analysis and interpretation of Hayy ibn Yaqzân.

Salma Khadra Jayyusi, editor, *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* (Leiden: Brill, 1993). See also L. P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250 to 1500* (Chicago University Press, 1990).