

DHP H205: THE HISTORIAN'S ART AND CURRENT AFFAIRS- Sulmaan Khan

Course Description:

We all use history, whether consciously or unconsciously, to understand the present and make decisions about the future. But we misuse it all too often and to our peril. Through a series of case studies, this course aims to give students the historical powers they need as they go out into the world: empathy, detachment, and relentless scepticism.

Assignments:

Three four page papers and one take-home final exam.

Required readings:

Ernest May and Richard Neustadt, *Thinking in Time*.

Barbara Tuchman, *The Guns of August*.

Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*.

M.E. Sarotte, *1989*.

Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*.

Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*.

Caroline Fraser, *Rewilding the World*.

Additional readings available on Trunk.

Electronics Policy

The use of laptops or other electronic devices is not permitted in this class.

Sessions:

- 1) The Origins of World War I. Readings: Tuchman, *The Guns of August*
- 2) The Cuban Missile Crisis. Readings: May and Neustadt, xi-16, Kennedy Tapes, excerpts
- 3) World War I: Analogies Today. Readings: Kissinger, excerpts, FT coverage.
- 4) The Great Depression, The Not Great Recession. Guest speaker: Michael Klein.
Readings to be announced.
- 5) Appeasement. Readings: Chamberlain, Churchill, and all; Snyder.

- 6) The Sicilian Expedition. Readings: Thucydides, excerpts.
- 7) Korea. Readings: May and Neustadt, 34-48, Truman, excerpts
- 8) Vietnam. Readings: May and Neustadt, 75-90, 157-171, Halberstam, excerpts
- 9) The Many Endings of the Cold War. Readings: *Cambridge History of The Cold War*, excerpts. **First paper due.**
- 10) American Lessons from the Cold War---and Beyond. Readings: Bush National Security Strategy, Fukuyama, “The End of History?”, Goldberg, “The Obama Doctrine”.
- 11) Russian Lessons from the Cold War. Readings: Freeland, excerpts, Alexievich, excerpts, Sarotte, “A Broken Promise?”
- 12) Crimea. Readings: Kramer, CWIHP Working Paper.
- 13) Crimea. Readings: Saakashvili, “Let Georgia Be a Lesson for what will happen to Ukraine,” Snyder, “Fascism, Russia, and Ukraine”
- 14) China’s Lessons from the Cold War. Readings: Sarotte, “China’s Fear of Contagion”, Jan Wong, excerpts, Kissinger, excerpts.
- 15) An Exercise in Placement: Xi Jinping. Readings: Osnos, Xi.
- 16) Placing Japan: The Okinawa Base and More. FT coverage; Yamada.
- 17) Taiwan Tangle. Readings TBA.
- 18) Trouble in the China Seas. Readings: Fravel, excerpts, Crisis Group report, FT coverage. **Second paper due.**
- 19) The Pivot to Asia as Contemporary History. Readings TBA.

- 20) Revolutions: Velvet. Readings: Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*; M.E.Sarotte, 1989; NYT, “Obama Hails Poland as Model for Arab Nations in Upheaval.”
- 21) Surprise Attack: Pearl Harbour and 9/11. Readings: Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*, May and Neustadt, 9/11 Commission Report (extracts).
- 22) The Environment as a Security Problem. Readings: Fraser, *Rewilding the World*; Brook, excerpts, Parker, excerpts. FT coverage.
- 23) The Great Game and Af-Pak. Readings: Kipling, *Kim*, Mason and Johnson, “No Sign Until the Burst of Fire”.
- 24) The Historian as Grand Strategist. Readings: Kissinger, “The White Revolutionary”, National Security Archive, Memcons, excerpts, Kissinger, *White House Years*, excerpts. **Third paper due.**
- 25) The Historian as Prophet. Readings: Gaddis, excerpts, Kennan, “The Long Telegram”.
- 26) Thinking like a Historian. Readings: May and Neustadt. **Final exam due.**