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Project Work

Introduction to History
Monsoon Semester 2023

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Premise: Corresponding to the overarching objective of the course that aims to introduce the class to the main methods, methodologies, concepts, and historiographical developments in the discipline of history and how it is practiced by trained historian, the project will be an exercise in familiarising students first hand with how a historical research project is envisioned and planned through the preparation of a research proposal.

Structure of the project
Group work: The project will be a team-based effort overall. However, every student in the class will be assessed individually based on a combination on their demonstrated contribution to the group work as well as an individual written submission within it.
Note on the creation of groups: The formation of groups will be primarily coordinated and facilitated by the project TA Aaryan Sharma. Those of you who already have a team that you want to work with in mind please approach him with your names. We shall try as much as possible to accommodate your requests and preferences. However, inevitably there shall be those who do not have a preference on this. Such students shall either be assigned to existing groups that already have a few members but have spots left or a separate group might be created for them altogether.
Deadline for the finalising of groups: **August 31**

Project Components

1) **Exploring potential areas of research and finalising a specific research problem/question**
   Once the groups have been formed the next step in the project would be to get to work together and explore potential themes of research interest that you would like to take forward and make into a full proposal. This process entails two parts essentially 1) Agreeing upon a broad area of historical enquiry and 2) zeroing in on more specific research question/questions that you would like to work on within this broad field. This is something that needs to be done in consultation with the course instructor. Once you have had a few rounds of discussions among yourselves (within your groups) on this each of the groups should write to the course instructor informing her the same and requesting a brief meeting to discuss their project idea which needs to be okayed by her.
   Deadlines to note:
   September 15: Each of the groups should have by this date discussed their project proposal idea amongst themselves and written to the course instructor for an appointment to discuss it with a brief description of what they would like to work on.

   September 30: Based on the feedback you have received and the further discussions (if needed) you have had among your team members about it, the topic of the research proposal and the very specific research question/questions that you want to focus on should be completed by this date. Each of the groups will submit a brief concept note describing their finalised project idea (not more than 500 words)

Please note that this part of the project and the discussion regarding your research proposal idea with the course instructor is mandatory. And while it does not count towards a portion of your final grades in the project, failure to do so will be penalised in the form of a grade cut.

2) **Envisioning the research and structuring the research proposal:**
   i)Research proposal: With the research topic finalised and the research question zeroed in, the next step in the process is to start thinking about if you were to go on to do this research how you would go about coming up with a coherent plan to execute to. This involves considering a series of things: 1)Why is this research question relevant/important to study 2) What work has already been done on it specifically and/or in the field more generally 3) What primary source material can you use to answer the question/s you are posing 4) What methods and methodologies will you use firstly to access this material and secondly to analyse it 5) How long will you take to do this research and what will be its broad strokes timeline 6) What will be the output from it – both academic as well as societal (if at all). These are all sections that would form the research proposal that you will together come up with as a group.

   You can work on an prepare this document as a group but ensure that divide the work among yourselves in a way that clearly demonstrates your contribution to it. For example, you can each choose to work writing up one section of the proposal while still actively in discussion and collaboration with each other.

   ii) Annotated bibliography and list of primary sources: The other component of the collective part of this stage of the project is to compile an annotated bibliography of a secondary literature integral to the project (at least five articles and a 2-3 books) and a list of potentially useful primary sources based on searchable catalogues of archives (both physical and digital) available online and discuss why these sources would be important for the research proposed in the proposal. The list should also be accompanied with a brief description of why the included sources/category of sources are relevant to the project.

   Keep in mind that while the research proposal will also have a section on literature review which is different from the annotated bibliography. The literature review section should only provide a very brief overview of the secondary literature surveyed and how the proposed research will contribute to it. The Annotated bibliography is a more detailed document that provides a short description of the argument of the works included in it.

   You can work on the annotated bibliography and the list of primary sources as a group. However, once again please make sure you go about this in a way that all group members contribute towards its compilation.

   Deadlines to note:
   October 31: Submission of research proposal, annotated bibliography, and list of primary sources. The compilation should clearly state which parts have been worked on by more concentratedly by which group member. This will be used to assess you individually.

3) Group presentation

The final part of the of the project will be class presentations of the work you have carried out as a group.

You will be presenting the research proposal, the annotated bibliography and list of primary sources that each group has collaboratively worked on. However, please make sure to structure the presentation in such a way that reflects the work you did together as a team as well as the specific contribution of each group member.

More details about the structure, format and stipulated time for the presentations will be shared in due course.

Deadline to note:

The specific dates for the class presentation: TBA