

Empires, States, and Political Imagination

Department of History

HIST-GA 3390.001

Jane Burbank, Fred Cooper, and Lauren Benton

Fall 2011

Class Meetings: Mondays, 2:00-4:45, KJJC room 701

In much of social science as well as in popular conceptions, the nation-state is regarded as the central unit of historical activity. Yet even during most of the last two centuries, the idea of a "nation" was only one way of representing political affiliation. An analysis of empire--both in the present and the past--opens up possibilities for examining a wider range of social linkages, imaginations, and behaviors. This course will focus on the comparative study of empires from ancient Rome and China to the present, and upon the variety of ways in which empire-states have established and constrained claims to rights, belonging, and power. The study of empire expands our debates over rights, citizenship, economic regulation, and accountability without letting them fall into an assumed gap between the nation-state and the global.

Each week's class will consist of a discussion based on assigned reading. Students will write a short (1 page) reaction to the reading and post it to the Blackboard site for this class by **8:00 am on Monday** before each class. The other writing assignments are an exploratory essay (6-8 pages, due October 28) and a final paper (12-14 pages, due December 19), reviewing the literature on a topic to be chosen in consultation with the instructors and, for most students, coordinated with the follow-up seminar described below.

There will be a follow up course to this one taught in spring 2012 by Professors Benton, Burbank, and Cooper. The spring semester course will be a research seminar on empires and will presume that students have either taken the fall course or have equivalent preparation. Students continuing in this course should use the second of the two required papers to work toward defining the topic for research the following semester. The final paper should include a review of the existing historiography relevant to the chosen topic, a statement of the problem to be investigated, and a preliminary list and discussion of primary sources to be used. In the event that the fall course is oversubscribed, we will give priority to students who intend to take the research seminar in the spring. All students should consult with an instructor about the focus and content of their final papers before November 15.

Where to Find Readings:

Four books are available for purchase at the NYU Bookstore. Copies of these books are also on reserve at Bobst library. All other readings will be posted on the Blackboard site of this course.

Books to Purchase:

Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010)

Mark Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900* (Cambridge University Press, 2010)

Contact Information

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Lauren Benton: 8-3407 or lauren.benton@nyu.edu. Office, 5 Washington Sq. No., second floor, by appointment.

Schedule of Course Meetings, Due Dates, Readings

September 12	Introduction
September 19	Theories and Questions Readings: Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, <i>Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Knowledge</i> , chapter 1, 1-22 Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "A Tale of Three Empires: Mughals, Ottomans, and Habsburgs in a Comparative Context," <i>Common Knowledge</i> 12, no.1 (2006): 66-92. Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," <i>Economic History Review</i> 2 nd series, 6 (1953): 1-15 . Ranajit Guha, "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," and Ranajit Guha, "The Prose of Counterinsurgency," in Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, eds., <i>Selected Subaltern Studies</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 37-86.
September 26	Rome and China Readings: Greg Woolf, <i>Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), "On Romanization," "Roman Power and the Gauls," "The Civilizing Ethos," "Consuming Rome," "Being Roman in Gaul," pp. 1-76, 169-205, 238-241. Bryn Ward Perkins, <i>The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), "Why the Demise of Comfort?" and "The Death of Civilization," pp. 123-168.

Mark Edward Lewis, The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), "A State Organized for War," "The Paradoxes of Empire," "Imperial Cities," "The Outer World," pp. 30-101, 128-154.

Victoria Tin-Bor Hui, War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe (New York: Cambridge, University Press, 2005), "The Dynamics of International Politics in Ancient China," pp. 54-108.

Recommended reading:

Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 2, 23-60.

October 3

Mongol Empires

Readings:

J. Fletcher, "The Mongols, Social and Ecological Perspectives," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 46, no.1 (June 1986), pp. 11-51.

Michal Biran, "The Mongol Transformation: From the Steppe to Eurasian Empire," Medieval Encounters 10, 1-3 (2004), 339-361.

Nicola Di Cosmo, "State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History," Journal of World History 10, no. 1 (1999): 1-40.

Donald Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols: Cross-Cultural Influences on the Steppe Frontier, 1304-1589* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), "Setting the Scene" and "Administration, Political Institutions, and the Military," pp. 31-63.

Recommended reading:

Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 4, 93-116.

Oct. 10

No class (NYU holiday)

October 17

Imperial Mixing: Byzantine and Ottoman Empires

Readings:

Judith Herrin, Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 3-32, 70-79, 83-97, 299-336

Kathryn M. Ringrose, The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 1-24, 163-83

Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), "Myths and Realities of the Harem" and "The House of Osman," pp. 3-27.

Leslie P. Peirce, "An Imperial Caste: Inverted Racialization in the Architecture of Ottoman Sovereignty," in Margaret Greer et al, eds., Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Racial and Religious Difference in the Renaissance Empires (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007), 27-47.

Recommended reading:

Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 3, 61-92; chapter 5, 117-48.

October 24

Land, Sea, and Imperial Expansion

Readings:

Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 6, 149-84.
John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Global History of Empire since 1945* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008), pp. 50-99.
Geoffrey Parker, "Europe and the Wider World, 1500-1700: The Military Balance," in James Tracy, *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 161-95.
Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-161.
J. H. Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," *Past and Present* 137 (1992), pp. 48-71.

October 28 (Friday)

Essay due in instructor's mailbox at 4:00 pm

Oct. 31

China as an Empire-State

Readings:

Mark Elliott, *The Manchu Way*, pp. 1-171, 275-304, 346-61.
Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), "Moving Through the Land," pp. 409-461.
Johanna Waley-Cohen, *The Culture of War in China: Empire and the Military under the Qing Dynasty* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), "Religion, War and Empire-Building" and "Military Ritual and the Qing Empire," pp. 48-88.
Recommended reading:
Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 7, 185-218.

November 7

Revolutions, Empires, and Citizenship

Readings:

Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 1-9, 72-121
Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804*, pp. 1-14, 23-29, 85-188
David C. Hendrickson, *Peace Pact: The Lost World of the American Founding* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003), pp. 3-64, 242-260.
Lauren Benton, "Strange Sovereignty: The Provincia Oriental and the Atlantic World," ms. forthcoming in *México/2010*, 1-29.
Recommended reading:
Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 8, 219-50.

November 14

Empires on the Eurasian Continent

Readings:

Michael Broers, "Europe under Napoleon," Conference on "Empires in Modern Times," Institut des Hautes Etudes Internationales, Geneva, March 2003.

Stuart Woolf, *Napoleon's Integration of Europe* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 83-132

Willard Sunderland, "Imperial Space: Territorial Thought and Practice in the Eighteenth Century, in Jane Burbank et al., *Russian Empire: Space, People, Power 1700-1930* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), pp. 33-66.

Nathaniel Knight, "Ethnography in the Russian Geographical Society, 1845-1855," in Jane Burbank and David L. Ransel, eds., *Imperial Russia: New Histories for the Empire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), pp. 108-141.

Robert Crews, "Empire and the Confessional State: Islam and Religious Politics in Nineteenth-Century Russia," *The American Historical Review* 108.1 (2003):50-83.

Recommended reading:
Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 9, 251-86.

November 21

Expansion, Territory, and Rule

Readings:

Lisa Ford, *Settler Sovereignty* (Harvard University Press, 2010), chap. 1, 3, 5, pp. 13-29, 55-84, 108-128.

Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty*, chapter 5, pp. 222-278.

Richard White, *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), pp. 27-53, 85-118.

Julian Go, "Chains of Empire, Projects of State: Political Education and U.S. Colonial Rule in Puerto Rico and the Philippines," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42 (2000): 333-62.

Recommended reading:
Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 9, 251-86.

November 28:

Empire and Reform

Readings:

Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (London: Tauris, 1999), pp. 1-15, 44-67, 150-176.

Hasan Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 144-173.

Daniel L. Unowsky, *The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism: Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848-1916* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2005), "Imagining Austria," pp. 77-112.

Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontier of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), "Tourism to the Rescue," pp. 141-176.

Anatolyi Remnev, "Siberia and the Russian Far East in the Imperial Geography of Power," in Jane Burbank et al., *Russian Empire: Space, People, Power 1700-1930* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press,

2007): 425-454.

Recommended reading:

Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 11, 331-68.

Lauren Benton, "Abolition and Imperial Law, 1790-1820," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* Vol. 39:3, 355-374.

December 5:

Civilizing Missions

Readings:

Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 10, 287-330.

Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 11-37, 73-106.

Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper, "Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda," John Comaroff, "Images of Empire, Contests of Conscience: Models of Colonial Domination in South Africa"; Ann Laura Stoler, "Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia"; Lora Wildenthal, "Race, Gender, and Citizenship in the German Colonial Empire"; Fanny Colonna, "Educating conformity in French Colonial Algeria," all in Cooper and Stoler, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 1-57, 163-237, 263-83, 346-70.

Bruce Grant, "Empire and Savagery: The Politics of Primitivism in Late Imperial Russia," in *Russia's Orient*, pp. 292-310.

Francine Hirsch, "State and Evolution: Ethnographic Knowledge, Economic Expediency, and the Making of the USSR, 1917-1924," in Jane Burbank et al., *Russian Empire: Space, People, Power 1700-1930* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), pp. 139-165.

December 12:

Decolonization and Political Imagination

Readings:

Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapters 13, 413-42.

Sugata Bose, "Instruments and Idioms of Colonial and National Development: India's Historical Experience in Comparative Perspective," in Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, eds., *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays in the History and Politics of Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 45-63.

Bruce Grant, *In the Soviet House of Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 120-63.

Recommended reading:

Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 12, 369-412.

December 14 (Wednesday): Final discussion

Reading:

Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, chapter 14, 443-459.

December 19 (Monday): Final paper due in instructor's mailbox