Course: Historiography (5679)
Semester: Autumn, 2021

ASSIGNMENT No. 1

Q. 1 Human ideas and Human actions are the subject matter of history. Discuss with facts.

The subject-matter of history is human affairs, men in action, .things which have happened and how they happened; concrete events fixed in time and space, and their grounding in the thoughts and feelings of men—not things universal and generalized; events as complex and diversified as the men who wrought them, those rational beings whose knowledge is seldom sufficient, whose ideas are but distantly related to reality, and who are never moved by reason alone. Yet in all intelligent historical quest there is, underneath, a discreet, tentative search for the typical and recurrent in the psyche and actions of man (even in his unreason), and a search for a morphology of human affairs, curbed though that search be by the recognition that absent from the life of communities is the integration peculiar to living organisms: "fifty men do not make a centipede." On the practical side history should help man to master the past immanent both in his person and in his social setting, and induce in him a fuller understanding of the present through a heightened awareness of what is, or is not, peculiar to his own age.

First, historians are interested in providing conceptualizations and factual descriptions of events and circumstances in the past. This effort is an answer to questions like these: "What happened? What was it like? What were some of the circumstances and happenings that took place during this period in the past?" Sometimes this means simply reconstructing a complicated story from scattered historical sources—for example, in constructing a narrative of the Spanish Civil War or attempting to sort out the series of events that culminated in the Detroit race riot / uprising of 1967. But sometimes it means engaging in substantial conceptual work in order to arrive at a vocabulary in terms of which to characterize "what happened." Concerning the disorders of 1967 in Detroit: was this a riot or an uprising? How did participants and contemporaries think about it?

Second, historians often want to answer "why" questions: "Why did this event occur? What were the conditions and forces that brought it about?" What were the motivations of the participants? This body of questions invites the historian to provide an explanation of the event or pattern he or she describes: the rise of fascism in Spain, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the occurrence of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia in 1992 and later. And providing an explanation requires, most basically, an account of the causal mechanisms, background circumstances, and human choices that brought the outcome about. We explain an historical outcome when we identify the social causes, forces, events, and actions that brought it about, or made it more likely.

Third, and related to the previous point, historians are sometimes interested in answering a "how" question: "How did this outcome come to pass? What were the processes through which the outcome occurred?" How did the Prussian Army succeed in defeating the superior French Army in 1870? How did the Polish trade union Solidarity manage to bring about the end of Communist rule in Poland in 1989? Here the pragmatic interest of the historian's account derives from the antecedent unlikelihood of the event in question: how was this outcome

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possible? This too is an explanation; but it is an answer to a "how possible" question rather than a "why necessary" question.

Fourth, often historians are interested in piecing together the human meanings and intentions that underlie a given complex series of historical actions. They want to help the reader make sense of the historical events and actions, in terms of the thoughts, motives, and states of mind of the participants. For example: Why did Napoleon III carelessly provoke Prussia into war in 1870? Why did the parties of the far right in Germany gain popular support among German citizens in the 1990s? Why did northern cities in the United States develop such marked patterns of racial segregation after World War II? Answers to questions like these require interpretation of actions, meanings, and intentions—of individual actors and of cultures that characterize whole populations. This aspect of historical thinking is "hermeneutic," interpretive, and ethnographic.

And, of course, the historian faces an even more basic intellectual task: that of discovering and making sense of the archival and historical information that exists about a given event or time in the past. Historical data do not speak for themselves; archives are incomplete, ambiguous, contradictory, and confusing. The historian needs to interpret individual pieces of evidence, and he or she needs to be able to somehow fit the mass of evidence into a coherent and truthful story. Complex events like the Spanish Civil War present the historian with an ocean of historical traces in repositories and archives all over the world; these collections sometimes reflect specific efforts at concealment by the powerful (for example, Franco's efforts to conceal all evidence of mass killings of Republicans after the end of fighting); and the historian's task is to find ways of using this body of evidence to discern some of the truth about the past.

Q. 2 Analyze the contribution of the Jews to history writing.

Judaism has played a significant role in the development of Western culture because of its unique relationship with Christianity, the dominant religious force in the West. Although the Christian church drew from other sources as well, its retention of the sacred Scriptures of the synagogue (the Old Testament) as an integral part of its Bible—a decision sharply debated in the 2nd century CE—was crucial. Not only was the development of its ideas and doctrines deeply influenced, but it also received an ethical dynamism that constantly overcame an inclination to withdraw into world-denying isolation.

It was, however, not only Judaism's heritage but its persistence that touched Western civilization. The continuing existence of the Jews, even as a pariah people, was both a challenge and a warning. Their liberation from the shackles of discrimination, segregation, and rejection at the beginning of the modern era was understood by many to be the touchstone of all human liberty. Until the final ghettoization of the Jew—it is well to remember that the term ghetto belongs in the first instance to Jewish history—at the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance, intellectual contact between Judaism and Christianity, and thus between Judaism and Western culture, continued. St. Jerome translated the Hebrew Bible into Latin with the aid of Jewish scholars; the exegetical work of the scholars of the monastery of St. Victor in the 12th century borrowed heavily from Jewish scholars; and the biblical commentary of Rashi (Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes)

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was an important source for Martin Luther (1483–1546). Jewish thinkers helped to bring the remarkable intellectual achievements of the Islamic world to Christian Europe and added their own contributions as well. Even heresies within the church, on occasion, were said to have been inspired by or modeled after Judaism.

Jewish history is the history of the Jews, and their nation, religion and culture, as it developed and interacted with other peoples, religions and cultures. Although Judaism as a religion first appears in Greek records during the Hellenistic period (323–31 BCE) and the earliest mention of Israel is inscribed on the Merneptah Stele dated 1213–1203 BCE, religious literature tells the story of Israelites going back at least as far as c. 1500 BCE. The Jewish diaspora began with the Assyrian captivity and continued on a much larger scale with the Babylonian captivity. Jews were also widespread throughout the Roman Empire, and this carried on to a lesser extent in the period of Byzantine rule in the central and eastern Mediterranean. In 638 CE the Byzantine Empire lost control of the Levant. The Arab Islamic Empire under Caliph Omar conquered Jerusalem and the lands of Mesopotamia, Syria and Egypt. The Golden Age of Jewish culture in Spain coincided with the Middle Ages in Europe, a period of Muslim rule throughout much of the Iberian Peninsula. During that time, Jews were generally accepted in society and Jewish religious, cultural, and economic life blossomed. Between the 12th and 15th centuries, Ashkenazi Jews experienced extreme persecution in Central Europe, which prompted their massive emigration to Poland.[1][2]

During the Classical Ottoman period (1300–1600), the Jews, together with most other communities of the empire, enjoyed a certain level of prosperity. In the 17th century, there were many significant Jewish populations in Western Europe. During the period of the European Renaissance and Enlightenment, significant changes occurred within the Jewish community. Jews began in the 18th century to campaign for Jewish emancipation from restrictive laws and integration into the wider European society. While Jews in Western Europe were increasingly granted equality before the law, they faced growing persecution and legal restrictions in the Pale of Settlement, including widespread pogroms, which caused a mass exodus of more than two million Jews to the United States between 1881 and 1924.[3] During the 1870s and 1880s the Jewish population in Europe began to more actively discuss emigration back to Israel and the re-establishment of the Jewish Nation in its national homeland. The Zionist movement was founded officially in 1897. Meanwhile, the Jews of Europe and the United States gained success in the fields of science, culture and the economy. Among those generally considered the most famous were scientist Albert Einstein and philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. Many Nobel Prize winners at this time were Jewish, as is still the case.[4]

In 1933, with the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and the Nazis in Germany, the Jewish situation became more severe. Economic crises, racial anti-Semitic laws, and a fear of an upcoming war led many Jews to flee from Europe to Palestine, to the United States and to the Soviet Union. In 1939 World War II began and until 1941 Hitler occupied almost all of Europe, including Poland—where millions of Jews were living at that time—and France. In 1941, following the invasion of the Soviet Union, the Final Solution began, an extensive organized operation on an unprecedented scale, aimed at the annihilation of the Jewish people, and resulting in

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the persecution and murder of Jews in political Europe, inclusive of European North Africa (pro-Nazi Vichy-North Africa and Italian Libya). This genocide, in which approximately six million Jews were methodically exterminated, is known as the Holocaust or the Shoah (Hebrew term). In Poland, three million Jews were murdered in gas chambers in all concentration camps combined, with one million at the Auschwitz camp complex alone.

Palestine, which had been under a British mandate since 1920, saw large waves of Jewish migration before and during the Holocaust. After the mandate expired in 1948, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed on May 14 the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz Israel to be known as the State of Israel. Immediately afterwards all neighbouring Arab states attacked, yet the newly formed IDF resisted. In 1949 the war ended and the state of Israel started building the state and absorbing massive waves of hundreds of thousands of Jews from all over the world. As of 2020, Israel is a parliamentary democracy with a population of 9.2 million people, of whom 6.7 million are Jewish. The largest Jewish communities are in Israel and the United States, with major communities in France, Canada, Argentina, Russia, United Kingdom, Australia, and Germany.

Q. 3 How did St. Augustine reconcile the philosophies of free will and determinism. Discuss.

Augustine is remarkable for what he did and extraordinary for what he wrote. If none of his written works had survived, he would still have been a figure to be reckoned with, but his stature would have been more nearly that of some of his contemporaries. However, more than five million words of his writings survive, virtually all displaying the strength and sharpness of his mind (and some limitations of range and learning) and some possessing the rare power to attract and hold the attention of readers in both his day and ours. His distinctive theological style shaped Latin Christianity in a way surpassed only by Scripture itself. His work continues to hold contemporary relevance, in part because of his membership in a religious group that was dominant in the West in his time and remains so today.

Intellectually, Augustine represents the most influential adaptation of the ancient Platonic tradition with Christian ideas that ever occurred in the Latin Christian world. Augustine received the Platonic past in a far more limited and diluted way than did many of his Greek-speaking contemporaries, but his writings were so widely read and imitated throughout Latin Christendom that his particular synthesis of Christian, Roman, and Platonic traditions defined the terms for much later tradition and debate. Both modern Roman Catholic and Protestant Christianity owe much to Augustine, though in some ways each community has at times been embarrassed to own up to that allegiance in the face of irreconcilable elements in his thought. For example, Augustine has been cited as both a champion of human freedom and an articulate defender of divine predestination, and his views on sexuality were humane in intent but have often been received as oppressive in effect. Augustine was born in Tagaste, a modest Roman community in a river valley 40 miles (64 km) from the Mediterranean coast in Africa, near the point where the veneer of Roman civilization thinned out in the highlands of Numidia. Augustine's parents were of the respectable class of Roman society, free to live on the work of others, but their means were sometimes straitened. They managed, sometimes on borrowed money,

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to acquire a first-class education for Augustine, and, although he had at least one brother and one sister, he seems to have been the only child sent off to be educated. He studied first in Tagaste, then in the nearby university town of Madauros, and finally at Carthage, the great city of Roman Africa. After a brief stint teaching in Tagaste, he returned to Carthage to teach rhetoric, the premier science for the Roman gentleman, and he was evidently very good at it.

While still at Carthage, he wrote a short philosophical book aimed at displaying his own merits and advancing his career; unfortunately, it is lost. At the age of 28, restless and ambitious, Augustine left Africa in 383 to make his career in Rome. He taught there briefly before landing a plum appointment as imperial professor of rhetoric at Milan. The customary residence of the emperor at the time, Milan was the de facto capital of the Western Roman Empire and the place where careers were best made. Augustine tells us that he, and the many family members with him, expected no less than a provincial governorship as the eventual—and lucrative—reward for his merits.

Augustine's career, however, ran aground in Milan. After only two years there, he resigned his teaching post and, after some soul-searching and apparent idleness, made his way back to his native town of Tagaste. There he passed the time as a cultured squire, looking after his family property, raising the son, Adeodatus, left him by his long-term lover (her name is unknown) taken from the lower classes, and continuing his literary pastimes. The death of that son while still an adolescent left Augustine with no obligation to hand on the family property, and so he disposed of it and found himself, at age 36, literally pressed into service against his will as a junior clergyman in the coastal city of Hippo, north of Tagaste.

The transformation was not entirely surprising. Augustine had always been a dabbler in one form or another of the Christian religion, and the collapse of his career at Milan was associated with an intensification of religiosity. All his writings from that time onward were driven by his allegiance to a particular form of Christianity both orthodox and intellectual. His coreligionists in North Africa accepted his distinctive stance and style with some difficulty, and Augustine chose to associate himself with the "official" branch of Christianity, approved by emperors and reviled by the most enthusiastic and numerous branches of the African church. Augustine's literary and intellectual abilities, however, gave him the power to articulate his vision of Christianity in a way that set him apart from his African contemporaries. His unique gift was the ability to write at a high theoretical level for the most-discerning readers and still be able to deliver sermons with fire and fierceness in an idiom that a less-cultured audience could admire.

Made a "presbyter" (roughly, a priest, but with less authority than modern clergy of that title) at Hippo in 391, Augustine became bishop there in 395 or 396 and spent the rest of his life in that office. Hippo was a trading city, without the wealth and culture of Carthage or Rome, and Augustine was never entirely at home there. He would travel to Carthage for several months of the year to pursue ecclesiastical business in an environment more welcoming to his talents than that of his adopted home city.

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Augustine's educational background and cultural milieu trained him for the art of rhetoric: declaring the power of the self through speech that differentiated the speaker from his fellows and swayed the crowd to follow his views. That Augustine's training and natural talent coincided is best seen in an episode when he was in his early 60s and found himself quelling by force of personality and words an incipient riot while visiting the town of Caesarea Mauretanensis. The style of the rhetorician carried over in his ecclesiastical persona throughout his career. He was never without controversies to fight, usually with others of his own religion. In his years of rustication and early in his time at Hippo, he wrote book after book attacking Manichaeism, a Christian sect he had joined in his late teens and left 10 years later when it became impolitic to remain with them.

For the next 20 years, from the 390s to the 410s, he was preoccupied with the struggle to make his own brand of Christianity prevail over all others in Africa. The native African Christian tradition had fallen afoul of the Christian emperors who succeeded Constantine (reigned 305–337) and was reviled as schismatic; it was branded with the name of Donatism after Donatus, one of its early leaders. Augustine and his chief colleague in the official church, Bishop Aurelius of Carthage, fought a canny and relentless campaign against it with their books, with their recruitment of support among church leaders, and with careful appeal to Roman officialdom. In 411 the reigning emperor sent an official representative to Carthage to settle the quarrel. A public debate held in three sessions during June 1–8 and attended by hundreds of bishops on each side ended with a ruling in favour of the official church. The ensuing legal restrictions on Donatism decided the struggle in favour of Augustine's party.

Q. 4 Evaluate critically the contribution of Al-Tabri to the discipline of history.

Al-Ṭabarī, in full **Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī**, (born c. 839, Āmol, Ṭabaristān [Iran]—died 923, Baghdad, Iraq), Muslim scholar, author of enormous compendiums of early Islamic history and Qurʾānic exegesis, who made a distinct contribution to the consolidation of Sunni thought during the 9th century. He condensed the vast wealth of exegetical and historical erudition of the preceding generations of Muslim scholars and laid the foundations for both Qurʾānic and historical sciences. His major works were the Qurʾān Commentary and the History of Prophets and Kings (Taʾrīkh al-Rusūl wa al-Mulūk).

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The History commenced with the Creation, followed by accounts regarding the patriarchs, prophets, and rulers of antiquity. The history of the Sāsānian kings came next. For the period of the Prophet's life, al-Ṭabarī drew upon the extensive researches of 8th-century Medinan scholars. Although pre-Islamic influences are evident in

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their works, the Medinan perspective of Muslim history evolved as a theocentric (god-centred) universal history of prophecy culminating in the career of Muhammad and not as a continuum of tribal wars and values.

The sources for al-Ṭabarī's History covering the years from the Prophet's death to the fall of the Umayyad dynasty (661–750 CE) were short monographs, each treating a major event or the circumstances attending the death of an important person. Al-Ṭabarī supplemented this material with historical reports embodied in works on genealogy, poetry, and tribal affairs. Further, details of the early ʿAbbāsid period were available to him in a few histories of the caliphs that unfortunately have come down only in the fragments preserved by al-Ṭabarī. Almost all of these accounts reflected an Iraqi perspective of the community; coupled with this is al-Ṭabarī's scant attention to affairs in Egypt, North Africa, and Muslim Spain, so that his History does not have the secular "universal" outlook sometimes attributed to it. From the beginning of the Muslim era (dated from 622, the date of the hijrah—the Prophet Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina), the History is arranged as a set of annals according to the years after the hijrah. It terminates in the year 915.

Obviously, al-Ṭabarī could not sustain his preference for reports originating with the Prophet and the pious scholars of the early community known as al-salaf. His judgment of a report's reliability was now based upon the largely theoretical criterion that it should originate with either an eyewitness or a contemporary informant. This posed a problem for which al-Ṭabarī had no practical solution. Oftentimes he placed separate accounts of an event side by side without editorial comment. He saw no relevance in searching for the nature and causes of events, for any ultimate explanation lay beyond history itself and was known to God alone. Prophetic tradition, like the Qurʾān, provided positive commands and injunctions from God. History pointed to the consequences of heeding or ignoring him. For al-Ṭabarī, therefore, history was the divine will teaching by example.

Q. 5 Write short notes on the following: -

1. Eusebius of Caesarea

Imagine writing a comprehensive history of the church's last three centuries. Now imagine no one has ever written such a history before, so there's no single collection of key documents, no books profiling key figures, no chronology of major events, not even a fixed system of dates. When Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, undertook such an effort, he felt trepidation: "I feel inadequate to do it justice as the first to venture on such an undertaking, a traveler on a lonely and untrodden path," he wrote in his introduction to the The Church History (or Ecclesiastical History). "But I pray that God may guide me and the power of the Lord assist me, for I have not found even the footprints of any predecessors on this path, only traces in which some have left various accounts of the times in which they lived."

Timeline	
215	Origen begins writing
230	Earliest known public churches built

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250	Decius orders empire-wide persecution
260	Eusebius of Caesarea born
340	Eusebius of Caesarea dies
367	Athanasius's letter defines New Testament canon

Just as Eusebius was writing about Christianity's defeat of paganism, one of its greatest threats was developing on the inside. Arius, a presbyter from Libya, was gaining followers around the empire, teaching, "There was a time when the Son was not." Egyptian bishop Alexander and his chief deacon, Athanasius, fumed at the teaching. The argument spread throughout the empire, promising to rip the church in two. Constantine—God's chosen instrument, as Eusebius saw him—called the Council of Nicea to close the fissure.

Since his earliest days with Pamphilus, Eusebius was enthralled with the teachings of Origen, who has been criticized for 1,800 years for his belief that the Trinity was a hierarchy, not an equality. So Eusebius was less concerned with Arius's heresy than the threat of disunity in the church. When Arius was censured, Eusebius—who thought the entire debate brought Christianity the "most shameful ridicule"—was among the first to ask that he be reinstated.

At the Council of Nicea, Eusebius (whose name means "faithful") attempted to mediate between the Arians and the orthodox. But when the council was over and Arius was anathematized, Eusebius was reluctant to agree with its decision. He eventually signed the document the council produced, saying, "Peace is the object which we set before us." But a few years later, when the tables flipped and Arianism became popular, Eusebius criticized Athanasius, hero of the council. He even sat on the council that deposed him. Eusebius wasn't himself an Arian—he rejected the idea that "there was a time when the Son was not" and that Christ was created out of nothing. He simply opposed anti-Arianism.

2. Jewish-Hebrew Historiography

The same interest in the records of the past was shown, in the Hellenistic period, by writers in Greek, who often translated from Hebrew or Aramaic sources. Thus the First Book of the Maccabees is such a version, as is also the "History of John Hyrcanus," of which nothing further is known (comp. I Macc. xvi. 23-24). Other adaptations from the Hebrew of the Bible are found in fragments contained in a work of Alexander Polyhistor from Demetrius, Eupolemus, Artapanus, Aristeas, Cleodemus; but these are scarcely histories, and are of no independent value. Jason of Cyrene wrote a book, in five volumes, on the Maccabean period, of which the Second Book of the Maccabees is an abstract. Philo of Alexandria himself wrote an account of the persecutions under Caligula, in five books, of which only two are extant.

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Josephus.

All these are of slight account compared with the contributions to Jewish history made by Joseph, son of Matthias, known as Josephus. Besides his "Jewish Antiquities," which has a certain apologetic tendency, he wrote a "History of the Jewish War," which is the main source of information for the fall and destruction of the Jewish state. A part from the value of the information conveyed, the work has considerable literary grace and power of presentation. A contemporary, Justus of Tiberias, also wrote a history of the Jewish war, which is referred to and sharply criticized by Josephus.

After the fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews, the absence of communication between the scattered communities prevented any systematic account being written of their doings; for a long time, indeed, the only approach to historic composition was connected with ritual observances, as in the Megillat Ta'anit, or list of fast-days, or with the succession of tradition, as in the Pirḳe Abot, continued later on in the Seder Tannaim we-Amoraim (c. 887) and the Epistle of Sherira Gaon (c. 980). The series of sketches giving the relations of various rabbis to their predecessors, and which occur in later works, though often containing historical facts, are mainly useful in throwing light upon literary annals, and do not call for treatment here. The only work of the Talmudic period which can be considered as historic in tendency is the Seder 'Olam Rabba. A smaller work, Seder 'Olam Zuṭa, on the same subject, is devoted to proving that Bostanai was not descended from David.

"Yosippon."

The revival of independent interest in history appears to be shown, in southern Italy, in the tenth century, by the "Yosippon," a history of the period of the Second Temple, attributed to Joseph b. Gorion and written in fluent Hebrew. Some additions to this were written by one Jerahmeel b. Solomon, about a century later, in the same district. Of the same period is the Ahimaaz Chronicle, describing the invasion of southern Italy by the Saracens, with an account of the Jews of Bari, Otranto, etc.

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