

Spring 2017

HIST 585-004: Special Topics in History:

(cross-listed with MESAS 570-000 and ANT 585-004)

Topic: Unarchived Histories

Instructor	Day(s)	Time(s)	Maximum Enrollment
Pandey	TU	1:00 – 4:00 pm	12

Semester Description:

This course takes up the question of what counts as archive, history and knowledge. We will focus on the extensive domain of the unarchived: histories, ethnographies and other investigations or accounts that have been or dis-qualified in the process of establishing particular aspects of the human past and present as “knowledge.”

Scholars have noted that the archive, as a site of remembrance, is also at the same time a project of forgetting. The very process of archiving is accompanied by a process of un-archiving, rendering many aspects of social, cultural, political relations in the past and the present as incidental, chaotic, trivial, and therefore unhistorical and inconsequential: not “knowledge.” What are the implications for our constructions of society and history?

We will examine these questions through texts from scholars, in a variety of disciplines, writing on different parts of the world. Introductory texts include Dipesh Chakrabarty’s *Provincializing Europe*, and my edited anthology, *Unarchived Histories: the “Mad” and the “Trifling,”* which lay out something of the range and parameters of the debate on unarchived histories. We then turn to a number of classic studies: by Eric Hobsbawm and Ranajit Guha on peasant revolts; E. P. Thompson and Carolyn Steedman on the English working class; Eugene Genovese and Ted Rosengarten on African American history; Michel-Rolph Trouillot, Antoinette Burton and Anjali Arondekar on the colonial archive, for example.

Possible Required Textbooks, Articles, and Resources:

The final list of readings will be drawn up during the first two meetings of the seminar, once the composition and concerns of the class are clear. The concluding weeks of the course may be reserved for student presentation of their own research projects and questions.