

## **Unbound Prometheus-An intellectual retreat**

**June 11<sup>th</sup> – June 14<sup>th</sup> 2017**

### **The Rise of the West and the Great Divergence: An Economic History of Globalization**

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This course offers an in-depth understanding of how the world economy developed during the pre-modern period (1500-1800) and all the way to the present. When did globalization begin? Why are some countries rich and others poor? When did the divergence and the gap between different parts of the world widen? During the period 1500-1800 income differences were fairly small, but since then the interplay between geography, globalization, technological change and economic policies have widened the divides when it comes to the wealth and poverty of nations. The material will be taught through a comparative approach of global history, which draws contrasts and connections between different parts of the globe and between political and social developments. Topics include the ‘great divergence’ and the ‘rise of the west’; the role of imperial expansion in world trade; the rise of the financial economy; the role of institutions and state building; the role of economic crises and war in the shifting of economic centers of gravity.

Students will explore the various historical trajectories in world and global history, will become familiar with recent approaches and tools in History necessary in the 21st century to reflect on centuries past. The course aims to help students develop the critical thinking on interactions between specific regions in Europe and other continents, between local agents and global structures through the study of history. We will focus on the three main approaches of global history, namely comparisons, connections and processes of global integration, also known as the history of globalization. Students will read and discuss key works in one of the most innovative and interesting fields of historical inquiry and reflect on the meaning of history, the histories of development, inequalities and especially the histories of globalization.

The course includes a daily lecture followed by discussion of key readings on the main debates in world and global history. The small number of students allows for discussion and participation, which forms a major component of the course grade. Students are expected to submit short reflection papers during their two weeks of classes and one major paper within four weeks of from the end of class.

Class participation:	20%
Four reflection papers, up to 1,000 words each:	40%
Major paper, up to 5,000 words:	40%

Required textbook:

**Conrad, Sebastian. *What Is Global History?* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016**

Students must purchase the required textbook before coming to the course, and read the chapters and other articles assigned for each day according to the syllabus.

Week 1.

Monday: The history of global history

Tuesday: From world histories to global history

Wednesday: 'Comparative', 'transnational' or 'post-colonial' history?

Thursday: Comparisons and Connections

Friday: The 'Great Divergence'

Week 2.

Monday: Global History as history of globalization

Tuesday: Empires, colonialism and global history

Wednesday: Do nations fail? The fate of economies after independence

Thursday: Global history as history of consumption

Friday: The great convergence and the politics of global history