

LAH 3930: Politics of the Past



Meets: MW 3:05-4:20 PM
Instructor: Sam Holley-Kline

The historicity of the human condition also requires that practices of power and domination be renewed...Thus, even in relation to The Past our authenticity resides in the struggles of our present. Only in that present can we be true or false to the past we choose to acknowledge.

—Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*

This discussion-based seminar course will take a historical perspective to explore the past as a resource that has been used to a variety of political ends. Drawing from a variety of theoretical approaches and empirical case studies, this course will address questions like: who has the power to write about the past? How can those narratives of the past be contested? How have such narratives been used? Across time and space, we will examine the politics of the past—from scholarly accounts to traditions, and from monuments to origin myths.