

# History, Geography and Genealogy Maxims

## History Maxims

The fundamental unit of historical inquiry is the person

Historians are products of their history

Histories have their own histories of genesis and production

Names have histories

The history of names is not the same as the history of those named

The act of naming past peoples reads history backwards by imposing epistemological paradigms on past identities

Names often say more about the namer than the named

The identities of past peoples rarely fit historians' definitions of them

Names are a barrier to understanding

The histories of landscapes and cultures is not the same as the histories of their boundaries

Frontiers can be the core: centres of creativity and innovation – i.e. agricultural, technical, linguistic or some combination – and the enclosed territories the periphery

Historians invented history to justify their existence

History does not exist, only past presents

History is the study of the isness of the wasness and/or the wasness of the isness

There is no such thing as Time; it is the measurement of the rate of change and does not exist outside of our beliefs and paradigms: history is the study of incremental change

There are three sets of historical philosophies: academic, local and commercial; the last values research time by the hour compared to the first that has little practical concept of time as earnings are unrelated to it (most have never left school and have little experience of 'real life' or 'real time' or the relationship between 'real work' and real money). The local historian allocates voluntary time after the more important putting-food-on-the-table time

Academic political history is popular because politicians pay academic's wages

Politicians pay academic historians' wages for legitimacy of power, fantasies of empire and glory in posterity

Political historians are propaganda lackeys and apologists of wielders of power

Historical subjectivity is polemic propaganda best suited for a career in public relations or politics

Polemic history is a stock of trade of politicians; the manipulation of the past to suit present personal political needs and objectives.

Political history is the most ephemeral of all histories; there is an infinite number of repetitive firefly rises and falls of power

Political determinism in the study of the past is a curse; political naivety is differently worse

Humanity will never learn from past mistakes; wisdom is not heritable, luckily, neither is idiocy

A historian chronicles the ever-new and creative ways humanity repeats the same mistakes

The history of humanity and march of civilisation has all the grace and artistry of a stampeding herd of elephants stoned on chilli looking for action without caring about the victim's gender

It's impossible to accurately reconstruct the roles and interplay of random external events and human agency involved in any occurrence

What happens is what happens when all alternatives have been eliminated

## The Sad and Sorry Tale of History and Geography

Geography as an academic discipline did not exist until the late 1800s. Claims that earlier geographers existed are usually made by geographers who read history backwards by imposing their paradigms and self-justifications on past literature. It started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as mercantile economic geography to efficiently manage colonies but over time became academic and theoretical.

However, geographers never lost their acquisitive conquering colonial capitalist instincts as can be seen with the 'borrowing' of philosophies from other disciplines such as ecology, economy, sociology, and ideologies, such as Marxism and Post Modernism, and their various sub-philosophies and sub-ideologies; possibly more economic than inventing new ones. Intermittent remedial attempts have fallen on fallow ground.

They have become experts on identifying underutilised subjects in other disciplines and taking them over with the eventual plan of academic world domination as formulated by geosophy's mission statement.

For instance, seeing that there was an unoccupied piece of historical territory because it wasn't political; geographers annexed and colonised it, then renamed settlement history as historical geography. Archaeologists have derivatively followed suit with landscape archaeology through demic diffusion, their (insert your favourite adjective here) euphemism for invasion and conquest.

The mad thing is that political historians didn't even notice and most are completely unaware of this turn of events so wedded are they to and blinkered by political determinism. It makes you wonder how savvy political historians are at all at all when they're supposed to be experts in power, conquest and colonisation.

## Geography Maxims

There is only one dimension: space; points; lines and planes do not exist, (nor does time, see above)

Space may be only a cultural concept of defining where everything happens and not exist independently

Space is passive

The geography of landscapes and cultures is not the same as the geography of their boundaries

Geographers invented geography to justify their existence

Geographers are products of their geography

Economic geography's popularity comes from its potential commercial benefits; Knowledge is Profit

There are no philosophies of geography

(Humorous interlude: the two favourite unreliable and derivative academic curses by unreliable and derivative academics are 'Unreliable!' and 'Derivative!')

## Genealogy is the Answer – even if you haven't asked the Question yet

Genealogy is mostly associated with family history but the underlying concept is equally valid in all other disciplines. It has the advantage of being neutral as it is unburdened with philosophies and ideologies having never become academic disciplines; though it does not mean that genealogists are neutral

It has expanded from the study of individual ancestors: to families

to history, where it provides the necessary continuities for migration and settlement, power and wealth

to the study of life, where it provides the tools for understanding the evolution of species

to geology, where it gives a framework to understanding the planet's rocky history

to astronomy, where it describes the birth and death of solar systems, stars and galaxies; all descended from the spark birth of our orphan universe

to the continuous present because the present is all there actually is, the concepts of past and future only exist in our heads

Fundamentally genealogy in its broadest sense is about understanding change: how one 'mass' or 'energy' becomes another, causes and effects over the 'short' to 'long' term; how the past is embedded in the present and present embedded in the future, to understanding the ever-evolving genealogy of the present.