**Historiography and theoretical frameworks crib sheet**

**1. Marxist history**

Structuralist framework:

* analysis of the past to understand the relationship of today to the future
* based on material production = the laws of historical development and the structures of society and politics were fundamentally economic
* progression thesis:

‘primitive’ societies held property in common

‘ancient’ societies saw the growth of private property, creating distinctions between groups

‘feudal’ societies saw social distinctions further accentuated by religious institutions and beliefs

‘capitalist’ societies experienced new social relations (developed by new technologies) where capitalists owned the means of production.

‘revolution’ – workers take over means of production

Key argument = history revolves around the struggle between social classes which have conflicting material interests = ‘dialectic’ between forces of production and relations of production.

‘new Marxism’ of the 1960s and 70s:

* Gramsci – idea of ‘hegemony’ = state power needs techniques of asserting legitimacy in the minds of those ruled = has to give concessions to wider interests, rather than outright coercion. Cultural hegemony.
* E. P. Thompson – political and cultural structures shaped class formation as much as economic structures in late eighteenth century Britain. Class as a process rather than a definable category.

**2. Annales school**

France from the 1920s.

From 1929, *Journal Annales d’histoire Economique et Sociale*.

Marc Bloch, *The Historian’s Craft* (posthumously published 1949)

Lucien Febvre.

* challenged predominance of political history and narrative.
* Problem solving analysis of structures = social science
* Interdisciplinary
* Integrated or total history – histoire totale – Ferdnand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1947)
* Longue duree

Critics:

- overly reliant on quantitative methods; deterministic; longue duree denied human agency; impossibility of ‘total history’

revival in recent ‘micro-history’ – study of particular localities or small structures such as the family.

**3. Feminist/gender history**

From 1960s – two strands:

1. ‘herstory’ – distinctively women’s history – often explicit attempt to challenge ‘patriarchal’ social structure of the day by critiquing patriarchal history and historians

2. putting women back into general narratives – re-examining old evidence and finding women in them, neglected by previous interpretations.

Two methods:

1. emphasizes the importance of patriarchy as the critical factory in determining inequality between the sexes

2. out of Marxism – gender relations reflect the relations of production – gender is therefore determined by class.

Also see queer history/theory

Gender history:

Since 1990s – more analytical rather than polemical

Interest in masculinity and male experience

Note also Michel Foucault - sexuality

**4. Post-structuralist/postmodern history**

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| **‘modern’** | **‘post-modern’ or ‘post-structuralist’** |
| structuralist | Post-structuralist = no over-riding structures |
| Metanarratives, e.g. progression | No overriding narratives – no progression |
| Search for truths and certainties | No truths or certainties = relativism |
| empiricism | Theoretical and cultural analysis |
| Statistical proofs or political causes of events | Discourse and agency |
| Certainty of evidence = can be used by the historian | Uncertainty of evidence = shaped by language of the source and by historians’ own interpretations of the language |
| Language of sources treated often at face value or search for ‘bias’ | Linguistic turn (again see Foucault) = language as a form of power and agency |

**5. postcolonial**

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1978)

Homi Bhabha

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

* intrinsically global
* as with gender history, takes as its starting point the marginalization of a large category of people
* seeks to understand and challenge relations of power and subordination of non-Western societies
* influenced by Foucault (all discourses are forms of power and language)
* argues history as the West understands it has silenced non-Western traditions and histories.

Said’s Orientalism = attempt by the West to define the Other [exotic, mystical, dangerous, uncivilized] – led to Arabs educated in the Western tradition to reject their own culture. Orientalism allowed imperialists to dominate. ‘science of imperialism’.

Critiques of Said = argue he portrayed a unified West imposing a unified discourse on the East = oversimplification.

3 strands:

1. 1980s subaltern studies – especially in India – history from below influenced by Marxism and E. P. Thompson

2. growth of non-Western history in the 1990s –especially based on oral history in African nations.

3. more recently – postcolonial historians, without downplaying the violence and authoritarianism of empire, emphasise the two-way flow of influences, e.g. Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects* (2002).

Summaries taken from Larry Butler and Anthony Gorst, *Modern British History: A Guide to Study and Research* (London, 1997), and John Tosh (with Sean Lang), The Pursuit of History: aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history (5th ed. 2009)