The 'Hidden Causes' of History: Integrating the Social and the Economic
FRE 328/ COM 463/ HUM 301/ ECS 335

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Our aim is to examine how the "social" and the "economic" become intertwined. From Enlightenment narratives about the origins of civilization, whether philosophical, ethnographic, or fictional, by Swift, Rousseau, or Graffigny, we also consider history-writing by Voltaire and Gibbon. We read early economic and sociological thought by Malthus, Saint-Simon, Balzac, and Smith, and delve into the crystallization of broadly Marxist approaches to society and culture in Engels, Benjamin, and, of course, Marx. While the category of "literature" will be an important lens for our thinking, archival and historical approaches will also be stressed.

Prerequisites and Restrictions: No particular disciplinary background or knowledge is required. Although those able to read French and German will have access to a wider range of archival materials for their own projects, all weekly readings will be offered in the original French or German, where relevant, as well as in English. Discussions will be in English. French concentrators will need to do the readings (where appropriate) and submit their work in French.