Course Title	:	AERIAL TECHNOLOGIES IN HISTORY
Course Code	:	HST2002
Recommended Study Year	:	Any
No. of Credits/Term	:	3
Mode of Tuition	:	Sectional
Class Contact Hours	:	3 hours per week
Category in Major Prog.	:	History Major Elective Category 5: "Interdisciplinary Historical Approaches or Methods"
Prerequisite(s)	:	None
Co-requisite(s)	:	None
Exemption Requirement(s)	:	N/A

Brief Course Description

This course explores the history of aerial technologies from the hot-air balloon through the airplane and the satellite to the drone. Since the first balloons carrying humans took flight in the late 18th century, these technologies have shaped societies in war and in peace, fundamentally altering the nature of armed conflict and travel. They have also functioned as a stimulus to the imagination, inspiring new aesthetic and cartographic representations of the world—as well as producing unrealistic expectations and unintended consequences that reveal tensions between technophile discourses and technology in practice. We will investigate these developments from interdisciplinary and international perspectives, integrating the history of technology with political and cultural history as well as epistemological and ethical considerations.

Aims

This course prepares students to analyze how aerial technologies relate to modern political and cultural history. It prompts them to examine different forms of historical evidence, ranging from government documents to oral testimonies to maps and photographs. Finally, the course encourages students to examine ethical debates stemming from the use of technology in a variety of cultural contexts.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify key moments when aerial technologies have shaped political and cultural change, and vice versa.
2. Analyze claims about the role of technology in history, taking into account political, cultural, and ethical perspectives.
3. Craft an original argument about technology in historical context.
4. Synthesize a range of appropriate sources to substantiate a thesis.

5. Communicate effectively in written and spoken English.

Indicative Content

I. Heads in the clouds: utopianism and early flight
II. Technological competition in an age of nationalism
III. Aerial bombardment and the transformation of warfare in the 20th century
IV. The jet age and the rise of mass tourism
V. The Cold War and the space race
VI. Ground control: infrastructure and discourses of modernization
VII. The making and mapping of environmental catastrophe
VIII. Cabin pressure: gender and labor in the airline industry
IX. Terrorism, security, and the surveillance state
X. Deregulation in global perspective
XI. The politics of automated and remote-controlled flight

Teaching Method

The course will integrate lectures and group discussions in order to elucidate content and foster critical thinking and participation. Lectures will provide historical context for the week's themes and assignments. In class discussions, we will interrogate secondary-source readings and engage with primary sources including texts, maps, and photographs.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

Essay (LOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

An essay assignment will prompt students to locate and synthesize a range of sources and to formulate an original historical argument about an aerial technology of their choosing.

Group presentation (LOs 2, 5)

A group presentation will require students to identify key themes and arguments from the week's readings, and to formulate discussion topics based on them.

Final project (LOs 1, 2, 5)

Students will have two options for a creative final project, in which they will conceptualize and illustrate how aerial technologies have affected politics and societies.

Option 1: Curate and annotate a collection of photographs and/or illustrations related to the transformative effect of aerial technologies in a given historical context. Curation should include an introductory essay, captions, and bibliographic references.

<u>Option 2:</u> Write an eyewitness account from the perspective of a historical actor who has experienced aerial warfare. Account should dramatize multiple opinions and points of view about the use of aerial technologies in war, and should include bibliographic references.

Course participation (LOs 1, 2, 3, 5)
Course participation will be assessed on the basis of factors including performance in class discussions and attendance.

Learning Outcome	Essay	Presentation	Final project	Participation
1. Identify key moments when aerial technologies have shaped political and cultural change, and vice versa.	X		X	X
2. Analyze claims about the role of technology in history, taking into account political, cultural, and ethical perspectives.	X	X	X	X
3. Craft an original argument about technology in historical context.	X			X
4. Synthesize a range of appropriate sources to substantiate a thesis.	X			
5. Communicate effectively in written and spoken English.	X	X	X	X

Assessment

Essay	35%
Group presentation	15%
Final project	30%
Course participation	20%

Required Readings
These will include <u>selected</u> readings from the following (the precise readings may vary from term to term):

Bailes, K. E., "Technology and Legitimacy: Soviet Aviation and Stalinism in the 1930s," *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Jan., 1976), 55-81.

Boris, Eileen, "Desirable Dress: Rosies, Sky Girls, and the Politics of Appearance," *International Labor and Working-class History*, No. 69 (spring, 2006), 123-42.

Cockburn, Andrew, *Kill Chain: The Rise of the High-tech Assassins*, New York, Henry Holt, 2015, pages TBA.

Collis, Christy, "The Geostationary Orbit: A Critical Legal Geography of Space's Most Valuable Real Estate," in *Down to Earth: Satellite Technologies, Industries, and Cultures*, edited by Lisa Parks and James Schwoch, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 2012, 61-81.

Conway, Erik M., "The Politics of Blind Landing," *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Jan., 2001), 81-106.

Francis, Martin, *The Flyer: British Culture and the Royal Air Force, 1939-1945*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, 106-30.

Holmes, Richard, *Falling Upwards: How We Took to the Air*, New York, Pantheon, 2013, 1-29, 80-96.

Koerner, Brendan I., *The Skies Belong to Us: Love and Terror in the Golden Age of Hijacking*, New York, Crown, 2013, 7-11, 35-57.

Martini, Edwin A., *Agent Orange: History, Science, and the Politics of Uncertainty*, Boston, University of Massachusetts Press, 2012, 53-96.

McCartin, Joseph A., *Collision Course: Ronald Reagan, the Air Traffic Controllers, and the Strike that Changed America*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2011, pages TBA.

Overy, Richard, *The Bombing War: Europe 1939-1945*, London, Allen Lane, 2013, chs. 2-3.

Satia, Priya, "The Pain of Love: The Invention of Aerial Surveillance in British Iraq," in *From Above: War, Violence, and Verticality*, edited by Peter Adey, Mark Whitehead, and Alison J. Williams, New York, Oxford, 2014, 223-46.

Sheftall, Mordecai George, "Kamikaze Warfare in Imperial Japan's Existential Crisis, 1944-1945," in *How Fighting Ends: A History of Surrender*, edited by Holger Afflerbach and Hew Strachan, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012, 383-94.

Van Vleck, Jenifer, *Empire of the Air: Aviation and the American Ascendancy*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard, 2013, 199-238.

Vantoch, Victoria, *The Jet Sex: Airline Stewardesses and the Making of an American Icon*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013, 27-57.

Whitelegg, Drew, "Cabin Pressure: The Dialectics of Emotional Labour in the Airline Industry," *Journal of Transport History*, No. 23 (Mar., 2002), 73-86.

Zaidi, Waqar, "'Aviation Will either Destroy or Save Our Civilization': Proposals for the International Control of Aviation, 1920-1945," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Jan., 2011), 150-78.

Supplementary Readings

Bowen, John T., *The Economic Geography of Air Transportation: Space, Time, and the Freedom of the Sky*, New York, Routledge, 2010.

Chamayou, Grégoire, *A Theory of the Drone*, translated by Janet Lloyd, New York, New Press, 2015.

Endy, Christopher, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

Hirsh, Max, and Jonathan D. Solomon, "Does Your Mall Have an Airport?", *Log*, No. 19 (spring/summer, 2010), 99-106.

Pousin, Frédéric, "The Aerial View and the *Grands Ensembles*," in *Seeing from Above: The Aerial View in Visual Culture*, edited by Mark Dorrian and Frédéric Pousin, London, I. B. Tauris, 2013.

Salter, James, *The Hunters*, Berkeley, Calif., Counterpoint, 1997 [1956].

Scott, James C, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1999.

Sebald, W. G., *On the Natural History of Destruction*, translated by Anthea Bell,   London, Hamish Hamilton, 2003.

Van Houtryve, Tomas, "Blue Sky Days," *Harper's* (Apr., 2014), 36-51.

Wohl, Robert, *The Spectacle of Flight: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1920-1950*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2005.

Young, Gavin, *Beyond Lion Rock: The Story of Cathay Pacific Airways*, London, Penguin, 1990.

Important Notes:
(1)   Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
(2)   Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is "the presentation of another person's work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student's own work". Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
(3)   Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
(4)   To enhance students' understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course "Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness" is available on https://pla.ln.edu.hk/.