

Fall 2016: History 706 Jones
M 3:30-6:20 2206 MHRA

Colloquium in European History from 1789

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Office Hours: T 12-1:30; W 1-1:50; R 2-3:15; and by appointment	

Course Description

The American Heritage Dictionary defines “colloquium” as “an academic seminar on a broad field of study, usually led by a different lecturer at each meeting.” This graduate-level “Colloquium in European History from 1789” holds true to that definition by having students facilitate discussions of some of the most important works representing the major historiographical trends, issues, and problems in modern European history from the French Revolution through World War II.

The class is arranged around weekly discussions of texts covering a wide range of topics divided into two parts—**Part I: the Classics**; and **Part II: Recent Titles**; classes will be led by teams of students who facilitate discussion by formulating questions germane to that week’s text. Our primary tasks will be to identify authors’ arguments, methodologies, and source bases, as well as to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their works.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Identify some of the key issues of debate in the broad historiography of modern Europe.
- Evaluate and synthesize scholarly arguments on a specific topic in modern European history by writing a historiographical essay.
- Critically appraise varying historical arguments and formulate their own interpretations.
- Critically read and distinguish between different methodologies and “read between the lines” of differing points of view.
- Participate in a respectful and thoughtful manner in discussions of a variety of topics.

Course Activities

Participation	20%
4 Book Reviews (2-3 pages/500-750 words; 12-point font; double-spaced)	10% each
Oral Presentation	10%
Historiographical Essay (12-15 pages; 12-point font; double-spaced)	30%

OPTIONAL TEXT (suggested for those with relatively minimal knowledge of modern European history):

- David S. Mason, *A Concise History of Modern Europe: Liberty, Equality, Solidarity*, 3rd edition (Landham, MD: Rowman Little Publishers, 2015; ISBN: 9781442236974).

Teaching Strategy

At the first meeting we will divide the class into groups and divide the readings among the groups. **Every student in the class is responsible for reading every assigned title for every**

week. Group members for a designated class will lead that week's discussion. As part of this responsibility, group members should compile a list of 3-5 discussion questions based on the title for their week and email those questions to the Instructor *no later than Thursday at noon of the week before they are to lead the next class discussion.* Group members are encouraged to come up with these questions by consultation, either through meetings or via email; lack of involvement in this process will negatively impact on the participation grade. In addition, each member of the designated group should write a review of the book for the week that they lead discussion (see below for details). Students outside of the designated group for a given week should come prepared to discuss the main aspects of the book for that week, i.e. the author's thesis, sources, methodology, and where the book belongs within the broader historiography on the subject. Finally, each student will write a historiographical essay (see below) dealing with some aspect of modern European history, and give a 10-15 minute oral presentation of their findings at our final class meeting during the exam period.

Participation

In a discussion-based seminar of this nature class participation is crucial. The 20% participation grade will be based on in-class participation, with an emphasis on the *quality* of input rather than the quantity of input.

Book Reviews

Each student will write four book reviews, worth 10% each of the course grade, corresponding to the titles of their group's designated weeks. This is the one activity that individuals within the group should do on their own; group members are free to proofread and comment on each others' reviews, but the final product should be the work of each individual group member, rather than a collective effort. Students should feel free to consult published reviews with the clear understanding that their review shall be their own work. The book reviews should be concise (500-750 words/2-3 pages; 12-point font; double-spaced) and should convey the author's argument and methodology clearly, as well as describe the source base(s) on which the work is based. Most importantly, the reviews should assess the strengths and weaknesses of the work under review.

Historiographical Essay

Students will write a historiographical essay, worth 30% of the overall course grade, identifying the major works, trends, and issues of any topic of the student's interest relevant to modern European history. The essay (12-15 pages/3000-3750 words; 12-point font; double-spaced), **due Monday, December 12 by 5:00 PM**, should convey the major themes covered in the works examined as well as differences between varying treatments of similar topics. For each work discussed in the essay students should consider the following questions: What is the author's thesis? What sources/evidence does the author rely on? Where does the book fit with historiographical trends in the field? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the book, i.e. how convincing is the author's interpretation and the book's overall argument? Finally, a strong essay will relate the works examined to each other in a clear and logical manner.

Oral Presentation

During the designated exam period for our class, **Friday, December 9, 3:30-6:30**, students will present the findings of their historiographical essays to the class as a whole in 5-7 minute

presentations (with 3-5 additional minutes for questions), worth 10% of the overall course grade. The oral presentation should succinctly summarize the key arguments and debates identified in the student's historiographical essay, including the most important authors and titles, as well as the main contending schools of thought among leading historians. Students are encouraged to consult the University Speaking Center for assistance in this endeavor. Power Point presentations are encouraged but not required for the oral presentations.

Course Schedule

WEEK 1. Objective: To gain an overview of the basic trends and schools of thought in modern European historiography.

- August 22: Introduction to the course: Discussion of Georg Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2005; ISBN: 9780819567666), led by the Instructor

Part I: The Classics

WEEK 2 Objective: To explore the concept of “Orientalism” as a European construct for understanding the “East” based on the book that sparked the debate.

- August 29: Discussion of Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979; ISBN: 9780394740676), led by Group 1

WEEK 3 Objective: To explore national and international power in the “modern”—post-Renaissance—period based on a classic book with a global focus.

- September 12: Discussion of Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York: Vintage, 1989; ISBN: 9780679720195), led by Group 2

WEEKS 4-5 Objective: To examine two of the most classic texts in the historiography of the French Revolution and the shifts in historiography represented by those titles.

- September 19: Georges Lefebvre, *The Coming of the French Revolution* (Princeton Classics) (Princeton University Press, 2005; ISBNs: 9780691121888/9780691168463), led by Group 3
- September 26: Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, ISBN: 9780520082700), led by Group 1

WEEK 6 Objective: To examine the origins and global impact of nationalism in the modern world.

- October 3: Discussion of Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised Edition (New York: Verso; ISBN: 9781844670864), led by Group 2

WEEK 7 Objective: To examine issues of human rights in modern history within the context of the New Cultural History.

- October 10: Discussion of Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2008; ISBN: 9780393331998), led by Group 3

WEEK 8 Objective: To explore a classic Marxist analysis of the emergence of England's working class in the 19th century.

- October 24: Discussion of E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage, 1966; ISBN: 9780394703220), led by Group 1

WEEK 9 Objective: To examine the spread of “Westernization” and its impact in the modern world.

- October 31: Discussion of Theodore von Laue, *The World Revolution of Westernization: The Twentieth Century in Global Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press; ISBN: 9780195049077), led by Group 2

Part II: Recent Titles

WEEKS 10-11 Objective: To study European colonialism and its impact around the world, specifically the politics of the British Empire and Belgium's rule in the African Congo.

- November 7: Jill Bender, *The 1857 Indian Uprising and the British Empire* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016; ISBN: 9781107135154), led by Group 3.
****NOTE: do not purchase; available as an eBook through the UNCG Library page**
- November 14. Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terrorism and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (New York: Mariner Books, 1999; ISBN: 9780395759240), led by Group 1

WEEK 12. Objective: To explore World War I, its impact and how it is remembered in Russian history.

- November 21. Karen Petrone, *The Great War in Russian Memory* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2011; ISBN: 9780253356178), led by Group 2

WEEK 13. Objective: To explore German intellectual history between the wars.

- November 28. Emily Levine, *Dreamland of Humanists: Warburg, Cassirer, Panofsky and the Hamburg School* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015; ISBN: 9780226272467), led by Group 3

WEEK 14. Objective: To examine the impact of World War II on the average Russian soldier.

- December 5. Discussion of Catherine Merridale, *Ivan's War: Life and Death in the Red Army, 1939-1945* (New York: Picador, 2007, ISBN: 9780312426521), led by Instructor

Friday, December 9 3:30-6:30: ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Historiographical Essays due Monday, December 12 by 5:00 PM