

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
HIS 706: Colloquium in European History since 1789

Spring Semester 2014
Instructor: Dr. Emily J. Levine

M 3:30–6:20 Room TBD

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Office Hours: W 3:00–5pm, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This graduate-level seminar surveys the major historiographical trends, issues, and problems in modern European history from the French Revolution through World War II, postwar memory, and the emergence of human rights. In early weeks such “classics” as E.P. Thompson’s *The Making of the Working Class* and Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* are placed alongside more recent scholarship in their respective fields. Marie Louise Roberts’s contribution on gender and the liberal state is paired with its theoretical model, Michel Foucault’s *The History of Sexuality*. In weeks 8 through 10 particular emphasis is placed on possible comparisons between Nazism and Stalinism. Inspired by the “international turn” in the field, this seminar also considers over the course of the semester how the new global history might enhance or challenge such topics as nationalism, Empire, revolution, and war.

The class is arranged around weekly discussions of texts on one event or topic. Classes will be led by a student who will facilitate discussion by formulating relevant questions to that week’s text or texts, generally a book or a selection of articles. (In the case where the assigned reading includes excerpts from a book, articles are used to supplement the reading.) Our primary tasks will be to identify the authors’ arguments, methodologies, and source bases and to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their works. In presentations, book reviews, and the final historiographical essay, students will also have the opportunity to reflect on the success of the authors’ objectives and the impact of their approach to our understanding of European history.

Please note that there is no survey assigned to this course other than Mark Mazower’s *Governing the World: The History of an Idea*, which we will discuss at the **first** session on **Monday, January 13th**. If you require further background or a refresher in any period of Modern European history it is highly recommended that you consult a textbook prior to our discussion of that topic. For recommended titles please contact the professor.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 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
- Write and speak critically and professionally about a variety of topics
- Give thoughtful, considerate, and substantive feedback to your peers

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Participation	15%
Peer critique	5%
4 Book Reviews (2-3 pages/500-750 words); 12-point font; double-spaced)	10% each
Oral Presentations	10%
Historiographical Essay (12-15 pages; 12-point font; double-spaced)	30%

PARTICIPATION

At the first meeting we will divide the classes for presentations. Every student in the class is responsible for reading every assigned title for every week, and if it becomes apparent that students are not doing the reading, their participation grade will suffer accordingly. The presenter is responsible for leading the group discussion. As part of this responsibility, the presenter should compile a list of discussion questions based on the title (or titles) for their week and email those questions to the class as a whole no later than **Sunday evening at 6pm** in the week they are to lead the class discussion. Given the discussion-nature of this small seminar, class participation is crucial. All students 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 (or article) belongs within the broader historiography on the subject. The 15% participation grade will be based on in-class participation in both presentations and conversation. Failure to arrive prepared and or to participate (emphasis on *quality* rather than quantity) will negatively impact one's grade.

BOOK REVIEWS

Each student will write four book reviews (worth 10% each of the course grade), which identifies the main argument in the book, the author's position and/or perspective, and evaluates the book for its ability to achieve its stated goals (500–750 words, 12-point font, and double-spaced). **Two of the book reviews will be due on 2/10 and 3/3.** Students may choose any other titles they wish for the second two book reviews, (including one on which they are presenting) as long as they read the book in its entirety and turn it in on the day on which we discuss it. Students will also be required to do one **peer-critique of a book review due 3/17** and a **rewrite based on this critique due 3/24** (5% of the grade). Students are strongly encouraged to peruse past issues of the *American Historical Review* for examples of short-form book reviews in the field and to emulate the tone and formatting of these models.

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

Students will write a historiographical essay (worth 30% of the overall course grade), which identifies the major works, trends, and issues of the student's research interest relevant to modern European history. (Topics must be approved by the professor by no later than **Monday, April 21.**) The historiographical essay (12–15 pages/3000-3750 words; 12-point font; double-spaced) will be **due on Wednesday, April 30th, in hardcopy to Dr. Levine by 5:00pm.**

The historiographical essay 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. Needless to say, the work should be polished and have no grammatical errors. Students are encouraged to consult the University Writing Center and/or exchange essays with their writing partner for editing purposes.

ORAL PRESENTATION

During our final class on **Monday, April 28th**, students will present the findings of their historiographical essays to the class as a whole in 7–10 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.

REQUIRED READINGS

You are being asked to read a book a week (or the equivalent). In cases, where the entire book (or a large portion thereof) is assigned, the book is on sale in the bookstore as well as on reserve in the library. Excerpted books are designated with an * and available on Blackboard for download. Although it is my preference that you bring the hardcopy to our discussions, I understand that sometimes printing costs do not make that possible. Please know that if you elect to read the work in electronic form you will need to take extensive and detailed notes so that you can fully participate in the class discussions.

The following books should be acquired and accessible in class in some form:

Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (Penguin, 2013).
ISBN: 978-0143123941

Leora Auslander, *Cultural Revolutions: Everyday Life and Politics in Britain, North America and France* (University of California Press, 2009).
ISBN: 978-0520259218

Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin de Siecle France* (University of Chicago Press, 2002).
ISBN: 9780226721248

Christopher Clark, *Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914* (Harper, 2013).
ISBN: 9780061146657

Peter Gay, *The Outsider as Insider* (W.W. Norton, 2001).
ISBN: 978-0393322392

Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).
ISBN 9780674018426

Tim Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (Basic, 2012).
ISBN: 9780465002399

Jan Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Penguin, 2002).
ISBN: 0142002402

Sam Moyn, *The Last Utopia* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).
ISBN 9780674064348)

1. M, 1/13—Europe and the World

Discussion of:

Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea*

2. M, 1/20—NO CLASS: MLK DAY

3. M, 1/27—The “global” French Revolution

Discussion of:

Leora Auslander, *Cultural Revolutions: Everyday Life and Politics in Britain, North America and France*, chapters 1, 3, 5, and 6.

Gary Kates, ed. *The French Revolution: Recent Debates and New Controversies:*

Gary Kates, introduction, 1–14; Francois Furet, “The French Revolution revisited,” 53–67; and Laurent Dubois, “The price of Liberty: Victor Hugues and the administration of freedom in Gadeloupe, 1794–1798,” 254–282.*

4. M, 2/3—The Great Catastrophe—its past and future?

Discussion of:

E.P Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*,
preface, and chapters 6, 9–12 (pp: 9–14, 189–213, 269–450).*

Geoff Eley and Keith Nield, *The Future of Class in History*, pp. 1–18, 81–203.*

5. M, 2/10—NO DISCUSSION

Due: Book review on title from 1/13, 1/27, or 2/3, hardcopy outside Dr. Levine’s office, MHRA 2217, by 5pm.

6. M, 2/17— Nations, Empires, and Multinational Corporations

Discussion of:

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*,

introduction, and chapters 3 and 5 (pp. 1–8, 37–46, 67–82).*

Alison Frank, “The Petroleum War of 1910: Standard Oil, Austria, and the Limits of the Multinational Corporation,” *American Historical Review* 114, no. 1 (2009):16–41.*

Andrew Sartori, “The British Empire and Its Liberal Mission” *Journal of Modern History* 78 (2006): 623–642.*

7. M, 2/24— Gender, Sexuality, and Politics in the Liberal State

Discussion of:

Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin de Siecle France*, entire.

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Vol. 1*, 1–49.*

8. M, 3/3— The First Global War

Discussion of:

Christopher Clark, *Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914*, entire.

Due: at the beginning of class: Book Review on Clark’s Sleepwalkers; one copy to Dr. Levine and one copy to assigned partner.

SPRING BREAK

9. M: 3/17—NO DISCUSSION—Meet with writing partner to give them feedback.

Due: peer critique of book review in hardcopy outside Dr. Levine’s office, MHRA 2117, by 5pm.

10. M: 3/24— The Weimar Republic and the Making of the Modern

Discussion of:

Peter Gay, *The Outsider as Insider*, entire.

Anna Krylova, “The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies,” *Kritika* 1.1 (2000): 119–146.*

Due at the beginning of class: book review rewrite

11. M: 3/31—Nazism and Stalinism

Discussion of:

Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, entire.

Peter Fritzsche and Jochen Hellbeck, “The New Man in Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany” in Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick, eds. *Beyond Totalitarianism: Stalinism and Nazism Compared*, 302–341.*

12. M: 4/7—Stalinism and Nazism

Discussion of:

Tim Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, entire.

13. M: 4/14—War and Memory

Discussion of:

Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland*, entire.

14. M: 4/ 21—European History as a History of Human Rights?

Discussion of:

Sam Moyn, *The Last Utopia*, entire.

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, ch. 9 (“The Decline of the Nation State and the End of the Rights of Man”).*

15. M: 4/28 –Oral Presentations

W, 4/30

Due: Historiographical essays on Wednesday, April 3, by 5pm, hardcopy outside Dr. Levine’s office, MHRA 2217.

Have a great summer!