

Graduate Center, CUNY, Fall 2021 (Draft)

HIST 71500-01 (52779)/FREN 84000-01 (54469)

Wednesday, 4:15-6:15 p.m., beginning on Zoom, possibly shifting to some face-to-face sessions.

Professor David G. Troyansky: troyansky@brooklyn.cuny.edu. Office hours to be determined.

“Revolution as Civil War, Revolution as War of Independence: Generations and Memory [in France] since 1789”

Historians have long characterized the French Revolution as a civil war (revolution/counterrevolution), and historians of the Atlantic world have also employed that term; meanwhile, a famous article by Pierre Serna has made the point that “all revolutions are wars of independence.” That idea can be applied to the French themselves but also evokes a more global context, including that of decolonization in the Caribbean. This course will begin with those overarching ways of describing the French Revolution and examine their usefulness in regional, national, and international contexts. It will also highlight themes of generation and memory in the transition to the post-Revolutionary era and beyond. The first part of the course will focus on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and develop those themes as conceptual tools to be applied, in the middle part, to a succession of moments of fracture and revolution in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries (possibly including 1848, 1871, Vichy, Algeria, 1968, or recent debates over race and multiculturalism in France). The final part will provide an opportunity for students to apply the conceptual tools developed in the course to their own areas of research. Written work will include two short historiographical papers and a final paper that may be largely historiographical but will provide opportunities for work in primary sources.

Schedule of classes (**potential on-campus sessions designated with ***):

August 25. Initial overview of the literature on the French Revolution. Read Lynn Hunt, “The World We Have Gained: The Future of the French Revolution,” *The American Historical Review*, Volume 108, Issue 1 (February 2003): 1–19, and “The Experience of Revolution,” *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (2009): 671-678. At your leisure, you might also want to look at Bailey Stone, Introduction and Conclusion to *Reinterpreting the French Revolution: a global historical perspective* (Cambridge UP, 2002), pp. 1-13, 259-268, and Suzanne Desan, Lynn Hunt, and William Max Nelson, Introduction to *The French Revolution in Global Perspective* (Cornell UP, 2013), pp. 1-11.

September 1. A couple of interpretive essays. Read David Armitage, “Every Great Revolution is a Civil War,” in Keith Michael Baker and Dan Edelstein, eds., *Scripting Revolution: A Historical Approach to the Comparative History of Revolutions* (Stanford UP, 2015), pp. 57-68; Pierre Serna, “Every Revolution is a War of Independence,” in Desan, Hunt, and Nelson, *The French Revolution in Global Perspective* (Cornell UP, 2013), pp. 165-182.

September 22.* A bit more globalizing. Read Janet Polasky, *Revolutions without Borders: The Call to Liberty in the Atlantic World* (Yale UP, 2015), David Bell, “Questioning the Global Turn: The Case of the French Revolution,” *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (2014): 1-24, and Manuel Covo and Megan Maruschke, Introduction to the “Forum: The French Revolution as an Imperial Revolution,” in the current (August) issue of *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (2021): 371-397. Recommended: the other articles in that issue of *FHS*, David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam,

The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760-1840 (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), and Malick W. Ghachem, "The Antislavery Script: Haiti's Place in the Narrative of Atlantic Revolution," in Baker and Edelstein, *Scripting Revolution*, pp. 148-165.

September 29.* Periodizing the Revolutionary Script. Read in Baker and Edelstein, *Scripting Revolution*. Baker, "Revolutionizing Revolution," pp. 71-102, Guillaume Mazeau, *Scripting the French Revolution, Inventing the Terror,* pp. 131-147. Recommended: Roger Dupuy, ed., *1795: Pour une république sans révolution* (Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1996 ; Open Edition, 2015) ; Pierre Serna, *La République des girouettes. 1789-1815, et au-delà : une anomalie politique, la France de l'extrême centre* (Champ Vallon, 2005). **A five-page historiographical paper on the assigned reading is due.**

October 6.* Following Terror. Read Jeff Horn, *The Making of a Terrorist: Alexandre Rousselin and the French Revolution* (Oxford UP, 2021). Recommended: Ronen Steinberg, *The Afterlives of the Terror: Facing the Legacies of Mass Violence in Postrevolutionary France* (Cornell UP, 2019). Professor Horn will join us either in person or via Zoom.

October 13. Other Ways of Periodizing Things. Jean-Luc Chappey, "Batailles encyclopédiques entre Révolution et Empire, » in *Les encyclopédismes en France à l'ère des révolutions (1789-1850)*, eds., Vincent Bourdeau, Jean-Luc Chappey, et Julien Vincent (Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté, 2020), pp. 21-42 ; Jean-Luc Chappey and Julien Vincent, "A Republican Ecology? Citizenship, Nature and the French Revolution (1795-1799), in *Past and Present*, No. 243 (May 2019): 109-140. Jennifer Pitts, "Republicanism, Liberalism, and Empire in Postrevolutionary France," in Sankar Muthu, ed., *Empire and Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge UP, 2012), pp. 261-291. I may also throw in a chapter of my forthcoming book.

October 20. Nineteenth Century Revolutions. Read Gareth Stedman Jones, "Scripting the German Revolution: Marx and 1848," in Baker and Edelstein, *Scripting Revolution*, pp. 169-180; Dominica Chang, "Reading and Repeating the Revolutionary Script: Revolutionary Mimicry in Nineteenth-Century France," in Baker and Edelstein, *Scripting Revolution*, pp. 181-198 .

October 27.* Remembering and Forgetting. Remembering 1848 in the Third Republic. Stacey Renee Davis, "Expectations of Aging as Gendered Political Discourse in 19th-century France," *Enfances, Familles, Générations*, Issue 27 (2017), *Âges de vie, genre et temporalités sociales*. Forgetting and Remembering the Paris Commune. John Merriman, *Massacre: The Life and Death of the Paris Commune* (Basic Books, 2014). **A second five-page historiographical paper is due. It should cover our reading since the previous paper but still make some reference to the themes of civil war and independence.**

November 3. Subsequent Revolutions. How we organize the rest of the course depends upon students' own interests. We will design the rest of the syllabus together. But if, for example, we do a week on 1968, we can read Julian Bourg, "Writing on the Wall: 1968 as Event and Representation," in Baker and Edelstein, pp. 287-, as well as articles in the issue of *French Historical Studies* devoted to "May '68: New Approaches, New Perspectives," Volume 41, Issue 2 (April 2018), or Malgorzata Fidelis, "Tensions of Transnationalism: Youth Rebellion, State Backlash, and 1968 in Poland," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 125, No. 4 (October 2020): 1232-1259. Each member of class will be responsible for suggesting a couple of common readings. How we divide the next few weeks

depends on how many students are in the class and how well the different topics fit together. **Final papers of 10-15 pages will balance students' own interests with the common themes of the course. It is anticipated that some papers will be heavily historiographical while others will involve more primary source material. Details will be worked as the course progresses.**

November 10. TBD.

November 17.* TBD.

November 24. TBD.

December 1. I may be out of the country, but there's no way to predict at this point.

December 8.* Concluding discussion.

December 15. Final papers are due at 5:00 p.m.