GLOBALIZING THE ENLIGHTENMENT

Hist 72800  
MALS 70600  
French 87400

Professor Helena Rosenblatt  
Tuesdays, 4:15-6:15  
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Course Description:

The Eighteenth Century European Enlightenment is widely seen as a transformative moment in Western culture, one which gave birth to many of our most cherished ideals. We are often told, for example, that it is to the Enlightenment that we owe our modern notions of human rights, representative government, and liberal democracy. However, the recent “global turn” in scholarship has led historians to ask some new and often unsettling questions. How, for example, did eighteenth-century European thinkers perceive the world beyond their own borders? How did they get their information and to what purposes was that information put? Did regions outside of Europe experience an Enlightenment too? With the help of both primary and secondary sources, we will ask how adopting a “global” perspective on the Enlightenment might change our view of it. Is it even correct to call the Enlightenment European?

Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to
• Read texts more critically and effectively
• Identify and summarize ideas in texts in an articulate and persuasive manner, verbally and in writing
• Display a grasp of the key methodological questions involved in “globalizing” the Enlightenment
• Display a grasp of some the key concepts that can be used to illustrate the global perspective of European eighteenth century thinkers.

Requirements:

• Regular class participation demonstrating careful reading of all assigned texts: 30%
• 2-4 sentence summaries of the argument(s) of each of the weekly readings. Sentences may be in bullet form and must be handed in in class: 10% (TEN times over the course of the term)
- a 7-10 page analytical summary of one week’s readings: 30%
- a 15-20 page analytical and critical summary, in essay form, of Rousseau’s Second Discourse answering the following questions: 30%

1. What are the (innate) characteristics of Rousseau’s savage (or natural) man?
2. What are the (innate) characteristics of Rousseau’s savage (or natural) woman?
3. How and why do these characteristics change over time?
4. How many “steps to society” are there? Recount them.
5. What role does Rousseau’s savage man play in the Discourse?
6. Is this a “Eurocentric” text? Why or why not and does it matter?

*No written work will be accepted after December 11.*

**Readings:**

*Recommended for purchase* (used editions are readily available, at amazon.co, for example).

These books are also on reserve at the library:

David Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global History*
Harvard University Press, 2008, pages TBA

*The Discourse on the Origin of Inequality among Men: by Jean-Jacques Rousseau with Related Documents*, Bedford, 2010 (There are many other good editions, but this one includes some other useful documents and a helpful introduction.


Charles de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu, *The Persian Letters* (There are many good editions available and it can be found online too.)


*All books will be on reserve.*

*All articles are either available through JSTOR or will be provided by the instructor.*
**Week One: Introduction to the Course and to the Historiography of the Enlightenment (8/28)**

**Recommended:**

Immanuel Kant “What is Enlightenment?”


**Week Two: The Enlightenment and its Critics (9/4)**

**Required:**

Denis Diderot, “Philosophe”


**Recommended:**


Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (There are many editions available)


**September 11 NO CLASS**

**September 18 NO CLASS**

**Week Three: The Enlightenment Reimagined for the Twenty-First Century (9/25)**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


Lecture by Sebastian Conrad (very similar to his article) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdU_mX2K0QM


**Week Four: ALL DAY CONFERENCE ON LIBERALISM (10/2)**

**Required:**

Introduction, Chapter One and Epilogue of Helena Rosenblatt, *The Lost History of Liberalism*.

**Week Five: Cosmopolitanism (10/9)**

**Required:**


Selected letters (TBA) written by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, available online at [https://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Texts/montagu-letters-abridged.html](https://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Texts/montagu-letters-abridged.html) (Letters I, V, X, XII, XXIV, XXV, XXVI, XXVII, XXIX, XXX, XXXII, XXXIII, XXXIV, XXXVIII, XXIX, XL, XLI, XLII, LI, LIII, LIV, LVI, LVIII)

**Recommended:**


Also at http://www.davidharvey.org/media/cosmopol.pdf


Also at http://people.duke.edu/~wmignolo/InteractiveCV/Publications/ManyFacesCosmo.pdf

Helena Rosenblatt, “Rousseau, the Anti-Cosmopolitan?” *Daedalus* 137, 3 (Summer, 2008), 59-67.

**Week Six: “Western Europe” vs. “Eastern Europe” (10/16)**

**Required:**


**Week Seven: The Muslim “Other” (10/23)**

**Required:**


Montesquieu, *The Persian Letters*, selected letters TBA

**Recommended:**


**Week Eight: The Islamic Enlightenment (10/30)**

Christopher Bellaigue, *The Islamic Enlightenment*, Liveright, 2018

**Week Nine: Enlightenment and Religion (11/6)**

**Required:**


*The Treatise of the Three Imposters*

**Recommended:**


**Week Ten: Anthropologies of the Enlightenment: (11/13 )**

Denis Diderot, *Supplement to Bougainville’s Voyage*, selections.


**Recommended**

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (“Second Discourse”)


Carl Niekerk, “The Problem of China: Asia and Enlightenment Anthropology” (Buffon, de Pauw, Blumenbach, Herder) in Daniel Leonhard Purdy and Bettina Brandt, eds., *China in the German Enlightenment*, University of Toronto Press, 2016, 97-117.


**Week Eleven: Race (11/20)**


Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, “New Worlds, New Stars: Patriotic Astrology and the Invention of Indian and Creole Bodies in Colonial Spanish America 1600- 1650”, *American Historical Review* 104 (February 1999), 33-68

**Recommended**

Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, ed., *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader*


**Week Twelve: Enlightenment Origins of Human Rights (11/27)**


**Recommended**


**Week Thirteen: The Haitian Revolution (12/6)**

Alyssa Sepinwall, “Beyond the Black Jacobins: Haitian Revolutionary Historiography Comes of Age,” *Journal of Haitian Studies*, (Spring 2017), vol. 23 (1) pp. 4-34.


**Recommended:**


Miranda Spieler, *Empire and Underworld: Captivity in French Guiana* (Cambridge, MA, 2012)

**Week Fourteen: “Contact Zones” and the Production of Knowledge (12/11)**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


