Literature of European History II (HIST 80020)

Spring 2020

Wednesday 4:15-6:15
Room

Andreas Killen
akillen@ccny.cuny.edu

Office hours: W 3:00-4:00 and by appt.

This course provides an introduction to the major themes and historiographic debates in the field of modern European history from the 18th century to the present. We will study a range of literature, from works of classic historiography to innovative recent studies; themes will range from state building and imperialism to war and genocide to culture and sexuality. Completing the course will give students a solid grounding in the literature of modern Europe, which will serve as a basis for preparation for oral exams as well as for later teaching and research work.

Requirements:

This course has three purposes: (1) to introduce students to major themes and problems in modern European historiography; (2) to help you prepare for your written and oral examinations; and (3) to give you experience in writing a substantial historiographical paper. Each week will be devoted to discussion of a selection of texts – usually 2, occasionally 3 - that all students must read in common. Two students will be responsible for introducing the common readings for a given week, as well as writing 700-900 word summaries of the readings and distributing copies of these summaries to the other students. In addition, one student will be responsible for summarizing and briefly introducing one supplemental reading each week.

Weekly summaries should be emailed to all class participants by noon on the day of class.

At the end of the semester you will be asked to submit a 15-20 page historiographical analysis on a topic of your choice.
Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able: to demonstrate a command of major historiographical themes in 20th century European history; to read the historical literature critically, with attention to questions, methodologies, sources, and arguments; and to put together individual works into larger interpretive frameworks in preparation for passing the written examination. They should also be able to prepare effective oral and written presentations of assigned readings.

Grade Breakdown

The focus of this seminar is class discussion, and the success of the discussion depends on careful readings by all students of the assigned texts as well as attendance of all meetings. Active, informed participation in class discussions counts as 35% of your final grade.

Each week, two students will be asked to introduce the common readings. As part of this responsibility, they will write 2-3 page summaries of the individual reading they have been assigned and distribute them via email to the other students and to me, in advance of that week’s meeting. Summaries must include: a) an assessment of the book’s place within the existing scholarship; b) summary of the argument, beginning with a 1 sentence statement of it followed by elaboration: c) mention of sources, ie. in what ways they support the argument. Where relevant, they should also address the authors’ theoretical and methodological approaches. Each week one student will also provide a summary of one supplemental reading. Summaries and oral presentations count as 35% of the final grade.

Students are required to write a 15-20 page historiographical paper based on a topic chosen in consultation with me, due on the last day of class. The paper should deal with a question that is controversial among historians. The paper will be devoted to a critical analysis of the most important scholarly works on this topic, with an emphasis on recent historiography. Once you have chosen the topic you will be expected to submit a preliminary bibliography and an outline by the date indicated on the syllabus. This paper counts as 30% of the final grade.

Class participation: 35%
Response papers: 35%
Historiographic paper: 30%

All readings for the course are on reserve in the Graduate Center Library.
Note: An * denotes a supplemental reading
Schedule of meetings

Jan  
  *Introduction to the course*
  
  AHR Roundtable: Historians and the Question of Modernity  
  (selections: Chakrabarty, Roseman, Wolin)

Feb  
  *Europe in the World*
  
  C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World 1780-1914*
  
  Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence* (electronic resource)  
  
  Recommended: “10 Years of Debate on the Great Divergence” (*Rev. in History*)

Feb  
  *The French Revolution*
  
  Peter McPhee, *Liberty or Death*
  
  Francois Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution*
  
  David Geggus, “The Haitian Revolution in Atlantic Perspective”  
  *David Bell, *The First Total War*

Feb  
  *The Long 19th Century*
  
  Jonathan Sperber, *The European Revolutions 1848-1851*
  
  Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*  
  *Darrin McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment* (electronic resource)*  
  *Geoff Eley, *Forging Democracy: History of the Left in Europe* (selections)*

Feb  
  *Imperialism*
  
  Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire*
  
  Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*  
  *Juergen Osterhammel and Niels Petersson, *Globalization: A Short History* (electronic resource)*  
  
  Recommended: Conklin, “Recent Studies of Modern French Empire” (*FHS 2007*)

March  
  *The German Question*
  
  Hans Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire 1871-1918*
  
  David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History* (GC electronic resource)  
  *Isabel Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (GC electronic resource)*
March  
*The First World War*
Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914*
Hew Strachan, *The First World War, V. 1: To Arms* (electronic resource)

March  
*The Russian Revolution*
Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*
Peter Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution: Russia’s Continuum of Crisis, 1914-1921* (electronic resource)
*Robert Gellately, Age of Social Catastrophe*

March  
*Stalinism*
Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism* (GC electronic resource)
Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain* (GC electronic resource)
Tim Snyder, *Bloodlands* (Ch’s 1-3) (GC electronic resource)

April  
SPRING BREAK

April  
*classes follow Friday schedule*

April  
*Interwar Europe and the Rise of Fascism*
Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France*
Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities* (GC electronic resource)
*Peter Fritzsche, Germans into Nazis*

Outline and bibliographies for final paper due

April  
*Nazi Germany and the Holocaust*
Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich*
Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews 1933-1945*
Tim Snyder, *Bloodlands* (Ch’s 4-7)
*Peter Longerich, Holocaust*
*Mark Mazower, Hitler’s Empire*
May  Postwar Europe
   Tony Judt, Postwar
   Dagmar Herzog, Sex after Fascism
   *Sam Moyn, The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History
   *Odd Arne Westad, The Global Cold War (ch’s 1-2)

May  Decolonization
   Fred Cooper, Colonialism in Question (electronic resource)
   Caroline Elkins, Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain’s Gulag in Kenya
   *Todd Shepard, The Invention of Decolonization
   *Kristin Ross, Fast Cars, Clean bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture (selections)

May  1989 and Post Cold War Europe
   Stephen Kotkin and Jan Gross, Uncivil Society: 1989 and the Implosion of the Communist Establishment
   Joan Scott, Politics of the Veil
   *Timothy Garton Ash, The Magic Lantern
   *Ian Buruma, Murder in Amsterdam

Historiographical paper due

May  Ph.D. Comp Exam