History 283  Honors Seminar: Studies in History

Course Description

The subject will be European imperialism and specifically the European partition of Africa in the late-nineteenth century. We shall examine the standard theories of imperialism postulated by thinkers such as Lenin, Hobson, Schumpeter, and others and see how they relate to the realities of the scramble for African colonies. In this respect, we shall consider the role of Bismarck, Leopold II of Belgium, Jules Ferry, William E. Gladstone, and a host of other political leaders and diplomats. Moreover, we shall examine the influence of missionaries, explorers, merchants, militarists, Social-Darwinists, writers, and journalists.

Lectures

No formal lectures.

Written Assignments and Exams

Everyone will be required to write a research paper on some aspect of the partition. It is possible that instead of one paper a number of shorter projects will be assigned.

Grading System

Class discussion will count for 50 per cent of the grade and the paper for 50 per cent.

Required Readings

Robin W. Winks, British Imperialism: Gold, God, Glory
Ronald Robinson,
John Gallagher &
Alice Denny    Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism
John D. Hargreaves, Prelude to the Partition of West Africa
Henri Brunschwig, French Colonialism 1871-1914: Myths and Realities

There will be additional library assignments.