History 868: Seminar in Modern French History

This course will focus on key issues in the political, social and cultural history of France in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Particular attention will be given to contemporary historiographical debates (on both sides of the Atlantic) on such topics as rural history in the nineteenth century or the Vichy régime.

Requirements: Two short (5-7 pages) review essays and one long paper (15-20 pages) on a topic to be agreed upon with the instructor. Those with an adequate knowledge of French will be required to review French language books. Students will also be responsible for leading discussions in tandem with another student.

Starred books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore. All books are on 3 hour reserve in Helen C. White Library. Most articles can be downloaded as PDF files through Madcat (just look up the name of the periodical and then track down the volume number); articles not available in this format have been placed on Electronic Reserves (EC).

Week 1. January 25. Introduction and Course Requirements

Week 2. February 1. Napoleon


Martyn Lyons, Napoleon Bonaparte and the Legacy of the French Revolution (St-Martin’s Press, 1994), 1-4; 77-93; 111-128.

David Bell, The First Total War: Napoleon’s Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It (Houghton Mifflin, 2007), 1-20; 187-317.


**Week 3. February 8. 1848**


* Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (New York, 1963). (parts I and VII are the most important ; read the rest to get the point)


**Week 4. February 15. Peasants and the French Nation**


**Week 5. February 22. Religion**


**Week 6. February 29. The Great War**

***First review essay due Monday February 25***


**Week 7. March 7. The French Political Model**


Andrew Jainchill and Samuel Moyn, “French Democracy between Totalitarianism and Solidarity: Pierre Rosanvallon and Revisionist Historiography,” *Journal of*
Modern History 76 (March 2004), 107-154.

Possible books for review: Pierre Rosanvallon, Democracy Past and Future (Columbia University Press, 2006)

Week 8. March 14. Fascism


Sean Kennedy, Reconciling France Against Democracy. The Croix de Feu and the Parti Social Français, 1927-1945 (Montreal, 2007), 3-16, 85-119, 158-82, 189-224, 259-269


Week 10. March 28. Vichy France,


Robert Gildea, Marianne in Chains (NY, 2002), 1-19; 42-89, 246-70, 403-11


Week 11. April 4. Immigration and the Republic


Gérard Noiriel, The French Melting Pot (Minnesota), xi-xxix; 1-44; 227-278.


Possible books for review: Patrick Weil, La France et ses étrangers: l’aventure d’une politique de l’immigration, de 1938 à nos jours (Gallimard, 1995); Vincent Viet, La France immigrée: construction d’une politique, 1914-1997 (Fayard, 1998); Riva Kastoryano, Negotiating Identities: States and Immigrants in France and Germany (Princeton, 2002)

Week 12. April 11. Foreign Policy

*** Second review essay due Monday April 7 ***

Michael Sutton, France and the Construction of Europe, 1944-2006 (Berghahn Books, 2007), pp. TBA.


Week 13. April 18. French Culture


Week 14. April 25. The Memory of Vichy and the Holocaust

* Samuel Moyn, A Holocaust Controversy: The Treblinka Affair in Postwar France (Brandeis University Press, 2005), 1-121; 141-68.


Week 15. May 2. The History of Anti-Americanism


Week 16. May 9. Islam and laïcité from an American Perspective

John R. Bowen, Why the French don’t like Headscarves: Islam, the State and Public Space (Princeton, 2007), 1-33, 65-127, 155-81, 208-49.


*** Final 15 to 20 page Paper due Friday May 16 ***