

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History
Semester I, 2008-09

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History 600: European Borderlands

This research seminar examines the history of contested borderlands in Europe since the 17th Century. Historians have increasingly turned to borderlands in order to analyze the development of national and cultural identities in Europe. Some argue that borderlands are unique sites to study national sentiment, linguistic and cultural conflicts, and the complex links between local, regional, and national identities. But is this really the case? Do borderlands have broader relevance or are they exceptional cases? The seminar will investigate these and other questions by focusing on the Franco-Spanish frontier, the Rhine and the Franco-German border, German and Austro-Hungarian borderlands, Greece and the Balkans, and the Italian-Croatian-Slovenian regions.

We will meet for the first 9 weeks of the semester to discuss common readings. Students are responsible for leading (in collaboration with another seminar member) one class discussion. Prior to our meetings, all students are required to email me two questions for discussion based on the readings. The questions should be sent to me and to the discussion leaders by 9 p.m. the day before the seminar meets. During the second half of the semester students will research and write a 20-25 page research paper based on primary and secondary sources.

In this class you will learn to:

- Conduct in-depth historical research
- Select and interpret primary sources
- Craft an original research topic
- Write a lengthy research paper that demonstrates your ability to evaluate sources critically and provide a convincing historical interpretation of the materials you have used.

Requirements: Two short (2 pages) response papers due early in the semester, a 1-2 page research statement of purpose, a detailed bibliography, and a paper outline. The central requirement of the course is a 20-25 page research paper on some aspect of the history of borderlands in Europe. You will also be required to discuss and critique each others' first drafts and to make a formal oral presentation to the seminar during the last

week of classes. Attendance is required. Please warn me in advance if you will be unable to attend a particular class session. Class participation will be a component of your final grade. Required books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and are also on 3 hour reserve in College Library. In addition a **course reader** will be available for purchase at the Humanities Copy Center.

The response papers (weeks 3 and 5) are due in class and are designed to facilitate our discussions. These papers should not be summaries of the readings; rather, you should pick 2 or 3 themes from the readings and “respond” to them in some detail. [Questions you may want to think about: Was the author convincing? If not, why not? Were you struck by the way he/she formulated an argument? Were the arguments original? Surprising? Based on evidence? What kinds of questions are left unanswered?]

Grading:

Final paper: 60%
Class participation: 25%
Short response papers: 15%

The following books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and are also available on 3 hour reserve at College Library:

Richard Marius and Melvin Page, A Short Guide to Writing about History (Pearson, 2005)
Peter Sahlins, Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees (University of California Press, 1989)

Week 1 (September 5) Introduction

Week 2 (September 12). Borderlands in Historical Perspective

Peter Sahlins, Boundaries, Preface, Introduction, 1-132.

Michiel Baud and Willem Van Schendel, “Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands,” Journal of World History 8 (1997): 211-242.

Barbara J. Morehouse, “Theoretical Approaches to Border Spaces and Identities,” in Vera Pavlakovich-Kochi et al., Challenged Borderlands: Transcending Political and Cultural Boundaries (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004): 19-39.

Week 3 (September 19). Forging a Border in the Pyrenees

*****First Response Paper due in Class*****

Sahlins, Boundaries, 133-197; 238-298.

William Douglass, "A Western Perspective on an Eastern interpretation of where North meets South: Pyrenean Border Cultures," in Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan, Border Identities: Nation and State at International Frontiers (Cambridge University Press, 1998): 62-95.

Week 4 (September 26). The Rhine and the Franco-German Border

Peter Schöttler, "The Rhine as an object of Historical Controversy in the Inter-War Years. Towards a History of Frontier Mentalities," History Workshop Journal 39 (1995): 1-21.

Marc Cioc, The Rhine: An Eco-Biography, 1915-2000 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), 3-45.

Tara Zahra, "The 'Minority Problem' and National Classification in the French and Czechoslovak Borderlands," Contemporary European History 17 (2008): 137-165

David Harvey, "Lost Children or Enemy Aliens? Classifying the Population of Alsace after the First World War," Journal of Contemporary History 34 (1999): 537-554.

Week 5 (October 3). Borderlands in German Speaking Europe

Tara Zahra, "Looking East: East Central European "Borderlands" in German History and Historiography," History Compass 3 (2005), 1-23.

Eric Kurlander, "The Landscape of Liberalism: Particularism and Progressive Politics in Two Borderland Regions," in David Blackbourn and James Retallack, Localism, Landscape and the Ambiguities of Place: German Speaking Europe, 1860-1930 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007): 124-145.

Pieter M. Judson, Guardians of the Nation. Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria (Cambridge., Mass: Harvard University Press, 2006), 1-65, 219-57.

*****Second Response Paper due in Class*****

Week 6 (October 10). Borders and Cultures in Eastern Europe and the Balkans

John Agnew, "No Borders, No Nations: Making Greece in Macedonia," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 97 (2007): 398-422.

John Agnew, "The 'Civilizational' Roots of European National Boundaries," in David H. Kaplan and Jouni Häkli eds., Boundaries and Place: European Borderlands in Geographical Context (Lanham, Md., Rowman and Littlefield, 2002), 18-33.

Patrice M. Dabrowski, "Discovering" the Galician Borderlands: The Case of the Eastern Carpathians," Slavic Review 64 (Summer 2005): 380-402

Mark Pittaway, "Making Peace in the Shadow of War: The Austrian Hungarian Borderlands, 1945-56," Contemporary European History 17 (2008): 345-364.

Doris Wastl-Walter and Mónica M. Váradi, "Ruptures in the Austro-Hungarian Border Region," in Vera Pavlakovich-Kochi et al., Challenged Borderlands: Transcending Political and Cultural Boundaries (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004): 175-192.

***** By Thursday, October 9 at noon: email the class a three sentence description of your research project along with a title *****

Week 7 (October 17). **Library Session with Lisa Wettelson** (European History Bibliographer). **Meet in Room 436 Memorial Library at 11.**

Reading: Marius and Page, A Short Guide to Writing about History, 29-54, 79-105

Don't take a vacation this week! Work on your research project.

Week 8 (October 24). Contemporary Borders East and West

*****Paper proposal due***** (1-2 pages) on Tuesday October 21 in my box. You should describe your research project and outline the central questions you are addressing. I will pair you with another member of the class and you will be required to provide a written critique your respective proposals. Send you partner an electronic copy of your proposal.

*****Bibliography of primary and secondary sources due in class*** Critique of your partner's research proposal due in class** (give one copy to your partner and one copy to me)

Warwick Armstrong, "Culture, Continuity and Identity in the Slovene-Italian Border Region," in James Anderson et al., Culture and Cooperation in Europe's Borderlands (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003), 145-169.

Ana Barbič, "Perceptions of New Realities along the Slovenian-Croatian Border," in Vera Pavlakovich-Kochi et al., Challenged Borderlands: Transcending Political and Cultural Boundaries (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004): 216-235.

John Western, "Neighbors or Strangers? Binational and Transnational Identities in Strasbourg," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 97 (2007): 158-81.

Daphne Berdahl, Where the World Ended: Re-Unification and Identity in the German Borderland (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999): 140-183.

Week 9 (October 31). The Research Process

*****Paper outline due*****

Discussion of sample research papers.

Reading: Marius and Page, A Short Guide to Writing about History, 1-28, 55-79, 106-173

You should also be prepared to give a short (5 minute) presentation on your research project.

Week 10 (November 7). No class. Work on your research projects

Week 11 (November 14). No class. Work on your research project

*****By November 14, send me a 2 paragraph email outlining the research you have completed and discussing one key problem you need to resolve *****

Week 12 (November 21). No Class. Work on your research projects.

Week 13 (November 28). Thanksgiving

*****Rough draft due Wednesday November 26 *****. Rough drafts should be as complete as possible (including footnotes, a bibliography, an introduction and a conclusion). The more you present, the more you will profit from the comments of your fellow students. Place a printed copy in my box **and send me an electronic version. You should also send an electronic version to the other members of your peer review group.**

Week 14 (December 5). In class oral presentations

December 3 and 4: Discussion of rough drafts in small groups of 3 or 4.

Week 15 (December 12). In class oral presentations

*****Final paper due Wednesday December 17 at noon*****