

History 6160
Europe and the World
Western Michigan University
Spring 2012
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Introduction

Welcome to History 6160, Europe and the World. This is a readings seminar that focuses on the relationship of Europe and the rest of the world, especially through the lens of colonialism and post-colonialism.

What can you take away from this seminar?

There are several reasons why this subject matter is important, even if it is not specifically aligned with your research topic.

First, postcolonial and subaltern theory is one of the most hotly debated and influential new areas of thought and methodology in history over the last twenty years.

Second, thinking beyond borders and national histories has become the most important trend in historical scholarship in recent years. Peruse any listing of calls for papers, conference themes, special editions of journals, panels at the AHA, or simply new book titles from the lists of major academic presses, and you will see the term “transnational,” “global,” “borderlands” or some similar catchphrase. Being able to market yourself as a scholar with transnational interests and knowledge is crucial.

Third, one of the most important themes to understand in the area of transnational history is the history European imperialism and its aftermath. This has shaped the globe that we live on significantly, and thus it touches almost all other histories that have played out in this era, beginning with the dawn of European global expansion in the late middle ages. The way that this history has been done, methodologically and theoretically, is a model (both positive and negative) for understanding how to import transnational historiography into your own area of work.

Fourth, world history has become a subject in ever more demand at the college and especially the secondary ed level. Marketing yourself as a teaching who can teach global, world, transnational histories or courses is an absolute must on the job

market nowadays. Yet there are very, very few graduate programs that provide anything like a background in world history. This seminar attempts to furnish you with some of the factual, methodological and theoretical skills you will need to have a foundation for further work in the arena of world history.

What are the requirements of the seminar?

The two most important requirements of this seminar are the final paper, which will be 20-25 pages and is due on April 18th in class and class participation. Each counts for 50% of your grade.

The Paper:

The final paper should be a chance for you to integrate and think deeply about the issues and readings you have encountered this semester, and it is also a chance for you to take your own unique view on the issues, and to think about how it might be related to your own work. You will be given a good deal of freedom to choose how you want to structure this paper to that it suits your intellectual and career needs, though it must incorporate readings and themes from the seminar. In addition, this a process that must take place under my supervision, involving at least one meeting with me outside of seminar. We will discuss the paper in more depth later in the semester.

Class Participation:

Class participation is at its core an acceptance of a share responsibility to create an atmosphere that is both intellectually inclusive and challenging. It is split into two expectations:

First, that you come to every seminar prepared, with your readings and accompanying materials (see number two), and that you make every reasonable effort to be engaged and to discuss the material of the week with your seminar mates. If you do not understand material, then you are expected to ask your seminar mates and myself intelligent questions, preferably with the specific passage you don't understand ready at hand. If you do understand the material, you are expected to be sensitive towards the feelings of those in the seminar who might not.

Second, each week half of the seminar will be asked to submit "position papers" of approximately 10 double-spaced pages in length to the rest of the seminar via email and over e-learning. The halves will alternate. These position papers will form the basis of our discussion for that seminar. They will be on specific aspects of the readings; or, they can be about a particular angle that you find interesting. If you disagree with something, or have an alternative theory or methodology that you have thought of, or if you feel the need to put the reading into your own words for us to read, those are all valid forms of the response paper for they are both important contributions to the intellectual atmosphere of the seminar as well as to your own intellectual growth. These papers are a chance for you to be creative and

imaginative and provocative, and test out new ideas that might come to you during the reading.

Readings:

There are readings that are required to purchase or obtain, and there are other readings that are scanned in and will be placed on e-learning. You are expected to purchase the required readings listed below. If you choose to purchase them online, it is your responsibility to make sure they arrive in time for the week the readings are due. The scanned readings are denoted by an asterisk below.

Required Readings (available in WMU bookstore)

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Vintage Press) ISBN 978-0394740676

Jane Hiddleston *Understanding Postcolonialism* (Acumen Press) 978-1-84465-161-0

Todd Shepard *The Invention of Decolonization* (Cornell University Press)
0801443601

Ruth Mandel *Cosmopolitan Anxieties* (Duke University Press) 9780822341765

Katherine Pratt Ewing *Stolen Honor* (Stanford University Press) 0804758999

Ann Laura Stoler *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* (University of California Press) 0520231112

Paul Gilroy *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* (University of Chicago Press) 978-0226294278

Week 1 (Jan 11)

Intro

Section 1: Imperialism and Postcolonial Theory

Week 2 (Jan 18)

Said, *Orientalism* and Hiddleston, *Understanding Postcolonialism* 1-97

Week 3 (Jan 25)

Hiddleston, *Understanding Postcolonialism* 98-186; Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, excerpts*

Week 4 (Feb. 1)

Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*

Week 5 (Feb. 8)

Mills and Barton eds., *Drugs and Empires** (excerpts); Edmond and Smith, eds., *Islands in History and Representation** (excerpts)

Week 6 (Feb 15)

Burton, ed., *After the Imperial Turn,**(excerpts)

Section 2: Decolonization of Algeria as imperial, national and international event

Week 7 (Feb. 22)

Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth,** (excerpts)

Week 8 (Feb. 29)

Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era ** (excerpts)

Spring Break

Week 9 (March 14)

Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization*

Section 3: The Empire Strikes Back

Week 10 (March 21)

Gilroy, *Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*

Week 11 (March 28)

Al-Azmeh and Fokas, eds., *Islam in Europe** (excerpts)

Week 12 (April 4)

Ewing Pratt, *Stolen Honor*; Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"*

Week 13 (April 11)

Mandel, *Cosmopolitan Anxieties*

Week 14 (April 18)

Reflection and sharing session