International History

Academic year 2019-2020

Doctoral Seminar I

HI013 - Autumn - 6 ECTS

Tuesday 14h15 - 16h00

Course Description

This is the first half of a two-semester-long mandatory introductory seminar for first year International History department PhD students, which Prof. Nicole Bourbonnais and I co-teach. It has four parts. Weeks 1-3 address “the fact” and the stuff of history writing, i.e. primary sources. Weeks 4-8 cover conceptual questions: space; scale and unit of analysis; periodization; causation; and structure&agency. Weeks 9-13 are dedicated to historiographic approaches and turns. Last, in week 14 we discuss an important academic skill: how one writes a critical review essay. To that end, I will divide the students in alphabetical order into 3 groups; each group will find one interesting review essay from a list of journals I will provide mid-semester; and discuss that essay in class, it being understood that all students will have read all three review essays.

Syllabus

Requirements

1. 50%: class participation
2. 20%: three max. 300-word texts that critique that day’s International History Forum (IHF) presentation (16:15-1800) through the lens of the texts discussed the same day in class (14:15-16:00). The dates of the IHF presentations about which you need to write a text are: 8 October (week 4: space), 22 October (week 6: periodization), and 5 November (week 8: the event). In each case, the text needs to be emailed to cyrus.schayegh@graduateinstitute.ch the next day (9&23 Oct and 6 Nov.) by 23:59.
3. 30%: a final paper, being a review essay of circa 3,000 words, on a topic discussed this semester. Deadline: 10 January 2020, 23.59. Penalty for late submission: 0.5 grade per day (for the paper only, not the overall final grade; example: a 6 becomes a 5.5).

Other matters

- The students will be required, as all other IH PhD students, to attend the by-monthly lectures of the department’s International History Forum, also those on which they are not asked to write a 300-word text.
- Drinking, no eating, in class.
- All written and oral communication may be in French or in English.

Readings

Week 1: The fact
- Philipp Müller, “Understanding history: hermeneutics and source-criticism in historical scholarship,” in Miriam Dobson and Ben Zielmann, eds., *Reading Primary Sources* (London: Routledge, 2009), 21-36

Week 2: Primary sources
- Miriam Dobson, “Letters,” in Dobson and Zielmann, *Reading Primary Sources*, 57-73
- Christa Hämmerle, “Diaries,” in Dobson and Zielmann, *Reading Primary Sources*, 141-158
- David Carlson, “Autobiography,” in Dobson and Zielmann, *Reading Primary Sources*, 175-191
- Paul Readman, “Speeches,” in Dobson and Zielmann, *Reading Primary Sources*, 209-225

Week 3: Primary sources, cont’d
- Moritz Föllmer, “Surveillance reports,” in Dobson and Zielmann, *Reading Primary Sources*, 74-89
- Claudia Verhoeven, “Court files,” in Dobson and Zielmann, *Reading Primary Sources*, 90-105
- Kristina Readman, “Memoranda,” in Dobson and Zielmann, *Reading Primary Sources*, 123-140
- Stephen Vella, “Newspapers,” in Dobson and Zielmann, *Reading Primary Sources*, 192-208

Week 4: Space
- Karl Schlögel, *In Space We Read History: On the History of Civilization and Geopolitics* (Rhinebeck: Bard Graduate Center, 2016), Introduction

Week 5: Scale
Week 6: Periodization

Week 7: Causation
- "AHR Conversation. Explaining Historical Change; or, the Lost History of Causes," *American Historical Review* 120:4 (2015): 1369-1423

Week 8: The event
- Peter Burke, "History of Events and the Revival of Narrative," in *New Perspectives on History Writing*, ed. Peter Burke 2nd ed. (University Park: Penn State Press, 2001), 283-300

Week 9: From social to cultural history and beyond

Week 10: Transnational histories

Week 11: Global histories

Week 12: International and diplomatic histories
- Thomas Zeiler et al., 'Diplomatic History Today: A Roundtable', *JAmH* 95, no. 4 (2009): 1053–1091
- Erez Manela, "International society as a historical subject" (work in progress)

Week 13: Guest class taught by another professor from our department
- Readings: assigned by the guest professor

Week 14: How to write a critical review essay
- Each student group selects its own review essay and discusses its ups and downs in a presentation