Dr. Foray  
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**HIST 601, Reading Seminar in European History:**  
**Modern European Imperialism and Decolonization**

**Fall 2013**  
**Thursdays, 6-8:50 PM**  
**UNIV 319**

**COURSE SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

This reading seminar will introduce students to scholarship examining the history of modern European imperialism beginning with the transformation and expansion of empires in the mid-late 19th century and concluding with the collapse of these systems in the decades following World War Two. Drawing upon this body of historiography, students in this course will explore the various theories, philosophical and cultural trends, and historical developments informing the creation, contraction, transformation, and dissolution of the European empires. Over the course of the semester, we will focus on the British and French empires and their respective colonies as well as the lesser-studied (at least in the English language) Dutch, Belgian, and German empires and territories, although the larger themes, approaches, and methodologies explored in this class will transcend simple regional and national boundaries. Enrolled students are expected to arrive with a solid grounding in European and/or global history. Over the course of the semester, every student in the course will be expected to participate actively in class discussions; write a number of analyses exploring our course readings; and craft a mock or actual “prelims reading list” organized around the subject of imperialism and/or decolonization.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS**

Grades in the class will be assessed as follows:

Two book reviews (10% and 20%) written over the course of the semester: total 30%

Reading list and written rationale: 20%

Regular participation in seminar discussions: 50%

Over the course of the semester, students will read a total of 11 books and 11 shorter pieces. Students in the class as responsible for obtaining copies of all books listed on the syllabus, whether via online vendors, Purdue/local libraries, or Interlibrary Loan; I will provide PDF versions of all articles, chapters, and shorter pieces. You may use paper or electronic versions of assigned readings, but you are expected to bring to class your copies of the week’s assigned reading(s), whether in digital or paper form. These assigned works are to be read in their entirety. As a member of this seminar, you are expected to attend every class familiar with and ready to engage this assigned material. On any given class meeting, you should be prepared to speak about the author(s) and his/her body of work and raise relevant questions and comments for further examination by the class.

In addition, all students in the course are expected to arrive to our first class meeting familiar with the general trajectory of modern European imperialism. Before the start of the semester, you should have read at least one of
the following general works—or another comparable work of your choosing—in its entirety. These accounts are intended to introduce you to major events, ideas, and interpretations in the field. During our first class meeting (August 22), I will ask you to speak about your chosen work, elaborating upon the sources employed in this work, the author’s (or authors’) arguments and narrative approach to the subject, key findings, and so on.


As this is a reading seminar, there will be no end-of-term research paper. Rather, students will write two short book reviews (approximately 4-6 pages). Each will address a single book or grouping of articles read in class. Regardless of whether you opt to write a book or article review, your review should address the arguments, sources, and broader implications of your selected works.

- The first of these reviews will be due Thursday, October 10. The second will be due on Thursday, December 5 (our last class meeting).

- You will receive detailed written feedback on your first review, and I will be happy to discuss my comments with you. I expect you to take these comments into account for your subsequent work in the class.

- Book reviews should be written in double-spaced Times New Roman 12 pt. font with 1 inch margins.

- You should footnote all books/articles in full, at least for the first reference. Subsequent references may refer to page number only. All footnoted citations should follow Chicago Manual of Style guidelines.

During the final weeks of the semester, all students in the seminar will compile reading lists tailored to their specific research and teaching interests. This “prelims reading list” must contain approximately 40-60 titles organized by theme, period, and/or region.

- As we will discuss later in the semester, the list must include articles, monographs, and general works/synthetic texts as well as a written narrative explaining the rationale behind the selection and grouping of these particular works.

- Your list should begin with a selection of relevant synthetic works—textbooks, general accounts, collections of primary documents, edited volumes, etc.—which, collectively, will serve as an introduction to your selected topic.

- You will not be expected to have read all of these works, but you should be able to explain why you selected these particular sources. For these reasons, I highly encourage you to examine the actual works, read book reviews and review articles, and otherwise familiarize yourself with your selected works. You should also be able to explain why certain relevant titles do not appear on your list.
Upon completion, these lists and their accompanying rationales will be made available to all members of the class in PDF form.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

As a student in this class and at Purdue, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses, and they will be treated as such in this class. You are expected to produce your own work and to accurately cite all necessary materials. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: failing to properly cite or indicate the words and ideas of someone else; having someone else write a paper and submitting it as one’s own; turning in a paper that has been purchased from a commercial research firm, essay bank, or other source; and “recycling” papers originally submitted for other classes. Those who engage in such practices should expect to fail the course and have their behavior referred to the proper university and departmental authorities. This is non-negotiable: if I find that you have plagiarized, you will fail the course—period. Please do not put yourself in this situation.

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to changes as necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Necessary changes will be announced via email.

During the last two weeks of the semester, you will be provided an opportunity to evaluate this course and my teaching. You will receive an official email from evaluation administrators with a link to the online evaluation site, and you will have two weeks to complete this evaluation. I consider your feedback vital, as does Purdue University. Your professors have access to these online evaluations only after grades are due.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Thursday, August 22: Introduction to the course and syllabus; discussion of works read over the summer


Thursday, October 10: Selected articles from special issue of *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review*, entitled “A New Dutch Imperial History,” Vol. 128 no. 1 (2013):


- Fenneke Sysling, “Geographies of Difference: Dutch Physical Anthropology in the Colonies and the Netherlands, ca. 1900-1940,” 105-126.


*First review essay due = turn in paper copy*


Thursday, December 5: Continued discussion of rationales; course readings

**Second review due in class = you must turn in paper copy.**

*Note:* if you’d like for me to return your essay and reading list/rationale during the winter break, please turn in your second review with a large self-addressed stamped envelope.

Thursday, December 12: Reading lists and rationales due by 5PM = email these to me.