HST 601: European Borderlands. A Transnational History of Modern Europe

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 4:30-6 p.m., and by appointment. Office: Powers Hall 242a
Class times: Wed, 3:30-6:20pm, Powers Hall 135

Course description:
What is transnational history? What can transnational approaches help us, as historians of Europe, to see? We will explore the methodological tools and categories of analysis that have helped historians to tell stories within a transnational framework. We will closely look at concepts of state and nation building, ethnicity, and national indifference by reading some of the best and most recent work that deals with these concepts (Ernest Gellner, Anthony D. Smith, Eugen Weber, Rogers Brubaker, Tara Zahra, Andreas Wimmer); by exploring the history of Alsace, Schleswig and Northern Ireland on the one hand and Polish-German, Polish-Ukrainian-Russian and Southeast European borderlands on the other we will develop a West-East-comparison within modern Europe and finally look at current developments of state building and separatism in Upper Silesia, Macedonia and the Post-Soviet space.

Assignments:
• Discussion participation (30% of total grade)

• Book presentation in class (20-25 minutes) and discussion leading (40% of total grade): Take a look at the syllabus to consider the week in which you would like to present your book and lead discussion.

• Written final paper (30% of total grade): You will write a synthetic historical analysis based on the book you presented in class in which you bring multiple texts into dialogue with one another in the field of your expertise (around 1500 words). It will be due on November 28 (Week 14)

Weekly class schedule

Week 1 (8/29): Class Introductions

Week 2 (9/5): Theories of modern state and nation building


Week 3 (9/12): New approaches to a (trans)national history

Rogers Brubaker: Ethnicity without Groups, Harvard University Press, 2004, chapters 1, 2, 5, 6, 7.
**Week 4 (9/19): France and Alsace**


**Week 5 (9/26): German Studies Association-Congress, no class**

**Week 6 (10/3): Danish-German Borderland: Schleswig**


**Weeks 7 (10/10): Polish-German Borderland: Upper Silesia**

Sources: Franz Buhl’s biography

Brendan Karch: Nationalism on the Margins: Silesians between Germany and Poland, 1848-1945. (book review3)

**Week 8 (10/17): Upper Silesia in the interwar period**

Sources: Locals into Poles and Germans – the community of Bierdzan, Upper Silesia.


**Week 9 (10/24): Upper Silesia after 1945**

Hugo Service: Germans to Poles: Communism, nationalism and ethnic cleansing after the Second World War, 2013. (book review5)

Sources: Als die Deutschen weg waren, 3Sat-Dokumentation + Stanislaw Ossowski, 1946. [German required]

Week 10 (10/31): Transnational history of migration


Upper Silesian migrations – localness, mobility, and political agency 1830s-1930s


Weeks 11 (11/7) Transnational history of migration (part2)


(book review Felix)

Polish-Ukrainian-Belorussian Borderland


Sources: Statistics language and confession in Poland 1931

Weeks 12 (11/14): Bulgarian nation-building in the 19th century


Weeks 13 (11/21) Bulgarian-Greek and Bulgarian-Turkish Borderlands


Mary Neuburger: The Orient Within: Muslim Minorities and the Negotiation of Nationhood in Modern Bulgaria, Cornell University Press, 2011 (book review8)

Week 14 Macedonia between Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia


**Week 15 (12/4): ASEEES-congress, no class**

**Week 16 (12/11)**

No assigned reading; summarizing discussion; evaluation