HIST 1502 Great European Leaders of the 19th and 20th Centuries and their Influence on History

FALL 2013 – Dr. Andrew Roberts (Merrill Visiting Professor)
Tuesday and Thursday: 2:55-4:10 plus discussion
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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 4:30-5:30
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‘The history of the world is but the biography of great men,’ wrote Thomas Carlyle, articulating a view that has since been attacked by successive generations of historians who have instead concentrated on what TS Eliot called the ‘vast impersonal forces’ that affect the story of Mankind. To discover who’s right, we will investigate the roles of twelve great – in the sense of influential, rather than morally admirable – modern European statesmen, looking at the impact on their own countries and on the wider world of the lives and careers of Napoleon Bonaparte, Otto von Bismarck, Lord Salisbury, David Lloyd George, Francisco Franco, Joseph Stalin, Neville Chamberlain, Benito Mussolini, Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle, and Margaret Thatcher.

Course Requirements:
This course meets on a Tuesday/Thursday lecture schedule, with discussions on Wednesday or Thursday. Each week we will cover the individual Great Leader during Tuesday lectures, and the essay topic during Thursday lectures. Mandatory discussion sections will be led by a Teaching Assistant and include discussions based on that week’s Great Leader.

Each student is required to write two short essay papers and one research paper. The two essay papers will be related to Napoleon and Churchill, and the final research paper will ask about the influence of the individual in history. Paper due dates are October 22, December 5, and the final research paper is due on the university’s final exam date.

Grading will be based on the two essays (20% each), the final research paper (30%), and participation in the discussion sections and attendance in class (30%).

Please feel free to contact either the TAs or me during office hours or schedule an appointment with us to discuss any questions or concerns you have during the semester.

Academic Integrity (official Cornell policy):
Absolute integrity is expected of every Cornell student in all academic undertakings. Integrity entails a firm adherence to a set of values, and the values most essential to an academic community are grounded on the concept of honesty with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others. Academic integrity is expected not only in formal coursework situations, but in all University relationships and interactions connected to the educational process, including the use of University resources. While both students and faculty of Cornell assume the responsibility of maintaining and furthering these values, this document is concerned specifically with the conduct of students. - Cornell Code of Academic Integrity, p. 1. http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html
Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of the words or ideas of others. A Cornell student's submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student's own. All outside assistance should be acknowledged, and the student's academic position truthfully reported at all times. In addition, Cornell students have a right to expect academic integrity from each of their peers.

For more Academic Integrity resources: http://as.cornell.edu/academics/advising/academic-integrity.cfm

Course Reader:
Available for purchase at the Campus Store - including the following materials listed for each week. Chapters marked with an Asterisk will be available on Blackboard and/or Library Reserve.

Additional Suggested Reading (recommended for anyone needing basic information on modern European history):

August 29: Introduction (no discussion sections on 8/28 or 8/29)

**Napoleon Bonaparte (week one: September 3 and 5)**
Weekly Issue: ‘Is Hubris really the best explanation for Napoleon’s Invasion of Russia?’
Sources:

**Otto von Bismarck (week two: September 10 and 12)**
Weekly Issue: ‘Who was ultimately to blame for the Franco-Prussian War?’
Sources:
Lord Salisbury (week three: September 17 and 19)
Weekly Issue: ‘How did Great Britain stay out of all major European wars from 1856-1914?’
Sources:

David Lloyd George (week four: September 24 and 26)
Weekly Issue: ‘Who knew better how to win the Great War, Britain’s politicians or her generals?’
Sources:

Francisco Franco (week five: October 1 and 3)
Weekly Issue: ‘What best describes General Franco’s statesmanship at Hendaye?’
Sources:

Joseph Stalin (week six: October 8 and 10)
Weekly Issue: ‘Was The Great Terror integral to Stalinism?’
Sources:


**October 12-15:** Fall Break

**October 17:** general discussion on the concept of great men and women

**October 22:** first essay due

**Neville Chamberlain (week seven: October 22 and 24)**

*Weekly Issue: ‘Should we still consider Neville Chamberlain a “Guilty Man”?’*

**Sources:**


**Benito Mussolini (week eight: October 29 and 31)**

*Weekly Issue: ‘Spain stayed out of World War Two; why didn’t Italy?’*

**Sources:**


**Winston Churchill (week nine: November 5 and 7)**

*Weekly Issue: ‘How did Winston Churchill lead Britain during the Blitz and the Battle of Britain?’*

**Sources:**

Charles de Gaulle (week ten: November 12 and 14)
Weekly Issue: ‘What Difference did Charles de Gaulle make in 1940?’
Sources:

Adolf Hitler (week eleven: November 19 and 21)
Weekly Issue: ‘Why did Hitler Invade Russia?’
Sources:

Margaret Thatcher (week twelve: November 26 and December 3)
Weekly Issue: ‘What was Margaret Thatcher’s contribution to the West’s Victory in the Cold War?’
Sources:

November 27-December 1: Thanksgiving Break

December 5: course overview, and second essay due

Final Research Paper: (Cornell’s Final Exam date for this course)

*Chapters available through Library Reserves and/or Blackboard