

## PCC111. Histories of Paris

Professor Christina von Koehler

Lecture: Mondays 2:00-3:30

Site Visits: Tuesdays 1:30-3:00 (Group 1) or 4:00-5:30 (Group 2)

This class examines how the history of political ideology and social conflict in France since the Middle Ages has been embodied in the urban landscape of Paris. More than in any other city, the meaning, message, and significance to state and nation of most Parisian sites was -- and continues to be -- violently contested. We will look at the histories of the conception, construction, and public perception of Parisian monuments and place their stories within the larger context of the development of the French state and of French national identity. Major events of French history form the chronological backbone for this course, with emphasis placed on the forces that literally shaped some of the city's most emblematic neighborhoods and monuments. The readings are selected from works by specialists in French political, urban, and social history; and the class will include weekly visits to sites in Paris, as the student learns to "read" architecture and to use the city as a rich primary source for historical analysis.

Be advised: while no prior knowledge of French history is required, a high level of commitment to learning about France is. All of the writing for this class demands careful consideration of both readings for class and information given during site visits. This is not a class for tourists, but a class that engages in the complex history of Paris and France. You will be evaluated on the richness and clarity of your engagement with that history.

### COURSE MATERIALS

Colin Jones, *Paris: Biography of a City*. (London: Penguin, 2004)

Course reader

English-language booklets [*Itinéraire* readers] have been put on reserve:

The Pantheon; The Arch of Triumph; The Palais Garnier; The Eiffel Tower.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

#### \*Class participation and Analytic response papers (40%)

Students are expected to have done all the readings and to participate both in class and to comment at the weekly site visits. You may not ever again have the opportunity to actually take what you read about Paris to the streets. The meeting points for the walks are indicated below. Arrive on time, do not expect me and your classmates to wait for you. (Call the cell # if you are lost).

The visits are not optional, as they form the core of the class. Therefore be prepared to do a lot of walking, and to take notes, no matter what the weather conditions might be. (Paris can get very cold, windy, and rainy. Pack sneakers and warm socks as well as a decent coat).

Your **analytic response papers – 2-3 typed double-spaced pages – will make the connections between site visits and the readings**. Each one should synthesize your impressions of the places we visit, to reflect upon them in terms of old and new political issues, and to raise questions for further debate. Each student must hand in **a total of 4 responses** (ie. you may chose not to write about some of the site visits).

**These are due in double-spaced print-outs – on the Monday after the related visit.** Those sent via e-mail will not be accepted. A first one must be submitted by Oct. 4 at the latest.

**\*One 3-4 page paper on a “monument” you have chosen. (10%)**

Just what is a monument? A building, a book, a person, a street....? Argue why the site/object/person you have chosen – and researched – merits being included in this category.

This paper is **due, at the latest, by Week 10** (ie. Nov 22).

**\* Midterm (25%)**

**\* Final (25%)**

## **SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1 - The Unplanned City: Whose Paris?**

**Sept 13 & 14**

Readings:

Jones, Ch. 4 and begin Ch. 5.

David P. Jordan, Transforming Paris, (New York: The Free Press, 1995), selection from Chapter 1 “Paris before Haussmann,” pp. 18-36.

Orest Ranum, Paris in the Age of Absolutism, (Penn State U Press, 2002), pp. 87-106.

### **Week 2 - Expressing Power: the Means and Ends of Louis XIV**

**Sept 20** Readings:

Jones, finish Ch. 5

Louis XIV, manuscript page from 1714.

Jean de La Fontaine, “The Frogs Who Asked for a King,” in Selected Fables (James Mitchie, trans. London: Penguin Books, 1979/1982, pp. 37-38).

Nathan Whitman, “Myth and Politics: Versailles and the Fountain of Latona,” in John C. Rule, ed. Louis XIV and the Craft of Kingship, (Ohio State University Press, 1969), pp. 286-301.

**Sept 21** *Site visit: From the Louvre to the Place des Victoires*

Meeting point: **outside the Metro stop Louvre/Rivoli** (Line #1)

(Re-read the section “The Philip Augustus Wall” in Jones, Ch. 2, and bring the maps from the reader)

### **Week 3 - Erase, Deface, Replace: Revolutionary Paris**

**Sept 27** Readings:

Jones, Ch. 6 and half of Ch. 7

Richard D. E. Burton, Blood in the City, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), Chapter 2 “Violent Origins, The Taking of the Bastille,” pp. 26-40.

James Leith, “Ephemera: Civic Education Through Images,” from Peter Jones, ed., The French Revolution in Social and Political Perspective (London: Arnold Press, 1996), pp. 188-202.

*Itineraire* reader: The Pantheon

**Sept 28** *Site visit: The Panthéon*

Meeting point: **in front of the Pantheon.** (*RER B Luxembourg*) If you are coming from the Saint Michel direction, be at the back of the train and head for the nearest exit.

Find rue Soufflot. If it is raining, inside.

## **Week 4 - Glory in Stone: Napoleon I's Paris**

### **Oct 4 Readings:**

Jones, finish Ch. 7

Johannes Willms, Paris, Capital of Europe, (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1997), "Napoleon as Architect," pp. 120-135.

Jordan, Transforming Paris. End of Chapter 1, pp. 36-40.

Last call for first analytic response paper.

### **Oct 5 Site visit: L'Arc de triomphe**

Meeting point:

**GROUP 1: on the corner (pairs) of the Ave. des Champs Elysées, outside the Metro stop Charles de Gaulle/Etoile** – facing the arch, you are on the right hand side of the avenue. First, we will be walking around the base, then walking up. (Metros: #1, 2, 6, and RER A)

**GROUP 2: at the top of the Arch.** Find the metro/RER exit clearly marked for the Arch, then take the underpass out to the monument. At a booth to your left as you are about to emerge from the tunnel, use your Accent card to get a free ticket and climb the 200 or so steps to the top. I will be waiting up there.

## **Week 5 - 1815 to 1851: The Struggle for Paris Past and Future**

### **Oct 11 Readings:**

Jones, Ch. 8.

Burton, Blood in the City, Chapter 4, "Vendôme/Invalides, Paris of the Bonapartes 1802-1871," pp. 72-89.

### **Oct 12 Site visit: The Ile de la Cité**

Meeting point **in front of the Statue of Henri IV in the middle of the Pont Neuf.**

The closest metro stop is Pont Neuf, line #7, but you can also take the #1 from Bastille to "Louvre/Rivoli" and walk over.

## **Week 6 - Three Wishes: Haussmann, genie of the Second Empire**

### **Oct 18 Readings:**

Jones, begin Ch. 9

Jordan, Transforming Paris, Ch. 8 "The Implacable Axis of a Straight Line," pp. 185-210.

Paul Goldberger, "Toddlin' Town," from The New Yorker, March 9, 2009, pp. 80-81.

Paul Goldberger, "Eminent Dominion, Rethinking the Legacy of Robert Moses," from The New Yorker, Feb 2, 2007, pp. 83-85.

*Itineraire* reader: The Palais Garnier

### **Oct 19 Site visit: Le Palais Garnier et/ou son quartier**

Meeting point: **On the front steps of the Opéra Garnier** (Metro stops: Opera (#3, 7, or 8) or Chaussee d'Antin/Lafayette (# 3 or #9).

Note: only Group 1 will be visiting the interior of the opera itself. Group 2 will explore the "quartier." You are welcome to come to both.

## Week 7

**Oct 25:** Catch-up

**Oct 26:** In-class **MIDTERM**

**MID-SEMESTER BREAK** (Oct. 30- Nov. 7)

## Week 8 - Blood and Iron: Constructing the Third Republic

**Nov 8 Readings:**

Jones, finish Ch. 9

David Harvey, Paris, Capital of Modernity (New York: Routledge, 2003). Ch. 13: "The Building of the Basilica of *Sacre Coeur*," pp. 311-340.

**Nov 9 Site visit:** *Sacr -Coeur (with a view of the Eiffel Tower)*

Meeting point : **outside the metro station Anvers** in front of the gates to the park on the Place d'Anvers. (Metro #2).

If you are late, walk north up the rue de Steinkerque. When you reach the Place Suzanne Valadon, take the funicular up to the church (Navigo or regular metro ticket works) and try to find us there.

## Week 9 - Temporary Monuments/Permanent Ambitions: The Universal Expos.

**Nov 15 Readings:**

Jones, Ch. 10

E.J. Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe 1870-1914," in Hobsbawm, E.J. and Terrence Ranger, eds., The Invention of Tradition. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), excerpts: pp. 263-273 and 303-307.

Henri Loyrette, "The Eiffel Tower," in Pierre Nora, et al. Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past. Arthur Goldhammer, trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), vol. III, pp. 349-374.

*Itineraire* reader: The Eiffel Tower.

Images from the Universal Expos of 1900 and 1937

**Nov 16:** *Site visit: The Petit Palais and the grounds of the 1900 World's Fair*

Meeting point: **at Place Clemenceau by the statue of de Gaulle** (Metros: #1 or #13 to *Champs Elysees-Clemenceau*)

## Week 10- Assimilation or exclusion: what is forgotten, what is remembered, being Jewish in Paris

**Nov 22 Readings:**

Jones, Ch. 11

Orest Ranum, Paris in the Age of Absolutism, (Penn State U Press, 2002), pp. 151-155.

Nancy Green, The Pletzl of Paris, Jewish Immigrant Workers in the Belle Epoque, (New York, Holmes & Meier, 1986), "Emmigration and Immigration," pp 29-32, "Arrival and Reception," 50-53, "Settling in," pp. 68-78.

Robert O. Paxton, "Inside the Panic," in The New York Review of Books, Nov. 22, 2007, pp. 49-50.

Tony Judt, "The Problem of Evil," in NYRB, Feb. 14, 2008, pp. 33-35.  
Original monument paper due

**Nov 23** *Site visit: Le Musée de l'art et de l'histoire du judaïsme*

Meeting point: **In front of the museum** at 71, rue du Temple (4ème). Closest metro:  
*Rambuteau* (#11)

### **Week 11 - The Identity Crisis of Postwar Paris: why do Les Halles matter?**

**Nov 29** Readings:

Jones, Ch. 12 and "Conclusion"

Jason Epstein, "New York: The Prophet," in NYRB, Aug. 13, 2009, pp. 33-35.

Images of the destruction of *Les Halles*.

Richard Cobb, "The Assassination of Paris," in his People and Places (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 187-199.

Christopher Caldwell, "Revoluting High Rises," the New York Times Magazine, Nov. 27, 2005.

Steven Erlanger, "Sarkozy's Plan to Reimagine the French Capital[...]," The New York Times, June 11, 2009.

**Nov 30** *Site visit: Looking for Les Halles*

Meeting point: **in front of The Centre Pompidou** (4<sup>th</sup> arr.) Closest Metro: "Hotel de Ville" (Metro #1) or "Rambuteau" (#11)

### **Week 12 - Culture as a monument to itself: the "grands projets" of the Mitterrand years**

**Dec 6** Readings:

Herbert Muschamp, "Growing Accustomed to Paris's New Face," from The New York Times, June 18, 1995, pp. 1 and 33.

Richard Bernstein, "The Death and life of a Great Chinese City," in NYRB, March 26, 2009, pp. 40-42.

Tony Judt, "A La Recherche du Temps Perdu," in NYRB, Dec 3, 1998, pp. 51-58.

**Dec 7** *Site visit: TBA*

Meeting point: **TBA**

### **Week 13**

**Dec 13:** Review session/ discussion

**Dec 14:** In-class *FINAL*