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HIS4230

Kvalifiseringsoppgave/Compulsory Assignment:

Students taking this class have to submit a mandatory mappe which consists of a) a written draft of the group presentation that each student has to give in class; b) an abstract of 1-2 pages on a topic of their own choice (which again outlines their ideas for the term paper to be situated within the broad framework of international history); and c) a term paper of 18,000-24,000 characters.

Eksamensoppgave/Final Term Paper:

The students will write their final term paper on the basis of their revised abstracts. This will take the form of a small research paper on a topic of their own choice. The course leader will provide assistance both on the choice of the subject and its refinement. The subject of the term paper has to be related to the overall topic of the course, that is international history and more recent trends in writing it. There is a wide range of possible research topics: students may want to deepen one of the topics that we discussed in class (such as Nazism and the problem of how to situate it in wider developments), but their papers may also cover other topics that were not covered by the mandatory reading. Students are free to deal with topics that bridge the gap between modern history and earlier eras as long as the focus is on history writing in the 20th century. For instance, students might want to engage with the changing ways scholars have written about the Crusades or how Italian fascism has used antiquity for its propaganda. The format of the term paper is also quite open: students may want to write on a specific scholarly debate surrounding international history, yet they might also want to write a book review, or a proper research article based on primary sources.

What is imperative, though, is that students deal with historiographical debates and methodological considerations; for instance, the fundamental problem how to write the history of most recent time periods. All course participants are expected to reflect on their approaches in their term papers, i.e. they are to provide a theoretical and methodologic framework. Students are also expected to research supplementary literature in addition to the one provided in the mandatory reading list/Pensum. All papers are expected to be based on a reasonable amount of secondary literature and, when appropriate, also on primary sources (this is the case in particular with papers that deal with more recent time periods on which we do not have much secondary literature yet). All papers have to be in accordance with the guidelines on how to write a history term paper; guidelines and recommendations that we discussed in week 6 of the course. The total length of the paper is 18,000-24,000 characters.