

HIST352 Americans and the Greek Revolution

Fall 2021

Course Instructor:

Alexander Kitroeff
(History Dept., Haverford College)

Course Description

The outbreak of the Greek revolution of 1821 against Ottoman rule made a deep impression on Americans. This course examines the wide-ranging forms of support Americans offered the Greeks including calls on the government to recognize Greece, creating a broad-based philhellenic movement that raised funds for the rebels; and for a few, crossing the Atlantic to fight as volunteers on the side of the Greeks. We will explore the causes of American philhellenism that Greece's 1821 crystallized: an education based on the Classics; the liberal content of the Greek uprising that echoed 1776; the religious impulse of supporting fellow Christians fighting for freedom; and a humanitarian empathy toward a people who faced death or being sold into slavery. We will also examine how the philhellenic movement legitimized the involvement in public affairs of ordinary Americans, especially women, and how many of them joined the abolitionist movement in the Antebellum era.

This course illustrates the ways historians study the past through privileging an investigation of causes and effects over a simple recitation of dates and facts; inquiring about the meaning of significance of events for a particular era or period; analyzing texts by placing them in their proper historical context; evaluating sources; and using a broad range of data including primary sources (evidence produced contemporaneously to the event we are studying), secondary sources (ex-post facto assessments either by lay-persons or academic historians).

Course Resources and Activities

Our encounter with the history of American Philhellenism in ante-bellum America will entail: reading and analyzing academic books and articles, the writings of the American philhellenes themselves; watching lectures and panel discussions related to our topic delivered earlier this year as part of the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the Greek revolution of 1821; discussion of this material in class with an emphasis of conversation and exchange of ideas; in-class presentations at the end of the semester of the final assignment each student will be working on; visits to the Athens Museum of Philhellenism; the exhibition on American philhellenism at the Gennadius Library of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens; the monument to American Philhellenes in Athens.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course students will have acquired an understanding of the historical trajectory of and motivations of the American Philhellenic movement and the ways many of them went on to join the Abolitionist movement; an ability to use the historian's tools to reflect and analyze the past and a familiarity with the use of a range of sources including texts and images.

Course Requirements

- Regular, prompt class attendance and ability to discuss assigned readings
- Mid-term Paper (1,200 words) double spaced submitted electronically by noon 10/21

- 1-paragraph proposal of planned research paper, including topic & main argument due 12/3
- 1-page outline of research paper including annotated content & bibliography due 12/3
- In-class presentation of term paper 7 or 9/12
- Research Project – Ppt & accompanying 3,000 word, double-spaced, text due 12/16
- Research project specifications: Your project should be organized in a way that demonstrates its main argument followed by the premises on which it is made, with the help of primary and secondary sources, it should be footnoted and include a bibliography. We will have ample time to discuss the paper, the topics, the appropriate sources and the instructor's expectations in class during the semester.

Grading & Evaluation

Your grade for this course will be based on the following distribution:

25% Regular, prompt class attendance and ability to discuss assigned readings

25% Mid-term Paper

10% In-class presentation of term paper

40% Research Paper

Grades are intended to give you a sense of the quality of a particular piece of work: roughly speaking, a B means that you have done a good job with the writing, the ideas, and the organization of the work; a C conveys that the work lacks some important qualities and has some problems, while an A means that the work is exemplary in some key ways: the writing is particularly clear, the ideas thoroughly treated, the organization of the presentation well considered and effective.

Attendance: Your attendance and in class writing and analysis – is vitally important to your success in this course. Tardiness for class and absences without a valid excuse (e.g. illness) will affect your grade.

Policy on Original Work: Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. (Check Student handbook, pg. 7).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you are a registered (with your home institution) student with a disability and you are entitled to learning accommodation, please inform the Director of Academic Affairs and make sure that your school forwards the necessary documentation.

Course Readings

Santelli, Maureen. *The Greek Fire American-Ottoman Relations and Democratic Fervor in the Age of Revolutions* (Cornell, 2020)

Howe, Samuel Gridley. *An Historical Sketch of the Greek Revolution* (1828, e-book available via Google Books)

St. Clair, William. *That Greece Might Still be Free: The Philhellenes in the War of Independence* (1972, e-book available via OpenBook Publishers)

& websites listed on syllabus

Class & Readings Schedule

Class Day	Day/Date	Topic & Readings	
1	Tue 9/7	Introduction to the course	
2	Thu 9/9	The Greeks Under the Ottomans & the Causes of the Greek Revolution <i>Historical Sketch</i> Introduction & Book 1 Chapter I	<i>An</i>
3	Thu 9/14	The Revolution Begins in the Peloponnese <i>Historical Sketch</i> Book 1 Chapters II-V	<i>An</i>
4	Tue 9/21	The European & Diaspora Greek Views of the Revolution <i>Greece Might Still be Free</i> Chapters 2-5	<i>That</i>
5	Thu 9/23	The American Views prior to 1821 <i>The Greek Fire</i> Chapter 1	
6	Tue 9/28	The European Philhellenes <i>Greece Might Still be Free</i> Chapters 6-10	<i>That</i>
7	Thu 9/30	Philhellenism Between Romanticism and Pragmatism <i>Greece Might Still be Free</i> Chapters 11-16	<i>That</i>
8	Fri 10/1	Visit to the Gennadius Library exhibit on American Philhellenism	
9	Tue 10/5	Art in the Service of Revolution https://www.eugenedelacroix.org/	
10	Thu 10/7	Visit to the National Gallery – self-directed project	
11	Tue 10/12	The Americans <i>The Greek Fire</i> Chapter 2	<i>The Greek</i>
12	Thu 10/14	Lord Byron in Popular History: The Poet as Scandalous Superstar Lord Byron on History Channel Biographies on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DaDVOsCW7o	Watch:
13	Tue 10/19	The Iconic Philhellene: Byron <i>Historical Sketch</i> Book 4 Chapter 1 <i>Might Still be Free</i> Chapters 17-19	<i>An</i> <i>That Greece</i>
14	Thu 10/21	American Philhellenism Spreads	<i>The</i>

<i>Greek Fire Chapter 3</i>			
15	Tue 10/26	American Philhellenism versus the Monroe Doctrine <i>Greek Fire Chapter 4</i>	<i>The</i>
16	Tue 11/9	Visit to the American Philhellenic Museum	
17	Thu 11/11	Come to class prepared to talk about one of the American volunteers	
18	Tue 11/16	Greece is Free! <i>Greece Might Still be Free Chapters 27-31</i>	<i>That</i>
19	Thu 11/18	From American Philhellenism to Reform and Abolitionism https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJ5I7igxMOE	Watch
20	Tue 11/30	From American Philhellenism to Reform and Abolitionism <i>Greek Fire Chapter 5 & Conclusion</i>	<i>The</i>
21	Thu 12/2	A Closer Look at Hiram Powers' <i>The Greek Slave</i> https://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/summer16/fryd-on-reflections-on-hiram-powers-greek-slave https://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/summer16/droth-hatt-intro-to-the-greek-slave-by-hiram-powers-a-transatlantic-object	
22	Fri 12/3	American Philhellenism in the 19th & 20 th Centuries	
23	Tue 12/7	In-class presentations of final assignment	
24	Thu 12/9	In-class presentations of final assignment	

*Assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class on due date, unless noted otherwise on syllabus

Course schedule, in terms of subjects and readings, may be subject to change to benefit student learning and in keeping up to date with current research.