

PARIS AND WAR: FROM HISTORY TO MEMORY

Professor: **Guillaume PIKETTY**
Session: **June 2025**
Language of instruction: **English**
Number of hours of class: **24h**



Objective of the Course

Over time and in various contexts, Paris and its suburbs have been impacted by the warlike phenomenon. They are still impacted today by its memories via architecture, monuments, memorials, paintings, and photographs. This seminar intends to address and to decipher the successive narratives, representations and uses of various conflicts that occurred in the Parisian area, since the beginning of the 19th century, by individuals, by organized groups and by people in power.



Summary

After an introductory session devoted to the main concepts surrounding the study of the warlike phenomenon and of the coming out of war processes, we will consider a series of themes and their practical illustrations in Paris and its nearby suburbs. Geography and architecture, art and ornamentation, realms of memory (Pierre Nora) and commemorations will be at the core of our work. To do so, four sessions will consist of visits of specific places: monuments, memorials, museums, etc. One onsite session will be devoted to the annual commemoration by the French President of the Republic of the General de Gaulle's Call of June 18th, 1940.



Organisation of the course (TBC)

Session 1

- Warlike phenomenon – Coming out of war processes.

- “Great Men”: Deeds and Representations – The Hôtel national des Invalides and its history

Session 2: Visit of the Hôtel national des Invalides (Historial de Gaulle, Museum of the Order of the Liberation, Napoleon the First’s Mausoleum)

Session 3

- Resistance, repression and death – Moral Economy of Gratitude
- Preparation for the visit to the Mont-Valérien Memorial and Museum
- Preparation for the commemoration of General de Gaulle’s Appeal of June 18th, 1940

Session 4: Visit of the Mont-Valérien Memorial and Museum

Session 5: Commemoration of General de Gaulle’s Call of June 18th, 1940 on the Mont-Valérien (onsite)

Session 6

- Honour, Heroism and Glory – Impossible memories?
- Preparation for the visit to the Arc de Triomphe on the Champs-Élysées Avenue
- Preparation for the visits to the Mémorial des martyrs de la Déportation and to the Panthéon

Session 7: Visit of the Arc de Triomphe

Session 8: Visits of the Mémorial des martyrs de la Déportation and to the Panthéon

Session 9: Conclusions



Professor’s Biography



Guillaume PIKETTY is a Full Professor in Contemporary History at Sciences Po (Paris). He works on the social and cultural history of the Second World War in France and in Europe, and, more broadly, on the warlike phenomenon and the resistance phenomenon since the beginning of the American Civil War. He places a particular emphasis on the links between war, sensibilities, and emotions.



Session 2: Hôtel des Invalides



Session 4 & 5: Mont-Valérien



Session 7: Arc de Triomphe



Session 8: Memorial to the Martyrs of the Deportation



Session 8: Panthéon