History 514: European Cultural History Since 1870
Fall 2005, 1651 Humanities, MW 2:30-3:45
Instructor: Dr. Koshar (rjkoshar@wisc.edu; 265-2578)
Office hours: MW 1-2:15 & by appt.
Teaching Assistant: Jared Buss

An erudite scholar once said that the twentieth century began with the death of God and ended with the death of Man. To discuss the meaning and validity of that statement is the goal of this course, an advanced undergraduate survey of European cultural and intellectual history since 1870. We pursue a number of themes, including the changing nature of selfhood, in its reflexive, bodily, and social dimensions; the changing meaning and role of theology and religion; relationships between “elite” and “popular” culture; the transformation of political ideologies; and social thought on gender, class, nation, and power.

Writing is a central part of the course. Writing assignments consist of responses to pre-circulated questions based on readings, lectures, and discussion; they include four essays of no less than four double-spaced pages and a take-home final of no less than eight double-spaced pages. Due dates appear in the course schedule. Papers submitted after the due date will lose two points for each day they are tardy. Rewrites are possible only for papers submitted on time, and in consultation with the instructor or teaching assistant; they are due one week after the essay has been returned in class. Rewrites do not guarantee a higher grade.

It is impossible to grasp the complexity of modern European cultural history without attending lectures and discussion sections. Attendance at discussion sections is required. Students lose one point for each unexcused absence in discussion. Students should have completed required reading for their weekly discussion meeting. Grading is as follows: 15 points for each of the four essays (60 points total); 15 points for discussion and participation; 25 points for the take-home final. On the basis of 100 total points, grades are determined as follows: A= 100-93; AB=92-88; B=87-83; BC=82-78; C=77-70; D=69-60.

Required Reading
Books are available for purchase at the Underground Textbook Exchange on State Street. The course packet is available at the Humanities Copy Center, 1st floor of the Humanities Building. The books as well as a copy of the reader are on reserve at Helen C. White. Readings from the course packet are identified with an asterisk in the list below.

Roland N. Stromberg, European Intellectual History since 1789 (Prentice-Hall) 6th ed.
*Ernst Jünger, *The Storm of Steel* (Howard Fertig, 1996 [1920]), 92-120.
José Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses* (Norton, 1957 [1930])
George Orwell, *Animal Farm* (Signet, 1946 [1945])

**Course Schedule and Lecture Topics**

**Part One: European Culture and Society, 1870-1914**

9/7 Introduction
Reading: skim Stromberg, 77-131

9/12 Nineteenth-Century Contexts
9/14 “Suppose that Truth is a Woman”: Nietzsche Beyond Good and Evil
Reading: Stromberg, 132-58; Nietzsche, 3-4, 34-57

9/19 Sigmund Freud, Vienna, and the Crisis of the Rational Self
9/21 “Eat well or sleep well”: Max Weber and the Spirit of Capitalism
Reading: Stromberg, 159-87; Weber, 155-83

9/26 Dionysian Self?: Popular Culture Before World War I
9/28 Why Filippo Marinetti Loved War and Technology, and Hated (?) Women
Reading: Marinetti, 39-79

**Essay #1 due**

**Part Two: The Thirty Years’ War, 1914-45**

10/3 Did a “New Man” Emerge from the Trenches?: Ernst Jünger’s *Storm of Steel*
10/5 The Totalitarian Self: Lenin and Mussolini
Reading: Stromberg, 188-221; Jünger, 92-120

10/10 A Wholly Other God: Karl Barth’s Theology of Crisis
10/12 “Why I am not a Christian”: Bertrand Russell and Religion in the 1920s
Reading: Barth, 27-54; Russell, 57-71

10/17 Käthe Kollwitz and the Culture of Mourning
10/19 Why did Jose Ortega y Gasset Hate Mass Culture?
Reading: Ortega y Gasset, chs. 1-2, 5-6, 8, 10-11, 13-15

Essay #2 due

10/24  Josephine Baker, the Banana Dance, and Sexuality
10/26  Taking Mass Culture Seriously: Siegfried Kracauer and Walter Benjamin
      Reading: Stromberg, 222-48; Kracauer, 74-86

10/31  Adolf Hitler’s Political Religion
11/ 2  A Spoke in the Wheel: Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s Resistance
      Reading: Bonhoeffer, 271-366

11/ 7  Victor Klemperer and the “Jewish Question”
11/ 9  Primo Levi and the Culture of Survival
      Reading: Levi
      Essay #3 due

Part Three: War and “Post”-War

11/14  C.S. Lewis and “Mere Christianity” in World War II
11/16  George Orwell’s Animals
      Reading: Stromberg, 249-75; Orwell

11/21  Existentialism and Jean Paul Sartre
11/23  Is Life Worth Living?: Albert Camus
      Reading: Camus, 3-138

11/28  “One is Not Born, But Becomes, a Woman”: Simone de Beauvoir
11/30  Lennon, Lenin, and the Triumph of Hedonism in the 1960s
      Reading: Stromberg, 276-305; De Beauvoir, 139-98
      Essay #4 due

12/ 5  Roland Barthes, Big-Time Wrestling, and the Death of the Author
12/ 7  Michel Foucault’s Imprisoned Self
      Reading: Stromberg, 306-40; Barthes, 11-12, 15-28, 36-42, 50-55, 58-64, 68-77, 84-93, 97-102

12/12  Did Jacques Derrida Have a Theology?
12/14  Conclusions and Review

12/16  Takehome final exam due in 4101 Humanities by noon