HISTORY 891-POSTWAR EUROPE
Fall 2013
Professors Laird Boswell and Francine Hirsch

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Office hours: Wed & Fri 2:30-3:30  
Office hours: Tues 11:00-12:30 and by appointment

Format: This reading seminar will introduce graduate students to the history of Postwar Europe—East and West. We will explore the imprint of the Second World War, the Holocaust, and the extension of Soviet power on the countries of Europe. We will look at European reconfigurations against the backdrop of the Cold War, focusing on "the end of empire" in Western Europe, the creation of the Soviet Bloc in Eastern Europe, and the creation of the European Union. We will also look at the transmission of ideas, culture, and people across borders, as well as at the politics of religion, immigration, reproduction, and environmentalism. We will end with an evaluation of the revolutions of 1989—and the new political, social, and cultural transfigurations that emerged in their wake.

Readings and preparation: All books are on reserve at College Library.

Each week (by 6 pm on the evening before class) all students should post two broad "discussion questions" to the Discussion Board on the course pages of the Learn@UW website. The following morning (by 9 am) all students should respond on-line to another student's posted question.

Each week, the designated “discussion leaders” will prepare a short (5-10 minute) introduction to the week’s readings and a list of questions and issues for discussion. As part of the introduction, the discussion leaders should present an overview of the week’s topic, situating it in the broader literature. (We recommend that this overview serve as the foundation for the course’s required historiographical essay.)

Papers: Each student will write three 6-7-page papers during the semester (see due date below). You may write these papers in the order you prefer. Those of you with sufficient reading knowledge of a foreign language should base one of your papers on foreign language sources.

1. Historiographical Essay: Write a historiographical essay on one of the week’s themes—giving careful attention to how a given topic has been treated by scholars writing in different time periods (i.e. in the 1960s versus in the 1990s) or writing from different countries with different scholarly traditions (i.e. from France versus from the U.S.). This paper is due the week we discuss the topic in class.

2. Contextualized “Source Analysis”: Choose one or two primary sources on one of the week’s themes. Analyze the sources in the context of the week’s assigned readings. What
do the sources add to our understanding of the topic? This paper is due the week after we discuss the topic in class.

3. **New York Review of Books-Style Book Review**: Choose two or three relatively new books on one of the week’s themes. Write a *New York Review of Books*-style essay—reviewing the books and also using them to reflect on larger issues. This paper is due the week we discuss the topic in class.

In addition to Tony Judt's *Postwar* (week 4) you may wish to consult some other general histories of the postwar period:

Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century* (New York, 2000), second half.


**INTRODUCTION**

**Week One (9/6): Introduction**

**PART I: WARTIME AND THE POSTWAR MOMENT**

**Week Two (9/13): Bloodlands**


**Week Three (9/20): Liberation and Occupation**


**Week Four (9/27): The Postwar Moment**


**PART II: EUROPEAN RECONFIGURATIONS**

**Week Five (10/04): Youth and Culture**


**Week Six (10/11): Ethnic Cleaning and Displacement**

First paper due


(Optional: Applebaum, *Iron Curtain*, 116-147.)

**Week Seven (10/18): The Politics of Empire**


**Week Eight (10/25): Legacies and Transformations**


**Week Nine (11/1) Thinking about Victims after the Holocaust**


Carolyn Dean, *Aversion and Erasure: The Fate of the Victim after the Holocaust* (Cornell, 2010).


**Week Ten (11/8). The Origins of the European Union**


**PART III: THE 1960s AND BEYOND**

**Week Eleven (11/15): The Politics of Religion, Immigration, and Difference**

**Second Paper due**


Laurent Dubois, *Soccer Empire: The World Cup and the Future of France* (California, 2010), preface, 47-176, 214-266.

**Week Twelve (11/22): 1989**


**Week Thirteen (11/29): Happy Thanksgiving!**

**Week Fourteen (12/6): Environmental Histories**


**Week Fifteen (12/13): Conclusions**

**Final Paper due**