

History 475: European Social History, 1914 to Present

Spring 2014, TR 4-5:15 (1131 Humanities)

Instructor: R. Koshar (rjkoshar@wisc.edu)

Office Hours: 4101 Humanities (Thursdays 2-3:45 & by appt.)

Course Rationale: In twentieth century Europe politics and society became intertwined as never before. Not only did war and political conflict shape daily life throughout the century; but social and economic issues, from mass unemployment and commercialization to gender relations and urban transformation, also called forth state action. The study of social history in the past century therefore demands close attention to the scope and nature of political power, and to the ideologies that envisioned how power was to be distributed, and how societies were to be remade. What were the major ideologies of twentieth century Europe? How did they imagine the societies over which they laid claim? To what social conflicts and trends did they respond? How did identities based on class, nation, gender, race, religion, generation, and locale relate to ideological reflection, society, and political practice? How did these changes affect individuals?

Goals: The pedagogical goals of the course are: to deepen your knowledge of late modern European social history in all its drama and complexity; to build your expository and critical skills through writing and discussion; to give you familiarity with a primary source that has become ubiquitous in contemporary culture, namely “life writing” (e.g., memoir, autobiography, diary); and to relate this source critically to larger historical narratives and problems.

Assignments and Grading:

Three-credit students: one four-page essay (Feb. 13), one ten-page (minimum) research paper (Apr. 29), a midterm (Mar. 6), a cumulative final (May 8), and discussion.

Four-credit students: one eight-page essay (Feb. 13), one fourteen-page (minimum) research paper (Apr. 29), a midterm (Mar. 6), a cumulative final (May 8), and discussion. (Students will receive more information in the course of the semester on the research papers.)

Graduate Students: a seminar-length research paper (25-30 pgs.), midterm, and final.

All students are urged to familiarize themselves with the rules and guidelines concerning plagiarism. Cases of plagiarism or cheating will be dealt with severely. (University policy on plagiarism is available at:

<http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html>).

Due dates for papers and exam dates are firm; exceptions will be considered only in two cases, dire personal crisis, or the end of the world, in which case the information contained herein is moot.

Discussion: While I'll include discussion throughout lectures, we will have seven separate lecture periods when we'll discuss primary source reading. For these class sessions, several students will be designated as "lead discussants," or panelists, and asked to comment on a number of pre-circulated questions before the entire class has the chance to "weigh in" on the reading. Each class member will serve as a lead discussant at least once. These discussions usually become quite lively, so be ready to critique, argue (respectfully), and enjoy. The success of each discussion is of course dependent on your attending all lectures and staying up-to-date with course readings. Your discussion grade hinges not only on the thoughtfulness and coherence of your comment as a panelist but also on your contributions to general class discussion.

Undergraduate Grading:

Shorter essay=15%
Research paper=25%
Discussion=15%
Midterm=20%
Final=25%

Graduate Grading:

Research paper=55%
Midterm=20%
Final=25%

These are flexible percentages. In some cases, the instructor may adjust percentages, e.g., to reflect a student's progress in the course of the semester. Grade Scale: A=100-93; AB=92-88; B=87-83; BC=82-78; C=77-70; D=69-60.

Required Reading (available for purchase and on reserve):

Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (Vintage Books)
Emilie Carles, *A Life of Her Own: The Transformation of a Countrywoman in Twentieth-Century France* (Penguin)
Ernst Jünger, *The Storm of Steel: From the Diary of a German Storm-Troop Officer on the Western Front* (Penguin)
Carlo Levi, *Christ Stopped at Eboli. The Story of a Year* (Farrar Straus Giroux)
Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (Penguin)

Anonymous, *A Woman in Berlin: Eight Weeks in the Conquered City. A Diary* (Picador)
Giorgio, *Memoirs of an Italian Terrorist* (Carroll & Graf)
Jana Hensel, *After the Wall: Confessions from an East German Childhood and the Life that Came Next* (Public Affairs)

Course Schedule:

Jan 21 Course Introduction

Jan 23: Economies & Societies

Reading: Mazower, ix-xv, 3-40

Jan 28 Mass Politics to 1914

Jan 30 Mass Culture to 1914

Reading: Mazower, 41-103, start Carles

Feb 4 Origins of World War I

Feb 6 Discussion of Emilie Carles

Reading: finish Carles

Feb 11 World War I as “Experience”

Feb 13 European Civil Wars

First paper due

Reading: start Jünger

Feb 18 Discuss Jünger

Feb 20 Italian Fascism and Italian Society

Reading: finish Jünger

Feb 25 Culture and Gender of Modernism

Feb 27 Film excerpt and discussion of “Berlin: Symphony of a Great City” (1927)

Reading: Mazower, 104-211

Mar 4 Nazism

Mar 6 **Midterm**

Reading: start Carlo Levi

Mar 11 World War II

Mar 13 Discuss Carlo Levi

Reading: finish Carlo Levi

Mar 15-23 Spring Recess

Mar 25 Genocide

Mar 27 Discuss Primo Levi

Reading: Primo Levi

Apr 1 European Society, Resistance, Postwar

Apr 3 From Trauma to “Miracle”?

Reading: Mazower, 212-326

Apr 8 Discuss *A Woman in Berlin*

Apr 10 “Real Existing Socialism”

Reading: *A Woman in Berlin*

Apr 15 The West: Lennon, not Lenin

Apr 17 Discuss Giorgio

Reading: Giorgio

Apr 22 Collapse of Communism

Apr 24 Discuss Hensel

Reading: Hensel

Apr 29 Memory

Second paper due

May 1 Neo-Liberal Triumph?

Reading: Mazower, 327-403

May 6 No Class: Study Day

May 8 **In-Class Final**