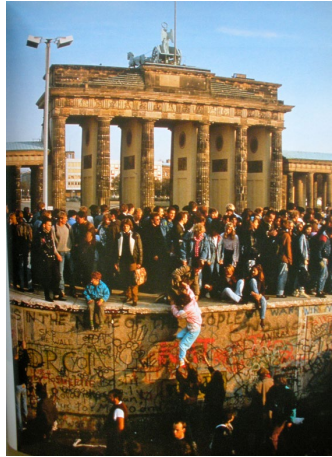


HISTORY 359: EUROPE SINCE 1945

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History



Italian poster in favor of European Unity, 1957



Fall of the Berlin Wall, 1989



Muslims praying in Marseille France, 1994

Fall 2024

*Monday-Wednesday at 4:00
1131 Humanities*

Laird Boswell

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Office hours: **Monday 1:30-3:30** in 5127 Humanities or email me for a different time either in person or on Zoom.

Course Description: How did Europe rebuild from the ashes of World War II? This course explores the history of the European Continent from the end of the Second World War to the war in Ukraine. We will focus on key themes such as the legacy of Nazism and the Holocaust; the Cold War and the rivalry between the superpowers; decolonization and the end of the European Empires; the birth and development of the European Union; the post war economic boom; the collapse of communism in the USSR and Eastern Europe; the rebirth of nationalism after 1990; the growth of the Extreme Right over the past two decades; the expansion of Euroscepticism; and the consequences of the war in Ukraine.

Objectives: This is an upper division course that will provide you with an in-depth overview of European history since the end of the Second World War. In this class you will:

- Gain an understanding of Europe's social, political, and cultural history.
- Situate Europe changing place in the world (loss of big power status; loss of Empire; development of the European Union).
- Understand how the past informs Europe's present, and how contemporary developments shape our understanding of the continent's past.
- Learn how to use different kinds of sources (novels, films, secondary sources) to make persuasive arguments about the past.
- Learn how to make concise arguments.

Requirements: There will be two one-page papers, two five-page paper, and one two-hour final examination. Essay topics will be distributed in advance; papers require no outside research and will be based on class readings.

Discussions:

Complete the readings and watch the movies ahead of our in-class discussions. These are marked with an → on this syllabus.

Nine of our class sessions will be devoted, either in part or entirely, to discussing the readings and the movies. Please refer to the schedule below for the exact dates. Plan ahead: we are reading entire books, some of them more arduous than others. You won't be able to complete the reading if you begin the night before. By 10 pm on the evening before each discussion students should post on the class Canvas page:

1) A two-paragraph response to the reading or movie. Please respond to the prompt that I will post on Canvas a few days before.

2) One question for discussion. Think of a question that we should discuss in class.

Your posts are part of your discussion discussion grade.

Movies: We will watch (and discuss) three movies: Alain Resnais' *Nuit et brouillard* (1955), Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (*Die Ehe der Maria Braun*, 1978), and Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's *The Lives of Others* (*Das Leben der Anderen*, 2006).

Honors: We watch three to five movies over the course of the semester and meet to discuss them. I will ask you to write a short (3 page) paper on these films toward the end of the semester.

Grading: Two one-page papers (5% each), two 5-page papers (25% each), two-hour final exam (20%), and discussion (20%).

Academic Integrity and AI: I expect you to hand in your own work, and not to borrow sentences or sentence fragments from books, articles, or the web. In other words, all your

sentences should be of your own making (if you use more than three successive words from a book, you should put them in quotation marks). Students are urged to familiarize themselves with the rules and guidelines concerning plagiarism -- any cases of plagiarism or cheating will be dealt with severely. Downloading material from the web and claiming it as your own is a form of plagiarism. So does buying an essay from a paper bank or using a paper written by another person. To learn more about quoting and paraphrasing check the Writing Center's excellent tips at <https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/assignments/quoting/sources/>

If you are unclear about what you should or should not be doing, **please ask**.

AI: Using arguments, sentences, and paragraphs created by ChatGPT or Generative AI in your papers or in your discussion posts is not acceptable. It constitutes a form of plagiarism: you didn't create the material, ChatGPT did, and you are claiming it as your own. The purpose of college is to learn how to think critically, evaluate materials, and propose compelling arguments in written and oral form. You're not learning anything if you are asking an artificial intelligence tool to do the work for you. In addition, there's no guarantee that the material generated by ChatGPT will be accurate and it is unlikely to demonstrate original thinking.

Electronic Devices: Please turn off all electronic devices (including laptops) during lecture. Research suggests that students learn more when they take notes by hand and they perform better than students who are electronically connected. Laptops can be distracting both for the user (who is often tempted to surf the web) and for his or her neighbors. Multitasking is not conducive to learning. During lecture and discussion you should focus on the material and keep outside distractions to a minimum.

The History Lab: The History Lab is staffed by History PhD students who can provide you with one-on-one consultations to help you with your papers. For instructions on how to make an appointment and a short explanatory video, see [The History Lab – Department of History – UW–Madison](#)

Readings: The following books are **required** and can be purchased at the bookstore of your choice. Students who want to read an engaging (though lengthy) history of Europe since 1945 can turn to Tony Judt's, Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945 (Penguin, 2005).

Primo Levi, The Reawakening (Touchstone, 1995). 9780684826356

Czeslaw Milosz, The Captive Mind (Vintage, 1990) 9780679728566

Georgio, Memoirs of an Italian Terrorist (Carroll and Graf, 2003) 9780786711345

Ian Buruma, Murder in Amsterdam. The Death of Theo van Gogh and the Limits of Tolerance (Penguin, 2006) 9780143112365

Mehdi Charef, Tea in the Harem (Serpent's Tail, 1990) 9781852421519

Svetlana Alexievich, Secondhand Time: The Last of the Soviets (Random House, 2016) 9780399588808

Recommended Textbook: William I. Hitchcock, The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent (Anchor, 2004) 9780385497992

Week 1

September 4: Introduction. Survival and Reconstruction

Week 2

September 9: Purges and Retributions

September 11: The Memory of War, Occupation, and the Holocaust

➔In class **Discussion on Sept 11. Movie: Night and Fog** (*Nuit et brouillard*) directed by Alain Resnais (France, 1955). Available via the library website on Kanopy. Remember to post response to the prompt and a question for discussion on Canvas by 10 pm on Sept 10.

Week 3

September 16: Europe Divided: The Cold War, 1947-65

➔September 18: **Discussion, Primo Levi, *The Reawakening*** (read entire book). Post comment and question on Canvas by 10 pm on Sept 17.

One page paper due Sept 18 in class.

Week 4

September 23: From Stalin to Gorbachev

September 25: The Origins of the European Union, 1940s-1990s

Begin Milosz, *The Captive Mind* (read ahead, this is an arduous book!)

Week 5

September 30: Repression and Resistance in Eastern Europe

➔Oct 2: **Discussion: Milosz, *The Captive Mind***, Preface, 3-24, 54-190, 223-251

Week 6

Oct 7: Decolonization and the End of Empire

Oct 9: The Economic Miracle and beyond, 1946-1975

5 Page Paper due Monday Oct 7.

➔**In class movie discussion on Oct 9:** Rainer Werner Fassbinder, The Marriage of Maria Braun (Federal Republic of Germany, 1979). Available via the library website on Kanopy. Post due Oct 9 at 11 am.

Week 7

Oct 14: The Rebirth of Italy, 1945-2010

Oct 16: Domestic Terrorism from the 1970s to the 2020s

➔**Discussion on October 16: Georgio, *Memoirs of a Terrorist* (entire book)**

Week 8.

Oct 21: 1968: Students and Workers Revolt

Oct 23: A Changing Religious Landscape

Week 9

Oct 28: A Continent of Immigrants

➔ Oct 30: **Discussion: Mehdi Charef, Tea in the Harem**
1 Page Paper due in class on Oct 30

Week 10

Nov 4: German Reunification and the Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe

Nov 6: Democratization in Southern Europe: Greece, Spain, and Portugal

➔ **In class movie discussion Nov 6: The Lives of Others (*Das Leben der Anderen*),** directed by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck (Germany, 2007). Available on Amazon prime, Apple TV, and other commercial providers (I'm checking to see if it is available via Kanopy).

Week 11

Nov 11: The Turning Point: The Implosion of the Soviet System, 1991

➔ Nov 13: **Discussion: Svetlana Alexievich, *Secondhand Time: The Last of the Soviets*,** 3-91; 165-86; 248-81; 305-336; 350-65; 454-470.

Week 12

Nov 18: Neoliberalism and the Challenge to the Welfare State

Nov 20: The Yugoslav War and the Nationalist Revival in the East

Week 13

Nov 25: The New Extreme Right

Nov 27: No class. Enjoy Thanksgiving break!

5 Page Paper due Nov 25

Week 14

Dec 2: Euroscepticism, Brexit, and the Crisis of the EU

➔ Dec 4: **Discussion: Ian Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam***

Week 15

Dec 9: Putin's War in Ukraine and the end of the post-1989 illusions

Dec 11: Europe in the twenty first century

*****Final Exam: *****

Thursday Dec 19, 7:45-9:45 AM

Course policies

Credits: This is a 3-credit class. The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning

activities (at least 45 hours per credit or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week), dedicated online time, reading, writing, field trips, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

This is an **intermediate level course** that fulfils **Social Science Breadth** requirements.

Course Evaluations: Students will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate this course and your learning experience. Student participation is an integral component of this course, and your feedback is important to me. I strongly encourage you to participate in the course evaluation.

Accommodations: The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy ([UW-855](#)) require the university to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to access and participate in its academic programs and educational services. Faculty and students share responsibility in the accommodation process. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations during the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after being approved for accommodations. I will work either directly with you or in coordination with the McBurney Center to provide reasonable instructional and course-related accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

University Statement on Diversity: Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.