

History 303

## **EUROPE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

Prof. John McCole

Spring Term 2015

Class: 250 CLS (Clinical Services) | MWF 11-11:50

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GTFs: Miles Wilkinson, Emily Cole

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

History 303 is a survey of the horrors and wonders of Europe's history during the past century, from 1914 to the present.

Europe's twentieth century was a century of terrors. Europeans unleashed two devastating world wars; saw fierce ideological and political conflict between liberal democracy, fascism, and communism; and both carried out and confronted genocide and so-called "ethnic cleansing." In the process, their relations with the rest of the world changed dramatically. The European nations began the century as the world's dominant imperial powers. After two world wars, Europe was split into two halves, integrated into blocs dominated by "outside" powers, the USA and USSR, during the Cold War. In our time, Europeans are struggling to redefine their identities, their political loyalties, and their place in a multipolar, global society.

But the full picture is as contradictory and varied as Europe itself. Europe's twentieth century was also a time of exciting social and political transformation and cultural innovation. In the second half of the century, Europe overcame many of its nationalist and ideological divisions and began a movement toward unification whose destination is still open. The legacies of earlier conflicts remain, and Europeans face difficult new problems. Still, a central question of this course will be how Europe succeeded in transforming itself so dramatically in the course of the twentieth century. To explore this question, we will examine the major social, political, and cultural movements that have vied to define and control Europe during the entire period. We will give full attention to the second half of the century, up to and including recent events.

### **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT TO LEARN IN THIS COURSE**

- a basic knowledge of the history of Europe in the twentieth century, including events and key dates; ideologies and ideas; political, social, and cultural movements; and major economic developments (a basic mastery of this knowledge is necessary, but not sufficient to do well);
- how to think about history in terms of political, economic, social, and cultural forces and how they interact;
- how historians and others go about explaining why things happened the way they did and not otherwise; let's call this historical reasoning (history is more than just "what happened");
- some of the main controversies about Europe's twentieth-century history;

- skills in evaluating primary source documents; and
- basic visual literacy in the images and iconography of twentieth-century Europe.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Course requirements**

- two in-class hour exams (each 20% of course grade) on dates to be announced;
- sit-down final exam (20%) on date to be announced;
- two papers, 4-5 pages each (20% + 20%).

The papers will be based on readings we are doing for the course. Topics and instructions will be distributed in advance. Due dates: paper #1 on Monday, May 4 (start of week 6) and paper #2 on Wednesday, June 3 (middle of week 10).

### **Grading policy**

When you receive an individual assignment, it will describe the criteria that will be used to grade it. I do not grade on a curve. I grade for accomplishment, not effort. In general, these are my standards for grading:

A: Work that distinguishes itself through its sophisticated grasp of the material and unusual accomplishment, in addition to being well executed and reasonably free of errors.

B: Work that satisfies main criteria of the assignment but lacks the element of distinction that carries the work into the realm of excellence.

C: Work that demonstrates a rudimentary grasp of the material and satisfies at least some of the assigned criteria reasonably well.

D: Work that demonstrates a poor grasp of the material and/or is executed with little regard for college standards, but which exhibits some engagement with the material.

F: Work that is weak in every aspect; satisfies none of the assigned criteria.

### **Policy on late work and taking exams**

Please understand that these policies are in the interest of fairness to your fellow students.

1. Papers submitted late will be penalized. (But it is always worth submitting work even if it is late.)
2. Makeup exams can be given only in case of a certified medical or personal emergency.
3. I will not give early final exams under any circumstances. Please make your plans for the end of the term accordingly.

### **Academic honesty**

All work that you submit for this course, including papers and exams, must be your own, and it must have been produced for this course. Please be sure that you are familiar with the University's policies regarding academic honesty. When you submit work for the course, you are certifying that you have complied with these guidelines.

Be sure you do not inadvertently commit plagiarism. The UO Library's website has a helpful guide to avoiding it:

<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>

### **Electronic devices in the classroom**

Laptop computers and similar devices are permitted for purposes of taking notes. This is the only permissible use of laptops during lecture. To begin with, I will not restrict the use of laptops to any particular section of the lecture room. Please respect the rights of your fellow students by not creating distractions by using computers to surf the web or do other business. If I find that this policy is being violated, I will change it during the term. The use of cellular phones, smartphones, mp3 devices and the like is prohibited at all times. Texting is out of bounds.

### **READINGS**

#### **Required and available for rental or purchase at the University Bookstore:**

- Robert Paxton and Julie Hessler, *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, Fifth Edition  
PLEASE NOTE: **ONLY THIS EDITION WILL DO!**
- Robert G. Moeller, ed., *The Nazi State and German Society*
- Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*

#### **Readings on reserve at Knight Library:**

note: Paxton and Hessler is not available on reserve, nor is Moeller's *Nazi State and German Society*. The library does not purchase textbooks or readers produced for courses.

Jane Kramer, *Unsettling Europe* (for "The Invandrare")

Slavenka Drakulic, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*

Vacláv Havel, *Living in Truth* (for "Power of the Powerless")

Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*

#### **Online readings:**

Please look in the course schedule below for the locations of online readings required for this course.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

#### **I. In Darkest Europe: The Thirty Years' Crisis, 1914-1945**

**Week 1: Under the Volcano: Europe on the Eve of Disaster** (March 30, April 1, 3)

1 Introduction to the Course | Imperial Europe at its Zenith

2 Imperial Europe: Challengers and Disruptive Forces

reading:

- Paxton and Hessler, Chapters 1, 2
- Emmeline Pankhurst, *My Own Story* (1914), excerpt at *The Internet History Sourcebook*
- Marinetti, "Manifesto of Futurism" (1909) at [italianfuturism.org](http://italianfuturism.org)

**Week 2: World War I and the Postwar Revolutions, Left and Right** (April 6, 8, 10)

- 1 Total War and Its Consequences
- 2 Revolutions, Left and Right: The Russian Revolution and Fascist Italy

reading:

- Paxton and Hessler, Chapters 4, 5, 6
- Lenin, "April Theses," a.k.a. "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution" (1917) at marxists.org
- Mussolini, "The Doctrine of Fascism" (1932) at worldfuturefund.org

**Week 3: Modernity and Democracies: The Twenties** (April 13, 15, 17)

- 1 Hopeful, Divided, and Demoralized Democracies
- 2 The Modernist Social and Cultural Revolution / FILM: Fritz Lang, "Metropolis" (1927)

reading:

- Paxton and Hessler, Chapters 8, 9
- start Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society*
- Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (online and on reserve), Parts 1 and 6

**Week 4: Crises of the Thirties** (April 20, 22, 24)

- 1 Monday, April 20: Hour exam #1 in class
- 2 The Crisis of Capitalism: The Great Depression

reading:

- Paxton and Hessler, Chapters 10, 11
- George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*: part I, chapter 5
- Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society*

**Week 5: The Catastrophes** (April 27, 29, May 1)

- 1 Nazi Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union
- 2 World War, Occupation, Carnage, and Genocide

reading:

- Paxton and Hessler, Chapter 13
- United Nations Resolution 260 (III), "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," (1948) at the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law

**II. Europe Divided: The Postwar Order, 1945-1968****Week 6: Europe's New Place in the World** (May 4, 6, 8)

- 1 Into the Cold War: Europe Divided and Diminished
- 2 The Politics of Prosperity: Postwar Consensus in Western Europe

reading:

- Paxton and Hessler, Chapters 14, 15, 18
- The "percentages agreement" between Churchill and Stalin
- Nikolai Novikov, "Report to Foreign Minister Molotov" (the "Novikov telegram") (1946)
- "Social Insurance and Allied Services" (a.k.a. "The Beveridge Report") (1942), facsimile at the website of the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation)
- Simone de Beauvoir, "Woman as Other," from *The Second Sex* (1949), at marxists.org

### **Week 7: Postwar Realities, West and East** (May 12, 14, 16)

- 1 Post-Stalinism: Life in the People's Democracies and the USSR
- 2 The Demise of Empires and the New Migrations

reading:

- Paxton and Hessler, Chapters 16, 17
- Jane Kramer, "The Invandrare," in Kramer, *Unsettling Europe* (or encrypted .pdf)
- Slavenka Drakulic, "You Can't Drink Your Coffee Alone," and "The Strange Ability of Apartments to Divide and Multiply" (from *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*), encrypted .pdf

## **III. Toward Europe Today, 1968-Present**

### **Week 8: The End of the Postwar Order (I)** (May 18, 20, 22)

- 1 Monday, May 18: Hour Exam #2 in class
- 2 1968: Paris and Prague

reading:

- Paxton and Hessler, Chapters 19, 20
- Václav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless" (1978)
- "1968 in Europe: Sources"
- youtube videos of Margaret Thatcher speeches:
  1. exchange about socialism during her final speech to Parliament (1990): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okHGCz6xxi>
  2. "the lady's not for turning" (1981): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQ-MOKEFm9I&feature=related>

### **Week 9: The End of the Postwar Order (II)** (May 27, 29)

- 1 The Social Contract in Crisis? Western Europe in the 1970s and 1980s
- 2 The Making of "1989": The Collapse of Communism

reading:

- Paxton and Hessler, Chapter 22, 23
- Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*: pp. 11-60, 131-156

- Mikhail Gorbachev, “Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World,” excerpt (1987)
- Solidarity, "21 Demands" (1980)

**Week 10: A New Europe—But What New Europe?** (June 1, 3, 5)

- 1 Uniting or Splitting? Europe in the Nineties and the Aughts
- 2 Europe and the World in the Early Twenty-First Century

reading:

- Paxton and Hessler, "Conclusion"
- Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*, finish

**FINAL EXAM:**

*as set by the official final exam schedule: Monday, June 8, 10:15-12:15*