

IDH 3931, Honors Seminar
“Crisis and Conflict in Modern Europe”
Fall 2017

Instructor: Prof. Stuart Finkel
Class Hours and Location: W 7-9, FLG 275
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Office Hours: Wed 10:15-11:45am and by appointment
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The 20th century began full of promise and hope, with technological transformations and a dogged belief in the possibility of human emancipation. But it turned into the bloodiest in human history, marked by two world wars, revolutions, and the most ruthless states the world has ever seen. It was only at the very end of the century that the seeming triumph of capitalist democracies in most of Europe (and elsewhere) was apparently assured.

This HONORS SEMINAR will focus on the “crisis of modernity,” the ways in which people came to terms with both cataclysmic violence and fundamental changes to daily ways of life. We will look in particular at the role of ideology, and at how intellectuals both served as the agents of change and grappled with their own place in the modern world. The course will cover such diverse topics as the fruition of the modern nation-state; the evolution of revolutionary socialism, the desire to forge a “new world,” and the resultantly momentous Russian Revolution of 1917; the terrible attraction of anti-democratic fascist, Communist, anti-Semitic, and other national-chauvinist ideologies; how these rival ideologies and nation-states produced two of the most catastrophic wars in history; and the continued debates over the role of educated citizens in politics today.

Required texts can be found at local or online booksellers; additional readings and visuals will be available on the course Canvas website. While this is an honors seminar focusing on European and world history, there are no prerequisites. Those who have less background might consider supplementing the required readings with the optional survey text recommended below. You will be graded on the basis of class participation (20%); the writing of three brief in-class response papers over the course of the semester (5% each); an in-class mid-term (25%); and a final group presentation and summary paper (40%).

Please read this syllabus carefully, refer back to it regularly, and don’t hesitate to ask me if you have any questions regarding the readings, assignments, or anything else!

Required texts and other materials

Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*
Nicholas Berdyaev, *The Origins of Russian Communism*
George L. Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution*
Evgenyi Zamyatin, *We*
Course *Canvas* website

Optional text

Michael D. Richards and Paul R. Waibel, *Twentieth-Century Europe: A Brief History, 1900 to the Present*, 3rd ed.

Grading Scale and Assignment Summary

Grade Proportion	Grade Scale	Grade Value
First Response Paper 5%	100-93=A	A=4.0
Second Response Paper 5%	92-90=A-	A-=3.67
Midterm 25%	89-87=B+	B+=3.33
Third Response Paper 5%	86-83=B	B=3.00
Group Presentation/Summary Paper 40%	82-80=B-	B-=2.67
Participation 20%	79-77=C+	C+=2.33
	76-73=C	C=2.00
	72-70=C-	C-=1.67
	69-67=D+	D+=1.33
	66-63=D	D=1.00
	62-60=D-	D-=0.67
	59-0=E	E=0.00

For information on UF's grading system and policies, please consult the Undergraduate Catalog <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

University and Class Policies

Assignments and Attendance

Students will be expected to have done all of the reading and participate fully in the class discussions. Honors seminars are most rewarding when students interact with the texts, each other, and the instructor on a sustained and consistent basis. Readings provide the raw material for class discussion, where much of the learning takes place. Effective and regular class participation is therefore essential. Students can expect a respectful atmosphere in which to express their opinions. *Cell phone use is prohibited*, and computers and tablets may only be used for taking notes or looking at materials directly related to the current class.

Attendance is mandatory, and you must be on time, prepared, and courteous to everyone in the room. Since we meet just once a week, participation portion of the grade will be adversely affected after one unexcused absence, except in extraordinary circumstances, and consistent tardiness will also be penalized. Late work will not be accepted without penalty. Please make every effort to apprise me of adverse circumstances that affect your ability to attend class or complete assignments on time. Official documentation is required to excuse an absence or to schedule make-up assignments. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>).

Academic Honesty

Students must conform to UF's academic honesty policy regarding plagiarism and other forms of cheating. This means that on all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. For more information about the definition of these terms and other aspects of the Honesty Guidelines, see the University's student code of conduct at <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>, and conflict resolution procedures at <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/conflict-resolution>

All students found to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in *any assignment* for this course will be prosecuted to the full extent of the university honor policy, including judicial action and the sanctions listed in paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code. For serious violations, you will fail this course.

Students with Disabilities

Please do not hesitate to ask for accommodation for a documented disability. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Please ask if you would like any assistance in this process.

Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>

Readings and Assignment Schedule

[There may be minor changes in the readings and assignments, which will be announced in advance.]

Week 1 (August 23rd): The Crisis of Modernity.

Readings:

- Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p. ix-xv, 3-6.
- Marquis de Condorcet, brief excerpts from *Progress of the Human Mind* (ER)
- Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, brief excerpts from *The Communist Manifesto* (ER)
- Fëdor Dostoyevsky, brief excerpts from *Notes from Underground* (ER)

Week 2 (August 30th): Intelligentsia and *Intellectuals*: Engagement, Commitment, and Modern Politics

Readings:

- Jeremy Jennings and Tony Kemp-Welch, “The Century of the Intellectual: from the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie” (ER)
- Isaiah Berlin, “The Role of the Intelligentsia” (ER)
- David Drake, *French Intellectuals and Politics from the Dreyfus Affair to the Occupation*, p. 8-34 (ER)
- Emile Zola, “Letter to France” and “J’accuse!” (ER)

[Optional: Berdyaev, *Origins of Russian Communism*, p. 19-75]

Week 3 (September 6th): Nationalism and the Origins of Fascism

Readings:

- Ernest Gellner, excerpts from *Nations and Nationalism* (ER)
- Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, p.55-93, 117-35.
- Houston Stewart Chamberlain, brief excerpts from *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* (ER)

1st Response Paper – September 6th

Week 4 (September 13th): The First World War and the Origins of Russian Communism

Readings:

- Roland N. Stromberg, “The West in Trouble: World War I and its Aftermath,” from *European Intellectual History since 1789*, p. 188-95 (ER)
- Berdyaev, *Origins of Russian Communism*, p.94-188.
- V. I. Lenin, excerpts from *What is to be Done?* (ER)
- Semen Frank, “The Crisis of the Old Intelligentsia,” from *Vekhi/Landmarks* (ER)

Week 5 (September 20th): Crisis of Faith: The First World War and its Aftermath

Readings:

- Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p. 3-40.
- R. W. Inge, brief excerpts from *The Idea of Progress* (ER)
- Oswald Spengler, brief excerpts from *The Decline of the West* (ER)
- Sigmund Freud, excerpts from *Civilization and its Discontents* (ER)

Week 6 (September 27th): Crisis of Faith: Utopia or Dystopia?

Readings:

- Carl Boggs, *Intellectuals and the Crisis of Modernity*, pp.79-89, 97-109 (ER)
- Fëdor Dostoyevsky, "Legend of the Grand Inquisitor," from *Brothers Karamazov* (ER)
- Zamyatin, *We*.

Film: Excerpts from Fritz Lang, *Metropolis* (1927)

2nd Response Paper – September 27th

Week 7 (October 4th): Crisis of Democracy: Interwar Europe and the Rise of Fascism

Readings:

- Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p.41-76.
- Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, p.1-44.
- Benito Mussolini & Giovanni Gentile, "Foundations and Doctrines of Fascism" (ER)
- Carl Schmitt, excerpts from *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* (ER)

Week 8 (October 11th): The Crisis of Capitalism and the "Treason of the Clerks"

Readings:

- Excerpts from Julien Benda, *Treason of the Intellectuals* (ER)
- Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p.77-137.

Review for Mid-Term

Week 9 (October 18th): Mid-Term

Mid-Term Exam – October 18th

Week 10 (October 25th): The Third Reich, Total War, and the Problem of Evil

Readings:

- Mazower, *Dark Continent* p. 138-81, 212-49.
- Max Horkheimer & Theodor Adorno, preface to *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (ER)
- Hannah Arendt, excerpts from *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (ER)

Selection of Final Presentation Groups

Week 11 (November 1st): The Pill of Murti-Bing – the Communist Seduction

Readings:

- Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p.250-85.
- Albert Camus, excerpts from *The Rebel* (ER).
- Czeslaw Milosz, excerpts from *The Captive Mind* (ER).

3rd Response Paper – November 1st

Week 12 (November 8th): Dissidents and Democracy

Readings:

- Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p. 286-326, 361-94.
- Vaclav Havel, “The Power of the Powerless” (ER)

Week 13 (November 15th): Presentation Workshops

Readings:

- Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p. 395-403.

Presentation Prospectus Due – November 19th

[Week 14 – no class, Thanksgiving holiday]

Week 15 (November 29th): Presentations

Group Presentations (~25-30 min. each)

Week 16 (December 6th): Conclusions: Educated Citizens and Public Life

Readings

- Edward Said, excerpts from *Representations of the Intellectual* (ER)
- Russell Jacoby, excerpts from *The End of Utopia: Politics and Culture in an Age of Apathy* (ER)

Presentation Summary Papers Due Tue., December 12th