

Modern German History in European Context: A Thematic Approach

In order to understand European history of the twentieth century, a focus on Germany is indispensable and unavoidable. At the heart of Europe, Germany took a radical approach in defining the common meanings of identity and nationality during the first half of the twentieth century. The first part of this “century of the extremes” (Eric Hobsbawm) saw Germany attempt to “Germanize” Europe under a blanket of propaganda and by violence, both brutal and coldly mechanistic. Today we experience a Germany that presents itself as one partner among equals in the European Union. This new identity follows forty years of ideological, social, political, and cultural division between two states – the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany). Reunified Germany now enjoys the political stability, peace and prosperity of a democratic system. Changes in German identity and the meaning of identity within the German context offer fascinating angles from which to approach German history. From these angles one gains a new understanding of Germany’s contradictions, catastrophes, abysses, and moral bankruptcies before and after the Holocaust, and the miraculous reconstruction after enormous casualties and destruction caused by total war between 1939 and 1945.

Within these parameters the course addresses various topics in German and European twentieth century history: different political ideas, systems, and movements, as well as social and cultural developments. We will compare and contrast the German variety of these phenomena with other European varieties. Two major themes are the struggles between democracy and dictatorship, and capitalism and communism, which play out through the twentieth century. The course will connect these essentially ideological struggles to the two World Wars and the ensuing “Cold War”, to memories of trauma, to the history of every-day life, pop culture and gender, and to the experience of youth and immigrants in Germany. Through analyses of the connections and distinctions between all these aspects, the course will provide participants with a better understanding of German society today.

Course requirements:

- (1) Regular attendance: 10 %
- (2) Discussion of mandatory texts and class participation: 10 %
- (3) 2 short presentations (5-10 min.): 10 %
- (4) 2 field reports on Berlin museums (2-3 pages each): 10 %
- (5) Midterm exam: 15 %
- (6) Final exam: 15 %
- (7) Term paper (3,000 words): 30 %

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and falsifying identity, and will not be tolerated. See also the Academic Regulations of the program.

Required reading:

Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, New York: Vintage Books 2000. A reader with photocopied material will also be made available.

SCHEDULE:

Session 1) Introduction: Twentieth-Century Germany in European Context

Session 2) War and Revolution – Struggles of building a Democracy in Germany (1918-1923)

Mandatory reading:

Mark Mazower, *The Deserted Temple: Democracy's Rise and Fall* (Chapter 1, pp. 3-40);

Konrad H. Jarausch/ Michael Geyer, *The Totalitarian Temptation: Ordinary Germans, Dictatorship, and Democracy*, in: idem, *Shattered Past: Reconstructing German Histories*, Princeton University Press 2003, pp. 149 - 172.

Voluntary reading:

John Horne, *War and conflict in contemporary European history, 1914-2000*, in: Konrad H. Jarausch/ Thomas Lindenberger, *Conflicted Memories: Europeanizing Contemporary Histories*, Berghahn Books 2007, pp. 81-95.

Session 3) The Weimar Republic: The Golden Age and the Rise of Hitler (1924-1932)

Mandatory reading:

Mark Mazower, *Empires, Nations und Minorities* (Chapter 2, pp. 41-75.)

Jochen Oltmer, 'To Live as German Among Germans' Immigration and Integration of 'Ethnic Germans' in the German Empire and the Weimar Republic, in Leo Lucassen/ David Feldmann & idem (eds.), *Paths of Integration. Migration in Western Europe (1880-2004)*, pp. 98-115.

Voluntary reading:

Uta Poiger, *Imperialism as a Paradigm for Modern German History*, in: Frank Biess, Mark Roseman & Hanna Schissler (eds.), *Conflict, Catastrophe and Continuity: Essays on Modern German History*, Berghahn Books 2007, pp. 177-199.

Session 4) The Third Reich: The Road to the Catastrophe of the Century (1933-1939).

Mandatory reading:

Mark Mazower, *The Crisis of Capitalism* (Chapter 4, pp. 104-137.)

Ian Kershaw, *Hitler and the Nazi dictatorship*, in: Mary Fulbrook (ed.), *German History since 1800*, Hodder Arnold 1997, pp. 318-338.

Voluntary reading:

Kiran Patel, *In Search of a Second Historicization: National Socialism in a Transnational Perspective*, in: *Conflicted Memories*, pp. 96-119.

Session 5) The European Catastrophe. World War II and the Genocide on Europe's Jews (1939-1945)

Mandatory reading:

Mark Mazower, *Hitler's New Order, 1938-1945* (Chapter 5, pp. 138-181.)

Nicholas Stargardt, *The Holocaust*, in *German History since 1800*, pp. 339-360.

Voluntary reading:

Mark Roseman, Beyond Conviction? Perpetrator, Ideas, and Action in the Holocaust in Historiographical Perspective, in: *Conflict, Catastrophe and Continuity*, pp. 83-103.

Session 6) Midterm exam

Session 7) Aftermath: Post-War Hardship in Germany and New Political Conflicts in Europe (1945-1948)

Mandatory reading:

Mark Mazower, A Brutal Peace (Chapter 7, pp. 212-249.)

G. Daniel Cohen, Remembering Post-War Displaced Persons: From Omission to Resurrection, in: Mareike König & Rainer Ohliger (eds.) *Enlarging European Memory. Movements in Historical Perspective*, Jan Thorbecke Verlag 2006, pp. 87-98.

Elizabeth Heineman, The Hour of the Woman: Memories of Germany's "Crisis Years" and West German National Identity, in: Hanna Schissler (ed.), *The Miracle Years, A Cultural History of West Germany*, Princeton University Press 2001, pp. 21-56.

Voluntary reading:

Henry Rousso, History of Memory, Politics of the Past: What for? In: *Conflicted Memories*, pp. 23-36.

Session 8) European and German Division: The East under Communist Rule (1949-1961)

Mandatory reading:

Mark Mazower, Building People's State (Chapter 8, pp. 250-285.)

Jochen Laufer, From Dismantling to Currency Reform: External Origins of the Dictatorship, 1943-1948, in: Konrad H. Jarausch (ed.), *Dictatorship as Experience. Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR*, Berghan Books 1999, pp. 73-90.

Thomas Lindenberger, Creating Socialist Governance: The Case of the Deutsche Volkspolizei, *ib.*, pp. 125-142.

Voluntary reading:

Christoph Kleßmann, Rethinking the Second German Dictatorship, *ib.*, pp. 363-372.

Session 9) Towards Democracy: The West German U-Turn (1949-1961)

Mandatory reading:

Mark Mazower, Democracy Transformed, Western Europe, 1950-1975 (Chapter 9, pp. 286-326.)

Frank Biess, Survivor of Totalitarianism: Returning POWs and the Reconstruction of Masculine Citizenship in West-Germany, 1945-1955, in: *The Miracle Years*, pp. 57-82.

Robert G. Moeller, Fighting to Win the Peace: 08/15 and West German Memories of Second World War, in: *Conflict, Catastrophe and Continuity*, pp. 318-339.

Voluntary reading:

Jürgen Kocka, The difficult rise of a civil society: societal history of modern Germany, in: *German History since 1800*, pp. 493-511.

Session 10) The End of the Post-War Period: Change and Conflict in West Germany (1961-1989)

Mandatory reading:

Rosemary Wakeman, European Mass Culture in the Media Age, in: idem (ed.), *Themes in Modern European History since 1945*, Routledge 2003, pp. 142-166.

Arnold Sywottek, From Starvation to Excess? Trends in Consumer Society from the 1940s to the 1970s, in: *Miracle Years*, pp. 341-358.

Kaspar Maase, Establishing Cultural Democracy: Youth, “Americanization,” and the Irresistible Rise of Popular Culture, *Miracle Years*, pp. 428-458;

Voluntary Reading:

Mary Nolan, Americanization as a Paradigm of German History, in: *Conflict, Catastrophe and Continuity*, pp. 200-218.

Session 11) The Demise of Communism in Europe and the Heritage of the GDR (1961-1989)

Mandatory reading:

Mark Mazower, Sharks and Dolphins: The Collapse of Communism (Chapter 11. pp. 361-394.)

Detlef Pollack, Modernization and Modernization Blockages in GDR Society, in: *Dictatorship as Experience*, pp. 27-46.

Dorothee Wierling, The Hitler Youth Generation in the GDR: Insecurities, Ambitions and Dilemmas, in: *ib.*, pp. 307-324.

Voluntary Reading:

Konrad H. Jarausch/ Michael Geyer, The Collapse of the Counternarrative: Coping with the Remains of Socialism, in: *Shattered Past*, pp. 61 - 84.

Session 12) Migration and citizenship: An Old Issue in New Context

Mandatory reading:

Jean-Jacques Jordi, The dismantling of the European colonial empires and its impact on Europe, in: *Themes in Modern European History since 1945*, pp. 40-58.

Konrad H. Jarausch/ Michael Geyer, Unsettling German Society: Mobility and Migration, in: *Shattered Past*, pp. 197-220.

Jan Motte and Rainer Ohliger, Men and Woman With (out) History “Lieux de Mémoire” in Germany’s Immigration Society, in: *Enlarging European Memory*, pp. 147-160.

Voluntary reading:

Karen Schönwalder, Integration from Below? Migration and European Contemporary History, in: *Conflicted Memories*, pp. 154-163.

Session 13) Final Exam