

History 214
War, Dictatorship & Democracy: Europe, 1914-2000
Spring, 2018 (CRN 32928)
John Abbott, Instructor
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Office Hours: 11-11:50am M/W/F (or by appt.)

Room 1015, University Hall

Teaching Assistant: Josh Bergeron (jberge24@uic.edu)

“If I had to sum up the twentieth century, I would say that it raised the greatest hopes ever conceived by humanity, and destroyed all illusions and ideals.” – Yehudi Menuhin

“History is made by people who have no idea what will happen next.” – Anonymous

Course Description

History 214 tracks European developments from the First World War through the conclusion of World War II, and considers the worlds undone and remade by these epochal conflicts. Historians sometimes refer to the traumatic years from 1914-45 as Europe’s “Second Thirty Years War,” a phrase that underscores the continuities between the two World Wars, as well as the tumultuous times between. Yet alongside their awful catastrophes, these years also saw remarkable innovation and departure in European culture, politics and social relations, and our approach will emphasize this bracing modernity alongside the era’s iconic disasters and atrocities. At semester’s end, we will briefly survey European developments after 1945 – the remaking and resettling of postwar Europe, the dynamics of conflict between East and West, and the forging of new European relations in the shadows of Cold War.

Assigned Readings

Ian Kershaw, *To Hell and Back: Europe 1914-1949* (Viking, 2015)

Henry Turner, *Hitler’s Thirty Days to Power* (Basic Books, 1997)

Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon* (any edition)

Documentary Readers (several devoted to World War I, another covering class materials from Week Five through Fifteen), both available at Blackboard, with some additional readings posted on Blackboard (see schedule below)

Class Requirements and Grading

- a) Two exams, together worth 50 percent of your grade
- b) Two essays (ca. five pp.), one devoted to World War I Document readings, the other to Koestler’s *Darkness at Noon*, each worth 15 percent of your grade (30% altogether)
- c) Participation in class discussions, online Discussion Boards, quizzes and classroom attendance, altogether worth 20 percent of your final grade

Course Policies & Ethics

a) This course is designed to promote classroom discussion and the fullest exchange of views. Our class size and the difficult, sometimes contentious, nature of course materials require we show one another the utmost respect and consideration, so as to ensure the highest level of classroom interaction and instruction. All of us (instructor included) are expected to make these standards standard operating procedure in Hist 214.

b) *No phones* out during class (not negotiable). In those cases where students use laptops for purposes unrelated to class, they will be asked (once only) to put these away.

c) *Make-up exams* will be allowed only when you can produce a valid (written) excuse.

d) *Incompletes* will only be considered in cases where the student has completed all the work up to the final exam, but cannot take the final for a valid reason.

e) *Plagiarism* in any form will be dealt with harshly. Recycling papers from the internet or elsewhere, copying other students' work, or cutting-and-pasting from other sources will be punished to the fullest extent of university policy. Count on this.

f) *Classroom citizenship*. Classroom behavior is one of many factors determining your final participation grade. Showing up prepared, answering or asking questions, taking notes and paying attention – these will be appreciated and duly noted. On the other side of the ledger: consistently showing up late, talking during class, using laptops for purposes other than note-taking and other disruptive behavior will also be duly noted. A special category in hell is reserved for those students who come to class, sign the attendance sheet, and then walk out. You really don't want to call that kind of attention to yourself.

g) *Religious holidays*. In those instances when classroom schedules conflict with religious holidays, students should provide us advance notification of their absence. We will in turn make every reasonable effort to honor these requests and make necessary accommodations.

h) *Disability accommodations*. We are committed to working with the Disability Resource Center in ensuring a barrier-free environment to all students at UIC. Please let us know as early as possible in the semester as to anticipated accommodations.

i) *Know your rights*. UIC is devoted to the principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. Freedom from discrimination for both students and employees is central to our academic mission. Students are encouraged to study UIC's policies and procedures pertaining to these issues, accessible at the web pages of the Office of Access and Equity (go to <http://oae.uic.edu/>).

Weekly Schedule

M/W/F, 1:00-1:50pm, Rm 208 Burnham Hall

Course Schedule

Week One: On the Eve of War

- M *No Class* (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
- W Class Introductory (course mechanics, themes)
- F Europe in 1914. Readings: Kershaw, pp. 1-23; Keynes, *Economic Consequences of the Peace* (excerpts), in *Gathering Storm/To Arms!* Documentary Reader (DR) at Blackboard

Week Two: World War I

- M Paths to War. Kershaw, 23-43; Angell, *The Great Illusion* (see *Gathering Storm* DR)
- W Causes & culpability. Kershaw, 23-43 (again); July Crisis Chronology, Blackboard. ***First Discussion Board entries due***
- F War enthusiasm and early fighting. Kershaw, 44-62; *To Arms!* DR at Blackboard

Week Three: Military Command and Social Control

- M The Western Front. Western Front DR at Blackboard
- W Eastern & Southern Fronts. Eastern Front DR at Blackboard
- F Hating the Enemy. Kershaw, 62-75; *War without Mercy* DR at Blackboard

Week Four: Representations

- M Home Fronts: labor, gender, family. Kershaw, 76-79; *Homefronts and the Food Question* DR at Blackboard
- W A New Role for Women? *Women and the War* DR at Blackboard
- F Dissent, resistance, mutiny. Materials on Blackboard

Week Five: Revolt and Revolution

- M Revolutionary Russia. Kershaw, 79-83; Lenin's April Theses (DR II, p. 2)
- W Rebellion in Britain's backyard: Ireland 1916-23 (DR II, p. 6)
- F Germany's collapse. Kershaw, 83-92; Hindenburg reading (DR II, p. 7); ***First essays due***

Week Six: "A laboratory atop a vast graveyard"

- M A Victors' Peace. Kershaw, 93-121; Wilson, Clemenceau readings in DR II, p. 8
- W Memory, trauma, legacies. Kershaw, 94-102. ***Second Discussion Board entries due***
- F New States in Eastern Europe. Kershaw, 121-34

Week Seven: Modernity, Brutality and Speed

- M **First exam**
- W Italian Fascism. Kershaw, 134-48; Mussolini reading in DR II, p. 12
- F A contested modernity. Kershaw, 149-60; 165-78; additional reading on Blackboard

Week Eight: Interwar economies & the Great Depression

- M An imbalanced world: economics and politics in the 1920s. Kershaw, 178-96
- W Great Depression. Kershaw, 197-208; Orwell, *Wigan Pier* excerpts in DR II, p. 14
- F Polarization and policy. Kershaw, 216-46. ***Third Discussion Board entries due***

Week Nine: Hitler, the NSDAP and Germany

- M Germans and Nazis. Kershaw, 208-16; Goebbels readings in DR II, p. 18
- W Hitler, Contingency & History. Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days*, 1-108
- F Man of Destiny? Turner, 109-83; *Quiz on Turner*

Week Ten: Turning Germans into Nazis

- M The Nazi Consolidation of Power. Hitler, Radio Address & Bonhoeffer, "On Stupidity" in DR II, pp. 21-26; Kershaw, 283-90
- W Movie: *Hitlerjunge Quex* (1933). Supplementary materials at Blackboard
- F *Hitlerjunge Quex*, cont. *Fourth Discussion Board entries due*

Week Eleven: Spring Break

(Note: this would be an excellent time to read Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*)

Week Twelve: Soviet Dreams and Realities

- M The Stalin Revolution. Kershaw, 160-65; 265-74; Lenin, Stalin excerpts in DR II, 26-29
- W Bolshevism "old" and "new." Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*
- F *Darkness at Noon*, continued. *Short quiz*

Week Thirteen: Towards the Cataclysm

- M Rehabilitating War. Kershaw, 247-60; 295-302
- W Comparing Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany & the Soviet Union. Kershaw, 260-65; 274-82; 283-90 (again); 290-94
- F The Spanish Civil War. Kershaw, 238-41; 303-15; *Darkness at Noon papers due*

Week Fourteen: Once again War

- M Hitler's Gambles. Kershaw, 316-34; Hossbach Memorandum in DR II, pp. 29-34
- W From "Appeasement" to Blitzkrieg War. Kershaw, 335-45; Hitler's speech to generals (August 1939) in DR II, pp. 34-38
- F Triumph in the West. Kershaw, 346-73. Barone & Bloch accounts in DR II, 39-45

Week Fifteen: The German Imperium

- M Turning points: the Battle of Britain. Churchill readings in DR II, pp. 45-49. *Fifth Discussion Board entries due*
- W Striking East. Kershaw, 373-84. Graebe reading (Einsatzgruppen) in DR II, pp. 50-52
- F Nazi Occupied Europe. Kershaw, 384-407. Reichenau Order ("Conduct of Troops in Eastern Territories") in DR II, pp. 52-54

Week Sixteen: "This war is not like other wars"

- M The Holocaust. Kershaw, *passim*. "Holy Laws of Blood" reading in DR II, pp. 54-57
- W Victory and Vengeance. Kershaw, 470-522
- F *Class summary and review*. Arendt on totalitarianism excerpts, DR II, p. 58

Final Exam: May 7 (Monday), 1-3pm