History 311: Europe in the Nuclear Age, 1945 to the Present

This course examines the history of Western and Eastern Europe since World War II with special attention to Europe’s transition from a “warfare” to a “welfare” state as it passed through the major turning points of 1945, 1968, and 1989. Our topics will include the Cold War as a force for domestic as well as international political transformation; the nature of “everyday socialism” in the Soviet bloc; the “American challenge” and the power of New Left ideas in the 1960s; the Prague Spring, “Ostpolitik,” and “Velvet revolutions” in Eastern Europe; and the pressures of youth, class, gender, ethnic, and racial politics in both East and West.

Writing assignments will include an oral history project (based on a personal interview), drawn from events of the Cold War era including the social conflicts of the 1960s; and a project on press coverage of a more recent event, from the fall of the Berlin Wall to the rise of the new right in Europe today. There will also be short reports or quizzes on our reading assignments and a take-home final exam.

Book List (available for purchase in the bookstore):

TEXT: William I. Hitchcock, *The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent, 1945 to the Present*
Laurence Wylie, *Village in the Vaucluse*, 3rd edition
Günter Grass, *Local Anaesthetic* (a novel)
Tina Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land: Facing Europe’s Ghosts After Communism*

Additional Readings (online reserve):

A. Fazekas, ed./illus., *Jokes of the (Not So) Humorous Struggle Against Communism in Hungary* (selections)
Barbara Einhorn, *Cinderella Goes to Market: Citizenship, Gender and Women’s Movements in East Central Europe*, ch. 1 (“The ‘woman question’: The legacy of state socialism”) and ch. 6 (“An allergy to feminism: Women’s movements before and after 1989”)
Paul Hockenos, *Free to Hate: The Rise of the Right in Post-Communist Eastern Europe*, Introduction and ch. 8 (“Anti-semitism without Jews”)

A selection of short (1- to 3-page) texts or documents for in-class analysis and discussion will also be made available in hard copy or on our Blackboard site.

Course Outline

I. The Postwar Era: Foundations of a New Society?

Jan. 10 Introduction to contemporary Europe
Jan. 12  From hot war to cold war  
Jan. 17  The Cold War and domestic politics  
Jan. 19  Origins of the Welfare State: Britain and Scandinavia  
Jan. 24  France: problems of modernization  
Jan. 26  Discussion: *Village in the Vaucluse*  
Jan. 31  Germany and Italy: “economic miracle” and political reconstruction  
Feb. 2  Europe and the world, I: decolonization and federalism  
Feb. 7  Stalinism and the Soviet bloc  
Feb. 9  “Everyday socialism”: communism in power  
Feb. 14  Europe and the world, II: the American challenge  
Feb. 16  Culture and society: origins of the “New Left”  
Feb. 21  Youth, class, and politics in 1968  
Feb. 23  Discussion: *Local Anaesthetic*  
Feb. 28  Eastern Europe: toward the “Prague Spring”  
Mar. 2  **Project I:** “Oral history and memory”  
Mar. 7, 9  *NO CLASS -- SPRING BREAK*  
Mar. 14  Europe and the world, III: Ostpolitik and detente  
Mar. 16  From affluence to austerity: the decline of the welfare state?  
Mar. 21  The New Russia: Gorbachev and after  
Mar. 23  Discussion: *Armageddon Averted*  
Mar. 28  “Velvet revolutions” in Eastern Europe  
Mar. 30  German reunification: domestic and international perspectives  
Apr. 4  Discussion: *The Haunted Land*  
Apr. 6  Women and society (East and West)  
Apr. 11  Identity and ethnicity (East and West)  
Apr. 13  **Project II** first draft due (plus in-class oral reports)  
Apr. 18  Europe today  
Apr. 20  Concluding class / exam review  

**II. Europe in the Sixties: Affluence and Dissent**

Feb. 14  Europe and the world, II: the American challenge  
Feb. 16  Culture and society: origins of the “New Left”  
Feb. 21  Youth, class, and politics in 1968  
Feb. 23  Discussion: *Local Anaesthetic*  
Feb. 28  Eastern Europe: toward the “Prague Spring”  
Mar. 2  **Project I:** “Oral history and memory”  
(plus oral reports in class)  
Mar. 14  Europe and the world, III: Ostpolitik and detente  
Mar. 16  From affluence to austerity: the decline of the welfare state?  
Mar. 21  The New Russia: Gorbachev and after  
Mar. 23  Discussion: *Armageddon Averted*  
Mar. 28  “Velvet revolutions” in Eastern Europe  
Mar. 30  German reunification: domestic and international perspectives  
Apr. 4  Discussion: *The Haunted Land*  
Apr. 6  Women and society (East and West)  
Apr. 11  Identity and ethnicity (East and West)  
Apr. 13  **Project II** first draft due (plus in-class oral reports)  

**III. European Revolutions**

Mar. 21  The New Russia: Gorbachev and after  
Mar. 23  Discussion: *Armageddon Averted*  
Mar. 28  “Velvet revolutions” in Eastern Europe  
Mar. 30  German reunification: domestic and international perspectives  
Apr. 4  Discussion: *The Haunted Land*  
Apr. 6  Women and society (East and West)  
Apr. 11  Identity and ethnicity (East and West)  
Apr. 13  **Project II** first draft due (plus in-class oral reports)  

**May 3**  **TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM** due with Project II (by 3:00 p.m.)
Course Responsibilities and Assignments

1. Attendance: Regular attendance is expected. Students will sign in each day to indicate their presence. For each absence beyond the first one, a brief essay on the readings for that class day will be required. These essays will NOT count toward the other writing requirements for the course.

2. Brief reports: To help you prepare the reading assignments for discussion, you are to write a two- to three-page comment on each of the articles or chapters assigned (other than the Hitchcock textbook or other book-length readings). These reports will be due in class the day of the discussion of each reading assignment, not after the fact. Your report should raise a question, make an observation, or link the reading to other issues raised by the class or by current events: i.e., serve as the basis for your participation in class discussion. These reports will not be formally graded (other than with checks, plusses, or minuses) but will factor into your grade if they are exceptionally strong, exceptionally weak, or late or missing. Late submissions will be penalized except in case of illness or other emergency for which adequate evidence will be required.

3. Quizzes: For the book-length reading assignments (other than the Hitchcock textbook), you should expect a brief quiz, of the true-false variety, on the factual content of the reading. The quiz questions, intended simply to ensure your completion of the reading assignment, will be easily answered by all who have done the reading -- but others will proceed at their own risk.... These quizzes will also ensure your attendance in class the day of the discussion; no make-up quizzes will be offered, but your lowest single quiz score (including zero for absence if applicable) will be omitted from your grade. Only in exceptional cases of illness or emergency will further absences on quiz days be excused.

4. Special Project I: Oral History and Memory. To investigate the theme of “history and memory,” with oral history as your source material, you are to interview an older friend or relative about an event in his or her memory drawn from the Cold War years or the social conflicts of the 1960s. Note that “memories” need not be from direct personal experience (for persons too young to have lived through these events directly) but could include perceptions drawn from your interviewee’s education, from the public media (books or films), etc.

Your essay, in 5-6 pages, should summarize the memories reported and analyze them from the perspective of a historian using this account as a documentary “source.” How was the reported experience “remembered” and/or distorted in memory? For example, compare/contrast the account to those presented in our assigned readings on a similar topic. How do you account for any deviations from “the facts”? What special traits of the individual (age, gender, social position, etc.) may have shaped his/her experience and memories of the events? What changes in the person’s later life or experience may have shaped the ways the prior events were remembered or interpreted? Be sure to pay attention to the individual’s tone, emotions, and vocabulary in reporting the events. Students will also present brief oral reports to the class on the day that the papers are due (March 1).

5. Special Project II: Post-Communism and the Press. To examine recent history in Western or Eastern Europe (since 1989), and the way it was reported in the media, you are to find and analyze a newspaper or magazine article (or short series of articles), contemporary to the events reported, on a topic drawn from the post-Cold War years, from the fall of the Berlin Wall to the rise of the new right in Europe today. Consider using sources published outside the United States, in English or another language as appropriate. Include a photocopy or pring-out of the published article(s), with complete bibliographical citation(s), along with your analysis. (Description continued on next page.)
Your essay, in 5-6 pages, should summarize the events reported, provide background and context, and explain the significance of the events. Comment also on the analysis of the events provided in the published report. (Is the interpretation open to debate? Do you agree with the author’s views? How does it compare or contrast to accounts in our other class readings?) How do you account for any deviation from “the facts”? What special characteristics of the publication, of the author (if known), or of the context in which the report was written might explain a particular viewpoint? Students will also present brief oral reports to the class on the day that the first draft (but NOT a “rough draft”!) of the project is due (April 13).

Note that a written Project Statement, identifying the title and source of the press report selected, is due in advance of this project draft (on March 30). The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that your choice of article is appropriate and your project is on the right track, while there is still time to make any necessary changes in your selection. Then, with my feedback on the first draft, a final draft of your project is due with the take-home final exam, on May 3. (Please turn in BOTH drafts of your papers.) Note that revisions should include more than mere cosmetic editing; some rethinking or reorganization of your material will be expected so as to make the final draft as thoughtful and articulate as possible.

6. **Final exam:** There will be a take-home final exam, of the essay variety, due on the exam date scheduled by the Registrar: May 3, by 3:00 p.m. The final draft of your press project is due at the same time. The rest of the exam will incorporate all readings and lecture materials covered in the class. It is your responsibility to make up any missed class work so that you will be prepared for the final exam. Further information on the exam format (and on all other assignments) will be provided as we get closer to the applicable date(s).

7. **Grading:** The grading will be based approximately as follows: 50%, final exam (with Project II); 25%, Project I; and 25%, quizzes, reading responses, and discussion. The latter factor may prove especially significant in case of borderline grades.

Please note that grammar and composition will figure into the grading of all assignments. Be sure to proofread your work before turning it in; use a spell checker; and use proper means of quoting and crediting your sources (where appropriate) to avoid any suspicions of plagiarism. *The Honor Code will apply to all assignments and exams.* Students are also urged to consult the Writing Center (Callaway N212) and the grammar resources on its webpage ([www.writingcenter.emory.edu](http://www.writingcenter.emory.edu)) for help in improving their writing. *Even good writers can become better writers with the Writing Center’s help.*

**Office hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30 to 2:15 p.m., or by appointment.

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