

**DRAFT**

History 9417A/B

## Europe since the Second World War

### Course Description:

The assigned texts were selected to introduce students to a range of subjects and historical methods in the larger field of post-1945 European history. No claim is made to comprehensiveness of coverage. The readings draw from a range of sub-specialties within history as well as from works by political scientists, sociologists, lawyers, journalists, and the makers of documentary films. History does not belong only to the historical profession, or to the academy, especially when the subject is such a recent period. The course is designed to stimulate reflection regarding students' own historical agendas and the approaches they propose to take in their own work.

The class begins with an examination of policies of inclusion and exclusion of immigrants and members of indigenous minorities. The post-war era was characterized by large-scale movements of population, in part as a result of policies of ethnic cleansing and forced labor during and after the Second World War, and later based on economic globalization and laws and treaties that made freedom of movement across national boundaries possible. This section begins with a class that focuses on the ways in which dramatic changes in the British Empire influenced British citizenship and immigration policies in the period between 1945 and 1970; maintenance of a common British citizenship was one method initially employed to maintain the bonds of empire, but for a range of reasons this approach was largely abandoned in the 1960s. The second class in this section of the course focuses on relations between Polish Jews and other Poles after the Second World War. That many Jewish Poles who returned to Poland from the Soviet Union after 1944 were not welcomed is clear; the exact facts of the case, and their larger meaning, is the subject of an intense historical debate, carried on in both English and Polish.

We next examine accounts of class differences in Europe, with an emphasis on the postwar period. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu argued in an influential study published in 1979 that class position is defined above all by distinctive personalities, dispositions. Bourdieu undertook to delineate the economic logic of class-linked personality traits, and how there were expressed in tastes in food, sports, and clothing, distinctive gender relations, and attitudes towards study and work. The second text we will examine, Thomas Piketty's *Capitalism in the Twenty-First Century*, published in 2014, returns the focus to wealth and income. Its innovative character lies in its historical sweep, based on new databanks of information regarding tax returns, and in its comparative approach. Piketty analyzes and seeks to explain how and why inequality of incomes and wealth have varied over the past century, and especially since 1945, in France, Germany, Britain, and the United States.

The third section of the course examines the influence of American culture on European states, with a special focus on West Germany. The assigned materials describe how the presence of American soldiers and the influence of American goods and cultural products and practices challenged existing cultural patterns and social hierarchies.

The fourth section of the class focuses on the last years of the Soviet Union and the methods employed by Vladimir Putin to rise to power and then rule Russia. The first class in this section is based on selections from the oral histories collected by Svetlana Alexievich regarding the impact on Soviet society of the meltdown at the nuclear reactor at Chernobyl in April 1986 and, in a separate book, how Russians experienced the 1990s and the first decade of the twentieth century. Alexievich, who won a Nobel Prize for her work, interviewed hundreds of those affected by these events to create a portrait of Soviet society at the moment of its dissolution. Historians increasingly rely on evidence of this kind to go beyond the limits of officially created documents and other more traditional sources. In the next week of this section the class will examine several critical accounts of Putin's regime.

In a fifth section the course examines the writings of two leading interpreters of the relationship - or potential relationship - between communities of Muslims and the societies and governments of Europe, Tariq Ramadan and Ayaan Hirsi Ali.

Students in the class will have the chance to propose a further subject or subjects for the final weeks of the course.

This class cannot provide an overview of post-1945 European history in addition to examining at some depth historical writings that focus on particular themes. Students who have not studied this period in history are urged to read at least parts of Tony Judt's *Postwar. A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005). Please note that the first class will start with a discussion of three assigned texts. Please read these texts before the class.

#### Assignments and Evaluation:

Two to three page responses to questions regarding the assigned readings, due in the instructors mailbox or sent to the instructor as an attachment (in Word) to an email by 1:00 pm on the day before each class. The instructor will propose questions to consider in the response papers.

10%

Participation in class discussions

20%

Presentation to the class:

20%

Explanation of the presentation: Students will be asked to make one class

presentation based on assigned readings, on the day the readings are to be discussed. Students will read drafts of their presentations to me on the Monday before the class during which they are to be made. I will offer suggestions for improvement. Students will be graded entirely on the content of the final presentations, which should last for twenty to twenty-five minutes.

Two eight to ten page essays on the assigned materials (each 25% of the course grade). **The essays are due in class on the day the material is to be discussed. Please write at least one of these essays by the end of week seven of the course.**  
50%

In calculating the grades for the responses to the assigned readings and for participation in class discussion, the instructor will exclude the lowest of the grades in each category. This means that if a student needs to miss one class, this will not be penalized; the grade for this class will be dropped. Further absences will require justification as provided by Western regulations.

Please note that I have listed the readings for each week in the order in which I suggest you read them.

Starred materials can be purchased in the bookstore.

## Subjects

September 12      Inclusion and Exclusion (1): The End of Empire, Citizenship Policies, and Immigration to Great Britain, 1945-1970

Zig Layton-Henry, *The Politics of Race in Britain* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), xiii-xvi, 10-74.

Winston James, "The Black Experience in Twentieth Century Britain," in *The Black Experience and the Empire*, Philip Morgan and Sean Hawkins, eds., *The Oxford History of the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 347-86.

Camilla Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1-39, 71-139.

What factors determined the form taken by British citizenship and immigration policies in the period between 1945 and 1970? Why did the British government, under the leadership of both the Labour and Conservative parties, initially continue to support granting the citizens of all Commonwealth nations the status of British subject, including the right to migrate to Great Britain? Why did the consensus in favor of this position break down in the course of the 1950s, and especially after 1960? Why did Enoch

Powell come to oppose this consensus, and how did his position reflect his understanding of the nature of the British Empire, Britain's role in the world after 1945, and what he considered the desirable form of the British nation-state?

September 19            Inclusion and Exclusion (2): Polish Jews and other Poles, 1944-1947

\*Jan Gross, *Fear. Anti-Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz. An Essay in Historical Interpretation* (New York: Random House, 2006).

Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, *After the Holocaust. Polish-Jewish Conflict in the Wake of World War II* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2003), 1-5, 53-62, 103-15, 131-39, 187-99.

Michael Steinlauf, *Bondage to the Dead. Poland and the Memory of the Holocaust* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997), preface, 1-61.

Anna Cichopek-Gajraj, *Beyond Violence. Jewish Survivors in Poland and Slovakia, 1944-48* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1-10, 130-45, 179-87, 231-37.

All four authors examine the violence against Polish Jews in Poland in 1945 and 1946, violence that led most of the Jews who had returned to Poland after the defeat of Germany to leave. Are there any facts or interpretations on which the authors agree? What are the most significant differences in the interpretations of these events? Consider the following factors: the role of long-held anti-Semitic sentiments in Polish society; the influence of the German example in making these sentiments even more extreme and depraved, and more generally the brutal experience of German rule; the active part played by some Jews and former Jews in the Communist administration in those parts of Poland occupied by the Soviet Union between 1939 and 1941, and after 1944 in all of Poland; the civil war that took place between supporters and opponents of the new Communist regime in 1945 and 1946, and the general lawlessness of the period; the murder of much of the Polish elite by Nazi Germany, which deprived the country of a significant part of its spiritual leadership; conflicts over property rights created by the return of Polish Jews whose property had been appropriated by non-Jewish Poles; the positions taken regarding the violence by leaders of the Catholic Church in Poland.

September 26            Inequality (1): The influence of class, especially in postwar France

Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Harvard University Press, 1991), 12-31 (introduction by John B. Thompson)

Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Harvard University Press, 1996), 99-115, 126-131.

What are the distinctive characteristics of the disposition, or habitus, as Bourdieu uses

the term? What qualities of the habitus interest Bourdieu; what are some of the most significant class-linked characteristics? To what extent does the habitus express an economic logic? Why is the habitus relevant to economic success, that is, perpetuate class distinctions? What are the problems with traditional measures of class, according to Bourdieu? What are the different forms taken by capital, in Bourdieu's account? How does one form of capital become transformed into another?

October 3                    Inequality (2): The influence of class, especially in postwar France

Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 142-43, 169-219.

Michèle Lamont, *Money, Morals, and Manners. The Culture of the French and American Upper Middle Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), selections.

How does Bourdieu explain what he sees as class-based differences in tastes for food, clothing, and sports? How does he relate these different tastes, in turn, to different ideals of the body and to class-based conceptions of gender-roles? What roles do distinctions in taste play in the social world Bourdieu describes?

Film: Selections from the *Seven Up* series.

October 10    FALL READING WEEK - NO CLASSES

October 17:                Inequality (3): Changing economic bases of class in postwar Europe

\*Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 1-30, 113-50, 164-94, 199-223, 237-376, 493-514.

Selections from critiques of Piketty, to be determined.

Piketty argues that as long as return on capital ( $r$ ) exceeds the growth rate of the entire economy ( $g$ ) inequality of wealth will grow, as long as: 1) more of the return from capital is reinvested than the annual growth rate of the economy, 2) governments do not intervene in economies (for example, through income and estate taxes) to reduce inequality. What is the rationale behind this claim? Why was there a deviation from this pattern in the period between the First World War and the 1950s, according to Piketty? What role was played in the growing inequality in the societies on which Piketty focuses by income inequalities? How does Piketty seek to explain this rise in income inequality? (see pages 506-7) How does Piketty respond to claims that rising income inequality is a

product of the increasingly specialized skills that managers must possess? What role was played by minimum wage laws in explaining the phenomena that Piketty describes?

October 24                      Europe and the United States: The role of American popular culture in postwar West Germany

Kaspar Maase, "Establishing Cultural Democracy: Youth, 'Americanization,' and the Irresistible Rise of Popular Culture," in *The Miracle Years. A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*, ed. Hanna Schissler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 428-50.

Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins. The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 1-33, 38-43, 74-95, 163-73, 222-35.

Further reading to be determined.

According to Kaspar Maase, what role did disputes over American popular culture play in internal conflicts in the Federal Republic? Why was the fundamental issue, according to Maase, whether those who had been excluded from power were "[legitimately entitled] to democratic participation"? (p. 430) On what kind of evidence does Maase rely to support his argument? To what extent is his article based on Bourdieu's categories? (see especially pages 442-43) Does Maase's larger argument tend to support or undermine Bourdieu's claims regarding the role of cultural capital in sustaining social hierarchies?

Maria Höhn's book also examines the efforts of German conservatives, generally members of traditional elites, to repress the influence of American models during the 1950s. While Maase focuses on the Halbstarken ("toughs") and their tastes in music and dress, Höhn examines the influences of interactions between ordinary Germans and the American military. How does this difference in focus influence the conclusions that Höhn draws regarding the effects of American culture on West Germany? Was the adoption of American styles a matter of creating a "legitimate entitlement to democratic participation," as Maase argues?

Film excerpt: selection from Edgar Reitz's *Heimat*.

October 31                      The end of the Soviet Union and the Rise of Vladimir Putin (1): The oral histories of Svetlana Alexievich

\*Svetlana Alexievich, *Voices from Chernobyl. The Oral History of a Nuclear*

*Disaster*, trans. Keith Gessen (New York: Picador, 2006), preface, 1-67, 105-236.

Svetlana Alexievich, *Secondhand Time. The Last of the Soviets*, trans. Bela Shayevich (New York: Random House, 2016), 3-33, 58-63, 74-77, 99-101, 292-96, 337-49, 454-68.

Alexievich records that a Soviet citizen who was affected by the Chernobyl disaster commented that "everybody became who he really was." (p. 109) What did the experience of Chernobyl reveal about Soviet society? What were this society's principal qualities, as reflected in its response to this disaster? Consider the role of memories of the war, attitudes regarding scientific innovation, the forms taken by solidarity and hierarchy, how the government related to the public, and the roles of widespread inebriation, theft, and lying. And how did the experience of Chernobyl change those touched by it?

What are the principal characteristics of post-Soviet society, as the individuals Alexievich interviewed describe it in "Secondhand Time"?

November 7            The End of the Soviet Union and the Rise of Vladimir Putin (2)

\*Masha Gessen, *The Man without a Face. The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin* (New York: Penguin, 2012).

David Satter, *The Less You Know, The Better You Sleep. Russia's Road to Terror and Dictatorship under Yeltsin and Putin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), ix-xiv, 1-29.

Karen Dawisha, *Putin's Kleptocracy. Who Owns Russia?* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014), 273-80, 285-93, 313-25, 340-51.

"The Litvinenko Inquiry. Report into the Death of Alexander Litvinenko," January 2016, Chairman Robert Owen. (<https://www.litvinenkoinquiry.org/.../Litvinenko-Inquiry-Report-web-version.>), 9-10, 13-25, 51-58, 227-44.

What have been Vladimir Putin's principal objectives at the different stages in his career? By what methods has he sought to achieve these objectives? What sources have been available to journalists, historians, and other analysts to determine the answers to these questions? What are the principal obstacles to gaining an accurate understanding of Putin and the regime he dominates?

Film: Putin's Way

November 14            Muslims and European Society (1)

Oussama Cherribi, "The Growing Islamization of Europe," in *Modernizing Islam. Religion in the Public Sphere in the Middle East and Europe* (London: Hurst & Company, 2002), 193-214.

Alison Pargeter, *The New Frontiers of Jihad. Radical Islam in Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), introduction, 1-31.

Tariq Ramadan, *Western Moslems and the Future of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 86-143, 165-99, 214-27.

November 21            Muslims and European Society (2)

Alison Pargeter, *The New Frontiers of Jihad. Radical Islam in Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2008), 64-105, 140-65, 187-209.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *Infidel* (New York: Free Press, 2007), 183-311.

Youtube recording of a debate between Tariq Ramadan and Ayaan Hirsi Ali:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJQ7tEoDhao>

November 28            Open

December 5            Open