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HSTR 325.01: European Cultural and Intellectual History from 1900 to World War II

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Fall 2015

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Syllabus for European Cultural and Intellectual History from 1900 to World War II
(HSTR 325))

Objectives of the Course

Cultural and intellectual history was described by Jacob Burckhardt, one of its greatest practitioners, as a method of unique effectiveness in measuring the creativity and real worth of an epoch. To him the great question of history was why some ages more than others possessed the capacity to produce original thought and art of enduring importance. The course takes its conceptual bearings from Burckhardt's insight.

We have two fundamental objectives in our course: to examine, first, the impact of World War I and, second, the Depression on the crisis of Western values that originated in the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century. To accomplish these objectives we will study the major esthetic, ideological, and intellectual movements of European cultural and intellectual life from 1900 to World War II. In the course examinations and term paper, students are expected to demonstrate powers of historical analysis at the upper-division level of university work.

Required Reading

John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (Harcourt, Brace & Howe)
Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (Harcourt)
André Malraux, *Man's Fate* (Knopf)
Giovanni Gentile, *Origins and Doctrine of Fascism* (Transaction)
Bertolt Brecht, *Three Penny Opera* (A&C Black)
Bertrand Russell, *The Scientific Outlook* (Routledge Classics)
Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New Directions Paperback)
Ignazio Silone, *Bread and Wine* (Signet Classics)
Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics* (S&S)

Mandatory Public Lecture

Students will be required to attend one event in the President's Lecture Series. On Friday, 18 September, Matt Haimovitz will give a lecture/concert in the Music Recital Hall at 8:00 P.M.: "The Changing Face of Classical Music." An internationally acclaimed cellist, Mr. Haimovitz teaches at McGill University's Schulich School of Music. For students unable to attend the presentation, a film of it will be made available on the Reserve Shelf of the Library.

Quizzes, Examinations, and the Term Paper

I will give **three** unannounced quizzes during the semester. Students will write a midterm examination and a final examination. Both examinations will have mainly an essay format, with some short-answer questions. A ten-page term paper, the content of which will be determined by each student in consultation with me, will be due in class on Friday, 6 November. Graduate students who are taking the course for graduate credit must write a twenty-page paper in place of the ten-page undergraduate paper. The term paper assignment gives students the opportunity to learn more about the subject matter of the course and to improve their writing and researching skills. As we progress in the course, students should identify the individuals, books, works of art and music, and theories that most interest them. Once these lists have been narrowed down to three or four topics, students should see me about making their final choices. At that time we can discuss bibliographical matters and other research strategies.

Grading Policy

The scores on the three quizzes will count for 10 percent of the grade. The midterm examination will count for 20 percent, the term paper for 30 percent, and the final examination for 40 percent. I grade students in accordance with their mastery of the course readings and lectures. Late term papers are discounted at the rate of one-third of a grade per day. I consider plagiarism in any form to be the sin against the Holy Ghost.

Lectures and Reading Assignments

Week 1

M	31 August	Introduction: Europe in 1900
W	2 September	The Avant-Garde: Paris (Slide Lecture on Henri Rousseau with musical accompaniment by Erik Satie)
F	4 September	The Avant-Garde: The Vienna of Sigmund Freud

Week 2

M	7 September	Labor Day holiday
W	9 September	World War I
F	11 September	John Maynard Keynes, <i>The Economic Consequences of the Peace</i>

Week 3

M	14 September	World War I and the Lost Generation in Britain
W	16 September	British Memoir Literature of the War
F	18 September	Virginia Woolf, <i>A Room of One's Own</i>
Week 4		
M	21 September	World War I and the Lost Generation in France
W	23 September	The Dada Movement (Slide Lecture)
F	25 September	André Malraux, <i>Man's Fate</i>
Week 5		
M	28 September	World War I and the Lost Generation in Italy
W	30 September	Italian Futurism (Slide Lecture)
F	2 October	Giovanni Gentile, <i>Origins and Doctrine of Fascism</i>
Week 6		
M	5 October	Luigi Pirandello and the Theater of the Absurd (for this lecture, a film of <i>Six Characters in Search of an Author</i> will be shown at 3:10 P.M. in LA 244; for students who cannot attend this showing, the film will be made available on the Reserve Shelf of the Library)
W	7 October	World War I and the Lost Generation in Germany
F	9 October	Käthe Kollwitz (Slide Lecture)
Week 7		

M	12 October	Bertolt Brecht, <i>Three Penny Opera</i> (for this lecture students will view the 1931 George W. Pabst film of the Brecht play, at 3:10 P.M. in LA 244; for students who cannot attend this showing, the film will be made available on the Reserve Shelf of the Library).
W	14 October	Review
F	16 October	Mid-term Examination
Week 8		
M	19 October	The Depression
W	21 October	The Allure of Marxism
F	23 October	Britain in the 1930s
Week 9		
M	26 October	The Crisis of the Liberal Faith in Science: Bertrand Russell, <i>The Scientific Outlook</i>
W	28 October	Aldous Huxley and George Orwell
F	30 October	France in the 1930s (for this lecture, Jean Renoir's <i>Grand Illusion</i> will be shown on Thursday, 29 October at 3:10 P.M. in LA 244; for students who cannot attend this showing, the film will be made available on the Reserve Shelf of the Library)
Week 10		
M	2 November	French Catholic Thought: Jacques Maritain
W	4 November	The Case of Simone Weil
F	6 November	Existentialism: Religious and Secular (term paper due in class this day)
Week 11		

M	9 November	Jean-Paul Sartre, <i>Nausea</i>
W	11 November	Veterans Day holiday
F	13 November	The Young Albert Camus
Week 12		
M	16 November	Italy in the 1930s: The Years of “Consensus
W	18 November	Fascist Culture in the 1930s
F	20 November	Ignazio Silone, <i>Bread and Wine</i>
Week 13		
M	23 November	Germany in the 1930s (for this lecture, Leni Riefenstahl’s <i>The Triumph of the Will</i> will be shown at 3:10 P.M. in LA 244; for students who cannot attend this showing, the film will be made available on the Reserve Shelf in the Library.)
W	25 November	Thanksgiving holiday
F	27 November	Thanksgiving holiday
Week 14		
M	30 November	Nazism and the Intellectuals: Martin Heidegger
W	2 December	Dietrich Bonhoeffer, <i>Ethics</i>
F	4 December	The German Catastrophe
Week 13		
Week 15		
M	7 December	Europe and the Second World War
W	9 December	Conclusions
F	11 December	Review

Final Examination: 8:00-10:00 Thursday, 17 December