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HIST20600: Modern Europe

Benjamin Diehl
CUNY City College

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Modern Europe

HIST20600 – City College of New York
NAC 6/314 | TuTh 5:00p-6:15p | Spring 2023

Professor Benjamin Diehl

-Email: bdiehl@ccny.cuny.edu or bdiehl@gradcenter.cuny.edu

-Office Hours: Tu/Th 4:00p-5:00p or by appointment (via Zoom)

Please note: The instructor reserves the right to modify any of the content below in the event that there is an error or needed change. All changes will be noted by the professor by email and in class. This syllabus is to be considered a binding and followed accordingly.

Course Description

This course surveys the history of Europe from the French Revolution to the present. This covers the traditional periodization of the “modern” era and will focus on the key events, episodes, and transitions that mark this timeframe. Readings, lectures, and discussions will engage with all aspects of European politics and society during this period but will be guided by the central problem of the pursuit of power as the key theme. “Power” in this sense refers not only to the way individuals sought political power in the domestic sphere or territorial control in the international realm, but also, more diffuse notions of power as they appear in daily life, culture, gender relations, race, and social conflict. This focus on power is largely a result of a particular understanding of “modernity” as ultimately an idea that pushed Europeans to develop new ideas about how to best control and order society and the globe. To be modern, in short, meant harnessing the technologies, populations, and institutions of the nation-state to create a more ordered, productive society.

Beginning with the French Revolution, Europeans in the modern era have sought to combine the pursuit of power with the mobilization and participation of mass society, in varying forms. The unleashing of popular sovereignty and the response of the various “isms” of the 19th century (e.g. liberalism, socialism, nationalism) reveal to us the extent to which politics became a question of who should have the power, and how that power ought to be used for the benefit of European societies. Europeans did not only struggle for power in this domestic sense, but also sought to use power abroad and expand the grip of European empire. The modern period, particularly during the “Age of Catastrophe” of the early 20th century, was one marked by warfare that reshaped how violence was conceived. Ultimately, the quest for power led to totalitarian states, the most infamous being Nazi Germany, which sought to control their societies in ways previous unheard of and use extreme forms of violence in doing so. The great cataclysm that was the two world wars destroyed the belief that the use of brute force was the most preferred means of exerting power at home and abroad, and the changes this brought about are evident in the way Europeans conceive and utilize power in today’s world.

Harmonizing with current approaches, this course also seeks to provide a “multi-perspective” overview of Modern Europe, working at different levels of society and engaging with perspectives from larger and smaller European nations. Ultimately, it strives to develop students’ understanding of Europe at large and the changes experienced there over the course of roughly two centuries.



Pathways General Education Learning Outcomes

This course satisfies the World Cultures and Global Issues category of Pathways. As such it will allow students to:

- Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
- Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.
- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring world cultures or global issues, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, economics, ethnic studies, foreign languages (building upon previous language acquisition), geography, history, political science, sociology, and world literature.
- Analyze the historical development of one or more non-U.S. societies.
- Analyze the significance of one or more major movements that have shaped the world's societies

Course Objectives

As a 2000-level History course, this class will aim to provide useful skills for students of history as well as students from other disciplines. It is understood that not all students will be history majors, so the goal will be to develop particular skills and insights that favor any academic discipline or career path. Nonetheless, history majors/minors will find this course to be a useful steppingstone in their undergraduate training. Throughout the course, students will expect to:

- Obtain proficient knowledge in the events, dates, individuals, and themes that make up the course of Modern European history.
- Understand how historians use historical reasoning and argumentation to develop their own interpretation of events.
- Develop their writing skills in a number of mediums, such as short response answers, discussion posts, and essays.
- Engage in and lead one of our group discussions, practicing skills in public speaking and presentation.
- Hone reading skills for both secondary and primary sources.

Texts

This course engages with CCNY's Open Education Resource (OER) initiative, in an effort to cut the costs of textbooks and other materials to students. As such, it uses only sources which are considered zero-cost, and there are no necessary purchases required for this course. The course uses an open-access, Creative Commons textbook, and several other open resources. Links to the materials are provided below in the Course Schedule.

Textbook: Hung, Jochen & Tompkins, Andrew & Ira, Jaroslav & Lesage, Sylvain & Klement, Judit & Hansen, Jan & Simal, Juan. (2023). *The European Experience. A Multi-Perspective History of Modern Europe, 1500–2000*. 10.11647/OBP.0323.

Download here: <https://www.openbookpublishers.com/books/10.11647/obp.0323>



Using the textbook in this course: *The European Experience* is quite different than other history textbooks you may have seen before. Rather than recounting each topic chronologically, the textbook explores various themes which are explained in narratives that run the span of an entire century, sometimes even more. There will be cases when you will be asked to read about topics which are “ahead of time” from our lectures. However, the goal of this textbook is to provide context for the events that are lectured on in class. You will find information in the text that is not covered in class, and vice versa. Therefore, it is very important that you follow along with the textbook reading. For those of you who find memorizing dates and names one of the worst parts about history, then this is the textbook for you! In it, you will learn more about trends and themes which enhance your understanding of the modern world and enrich your exam responses and essay writing.

Course Plan (our “game plan”)

This course is designed to combine two essential elements of college-level curricula and pedagogy: lecture and seminar. In other words, it will be mostly equal parts lecture and group discussion. The course is divided into 13 sections, each covering sections of the textbook and other material. For each section, there will be a lecture and a class session devoted to group discussion. Put differently, on lecture days I will be doing most of the talking, while on discussion days, it’s all on you guys!

Lecture classes will be a familiar format: I will lecture using a set of slides on the material you would otherwise find in the textbook, but with my own emphases and interpretations. Discussion session will run a bit differently: each week, a group of 2-3 students will begin our discussions of the discussion material (readings, videos, etc.) and pose a set of discussion questions. Your instructor will help guide the discussion, but it is the responsibility of the students to move the discussion along and participate accordingly. The quality of the discussion will rely on student participation and the ability of the weekly presenters to stimulate conversation.

Assignments

Exams: There will be three exams for this course, the dates of which are March 2nd, April 4th, and May TBA (your final exam). Each exam will consist of two parts. Fill-in-the-blank questions (part 1) will assess content-based knowledge, which can mostly be taken from lectures (a word-bank will be provided). Short-response questions (part 2) will consist of questions based on the textbook and lecture slides and assess your understanding of content, themes, and the skills of historical reasoning and interpretation.

Essays: Students will write three essays. All essays should be a minimum of three (3) pages and no more than five (5) pages, double-spaced. The essay due dates are listed below on the course schedule. In each essay, students will answer a set of questions dealing with the course materials, with emphasis on the primary source readings from our discussion sessions. We will discuss these essays more in class and specifically what your instructor is looking for. Please see the appendix for the essay rubric.

Weekly discussions and presentations: Lastly, participation in discussion classes is very important for your success in the class. Discussions will focus on primary source material in connection with the



previous lecture. These materials will also be expected to appear in your essays, so it is crucial that you read them. Additionally, each student will be required to present before one discussion session. Students will present alongside or with 1-2 other students. These short 10–15-minute presentations should introduce that week's discussion topics, posing questions that are intended to spark discussion and guide the conversation. Students may use a PowerPoint or present orally. However, students should coordinate with their group members and present together. See appendix for Rubric.

Grade Breakdown

Exams = 35%

Essays = 35%

Discussion Participation: 20%

Discussion Presentation: 10%

Submission/Lateness Policy

All essay submissions must be done through Blackboard using Turnitin. The instructor will provide directions on how to do this. In the case of an emergency, the student may submit an essay in paper form at the beginning of the class session on the date it is due. Otherwise, all essays must be submitted before 2PM (the start of our class) on the date it is due. All late submission will receive a 5-point deduction for each day it is late. No exceptions will be made to deadlines unless the student provides sufficient explanation or proof of a medical emergency.

General Rules/Advice

- DO actively use your email. Checking email is important both so that you stay on top of course announcements and additional materials, and because emailing the instructor (bdiehl@ccny.cuny.edu) is the best way to address any questions or concerns you may have.
- DO take good notes during lectures. Though there will be significant crossover between readings and lectures, there may be particular bits of information/ideas/images that only come up during lectures and could appear on an exam. Slides for the lectures will also be available on Blackboard.
- DO NOT miss a class or an assignment without providing an explanation. I understand emergencies happen and will be fully understanding of any critical situations, but please make sure you are in contact with me so that there are no misunderstandings between us.
- DO NOT make the classroom environment distracting or unenjoyable for others. That includes the instructor, but more importantly, your classmates. Disagreements are bound to occur in a class of this nature but being respectful and civil is vital to fostering a successful academic setting. As for distractions, I am fully understanding that electronic devices are crucial to our lives (and hard to put away), but any real nuisances or disruptions that occur as a result of these will have consequences (i.e., confiscation).



- DO attend class and come prepared to ask questions during lectures or sustain conversation during discussions. The simple act of being present will go a very long way in shaping my vision of you as a student and assisting in my reception of your work.
- DO visit me in office hours. This is a great opportunity to show your participation outside of class, ask any questions you may have, or even get help on writing your discussion posts or presentations.

Academic Integrity

CCNY's policy on academic integrity reads as follows:

Academic integrity is an essential part of the pursuit of truth, and of your education. We are all responsible for maintaining academic integrity at City College – it is the rock on which the value of your degree is built. If you cheat on a test or plagiarize by using someone else's work or ideas, you defeat the purpose of your education. In addition, academic dishonesty is prohibited in the City University of New York, and is punishable by failing grades, suspension and expulsion.”

Plagiarism includes: Using (in other words, stealing) the words or ideas of other writers or students without giving credit to that person. This means using phrases or sentences found in readings and copying websites without putting quotation marks around all the copied material and without citing the source. Therefore, it is important to write in your own words and credit your sources. Any direct quote must be put in quotation marks and footnoted.

In other words: Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will NOT be tolerated. My policy is to give a failing grade to any assignment that has been plagiarized. In addition, I am required by College policy to submit a report of suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. This report becomes part of your permanent file.

For further discussion of plagiarism and clarification of its parameters, see the official CUNY Policies: <http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-resources/academic-integrity-policy/>

Students with Disabilities Statement, Accommodations:

In compliance with CCNY policy and equal access laws, appropriate academic accommodations are offered by the AccessAbility Center. Students registered with this office and entitled to specific accommodations must arrange to have the office notify me in writing of their status at the beginning of the semester, and must present me with a form from that office at least one week prior to scheduled test dates in order to receive their accommodations.

In addition, you are encouraged to reach out to me with any issues you may be having. I want to ensure that this course is as effective and enjoyable as possible.



Course Schedule:

Note: Whenever “TEE” appear, this refers to the course textbook *The European Experience* (see above). Assigned chapters are noted by their chapter number. For example, for the French Revolution, “3.3.1” refers to Chapter 3.3: Revolutions and Civil Wars, Section 1: Revolutions and Civil Wars in Early Modern History. Whenever “BB” appears, this denotes material which will be uploaded for you to Blackboard.

Date and Topic	Required Readings/Assignments
(Th) 1/26: First Day, Syllabus/Introductions	No assignments. Come prepared to introduce yourselves!
(Tu) 1/31: French Revolution – Origins and Outset [L]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [3.3.1] [3.5.1] [6.2.1]
(Th) 2/2: French Revolution – Governing for “the People”[D]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abbe Sieyes, "What is the Third Estate?" • Declaration of the Rights of Man • M. Robespierre, Justification of the Use of Terror
(Tu) 2/7: The Napoleonic Wars [L]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [1.1.2] [3.4.2] [7.2.2]
(Th) 2/9: Napoleon – A Great Man? [D]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Napoleon, Proclamation to his Troops in Italy (1796) • Madame de Remusat, Remembrances of Napoleon <u>View:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paintings of Napoleon BB • (optional) further images of Napoleon here
(Tu) 2/14: The Industrial Revolution – Europe and the Rise of Capitalism [L]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [2.3.2] [5.1.2] [5.3.2] [5.4.2]



<p>(Th) 2/16: Industrialization and its Discontents – Karl Marx [D]</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpt: The Physical Deterioration of the Textile Workers (1833) • Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, <i>Communist Manifesto</i>, Introduction and Chapter 1
<p>(Tu) 2/21: No Class</p>	
<p>(Th) 2/23: A Europe of Nations – 1848 and the National Revolutions</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [2.2.2] [3.1.2] [3.3.3] <p>Essay # 1 Due</p>
<p>(Tu) 2/28: National Revolution – The Case of Germany [D]</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents on German Unification (1848-1871) • The Public Mood in Bavaria and Other Federal States through British Eyes (December 3, 1866) • Bismark on the "Polish Question"
<p>(Th) 3/2: EXAM 1</p>	<p>**EXAM 1**</p>
<p>(Tu) 3/7: Europe Abroad – Late Imperialism [L]</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [1.4.2] [3.2.1] [3.2.2]
<p>(Th) 3/9: “White Man’s Burden”: European Racism and World Power [D]</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden" • Wilfred Scawan Blunt, Britain's Imperial Destiny • Thomas H. Huxley, The Struggle for Existence
<p>(Tu) 3/14: World War One – The War to End All Other Wars [L]</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [1.4.3] [3.1.3] [3.4.3]



<p>(Th) 3/16: World War One – Competing Memory [D]</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpts of Erich Maria Remarque, <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i>. (Available via Open Library here): Chapter 6, p. 69-92. • Excerpts of Ernst Jünger, <i>Storms of Steel</i>. (Available via Internet Archive here): Chapter 6, “The Overture to the Somme Offensive”, p. 64-92. • World War I Poetry (optional)
<p>(Tu) 3/21: The Russian Revolution – From Czar to Stalin [L]</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [3.3.3] [5.2.3] [7.1.3]
<p>(Th) 3/23: The Russian Revolution – The Violent Cult of Stalin [D]</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpts of Lev Kopelev, <i>The Education of a True Believer</i> • Stalin's Purges, 1936 • (optional) Hymn to Stalin
<p>(Tu) 3/28: Interwar Europe and the Rise of Fascism [L]</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [1.3.3] [4.2.3] [6.2.3] <p>Essay # 2 Due</p>
<p>(Th) 3/30: Fascism – The Case of National Socialism [D]</p>	<p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 Points: Early Nazi Party Program (1922) • Hitler Speech: March 23, 1933 • Victor Klemperer, Diary Entry on the Impending Boycott of Jewish Businesses (March 31, 1933) • Nazi Guidelines for Teaching History (1938)
<p>(Tu) 4/4: EXAM 2</p>	<p>**EXAM 2**</p>
<p>(Th) 4/6: No Class</p>	<p>Spring Break</p>



(Tu) 4/11: No Class	Spring Break
(Th) 4/13: No Class	Spring Break
(Tu) 4/18: World War II – The Collapse of Europe [L]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [1.1.3] [2.1.3] [2.2.3]
(Th) 4/20: World War II – The Fight against Nazism [D]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churchill Speech (June 4, 1940) • DeGaulle, Appeal of June 18 • Molotov, Reaction to German Invasion of 1941 • CIA Report on the Assassination of Reinhard Heydrich
(Tu) 4/25: The Holocaust – Understanding the Unimaginable [L]	<u>Review:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This timeline (Ch. 26 contains substantive information and more will be provided in the lecture); possible other readings, TBA
(Th) 4/27: The Holocaust – Survivors [D]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primo Levi, <i>Survival in Auschwitz</i> (available through CCNY library here)
(Tu) 5/2: Cold War Europe – Rebuilding a Broken Continent [L]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [1.2.3] [4.1.3] [5.3.3]
(Th) 5/4 Cold War Europe – Experiencing Communism and Capitalism [D]	<u>View:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East vs. West Cities Images BB • Excerpts from Czesaw Milosz, <i>The Captive Mind</i> (available through archive.org here): p. 24-51.
(Tu) 5/9: Decolonization/Globalization – The End of European Empire [L]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEE: [3.2.3] [3.5.3] [6.3.3] <p>Essay # 3 Due</p>



(Th) 5/11: Decolonization/Globalization – The Case of Algeria [D]	<u>View:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Film: <i>The Battle of Algiers</i> -> Here• Complete video assignment BB
(Mo) 5/16: Post-Cold War Europe – Where We Are Today [L] [D]	<u>Read:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Selection of recent newspaper articles
Final Exam, TBA	**FINAL EXAM**

Appendix

Weekly Presentation [25 Points]

Summary (5) – The presentation provides a comprehensive yet concise overview of the discussion readings.

Articulation (5) – The presentation is clear in its delivery, with both spoken and visual (if applicable) components being well understood.

Creativity (5) – The presentation incorporates interesting ideas relevant to the readings and presents them in a visually appealing and creative way.

Accuracy (5) – The information delivered in the presentation is historically accurate and relevant to the readings.

Discussion (5) – The presentation provides questions for discussion and the team leads this discussion throughout the class session.



Essay Rubric

NAME _____

GRADE _____

Format Guidelines (20 points): All papers must be (1) a minimum of three pages (2) typed (3) double spaced (4) the font no smaller than 11pt and no larger than 12pt (5) 1-inch margins all around (6) easy-to-read fonts, e.g. Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, etc.

20 = excellent/meets all guidelines ; 15 = good/meets most guidelines ; 10 = fair/meets some guidelines; 5 = unsatisfactory/does not meet guidelines

Answers All Parts of the Question (20 points): 20 = all parts of the question are answered ; 15 = most parts of the question are answered ; 10 = some parts of the question are answered ; 5 = few parts of the question are answered ; 0 = no parts of the question are answered

Content/Quality of the Information (30 points):

30 = Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples. Well cited and containing multiple sources.

25 = Information relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples. Contains some irrelevant information. Mostly well cited with 1 or 2 sources.

20 = Information relates to the main topic. Few or no details and/or examples are given.

Contains some irrelevant and incorrect information. Adequate citations with only one source.

15 = Some information relates to the main topic. Contains irrelevant information. Poor citations with only one source.

5 = Irrelevant information. Has little or nothing to do with the main topic. Little to no citations with only one source.

Quality of Writing (30 points):

Introductory Paragraph:

- 5 = Strong
- 4 = Acceptable
- 3 = Weak
- 0 = none

Conclusion Paragraph:

- 5 = Strong

Use of Paragraphs:

- 5 = Consistently used
- 4 = Adequately used
- 3 = Poorly used
- 2 = Not used

Essay Cohesion:

- 5 = Very Cohesive

Grammar:

- 5 = no grammatical errors
- 4 = very few grammatical errors
- 3 = some grammatical errors
- 1 = many grammatical errors

Writing:

- 5 = Strong formal



4 = Acceptable
3 = Weak
0 = None

4 = Mostly cohesive
3 = A bit scattered
0 = Incoherent

4 = Mostly formal
3 = Both formal and informal
1 = Too informal

