

**Prof. Jackson**

Fall 2009

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Office Hours: W 1:00-4:00 PM

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**Description:** By focusing on the experiences of ordinary people and significant shifts in their values, we will study how Europe evolved through what one historian has called an “age of extremes” in the twentieth century. Central issues will include the experience and legacies of “total war,” daily life under Nazi rule and in the Communist countries of Eastern Europe, the psychological impact of the Great Depression, and the various ways in which people struggled to redefine themselves as Europe faded from a position of world dominance.

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**Developing Historical Thinking:** Successful historians must be able to master a specific body of factual knowledge, so I will stress learning important terms and key concepts. However, historians also practice a way of thinking about and analyzing that factual information in order to make sense of what it means. We don't simply memorize facts. Rather we try to understand the relationships between those facts and the larger flow of history. Therefore, this course will also introduce you to history as a way of thinking so that you can develop your analytical and historical thinking skills. I will ask you to engage in the kind of discussion that historians have with one another on a regular basis -- asking questions, analyzing documents, and interpreting events within their historical contexts.

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**History 217**  
**The Age of Extremes:**  
**European Culture and Society in the Twentieth Century**

**General Procedure:** You must come to class prepared to discuss all the material in the reading assignments, including the textbook, so that we can begin to understand how to interpret -- rather than simply to memorize -- factual information. In my lectures, I will often elaborate on the information contained in the textbook, but I will frequently add new material too. Then we will spend our class time trying to interpret that and other material as historians.

**Reading:**

The following books are available in the Rhodes bookstore and are required reading for this class:

Bonnie Smith, *Europe in the Contemporary World: 1900 to the Present*  
Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*  
Peter Gay, *My German Question*  
John Le Carré, *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*  
Slavenka Drakulic, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*

Additional readings are found in my faculty folder on the Acad\_Dept\_Pgm server.

Films are found on Moodle on the Rhodes website:  
<https://moodle.rhodes.edu/clogin.php>

**Exams:**

The midterm exam will consist of two parts: (1) a section in which I ask you to identify and describe the significance of a series of terms or concepts; (2) a short essay in which I ask you to discuss a theme or themes that we have been discussing so far in class during the semester. Information from any of the reading material assigned on the syllabus may appear on these exams. You will need a blue book for this exam.

The take-home final exam in this class will consist of two parts: (1) a cumulative section designed to help you tie together the themes of this class; (2) a section focusing on decolonization and the end of communism in Eastern Europe. The exam will in particular emphasize Slavenka Drakulic's *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* and the films *East is East* and *Goodbye, Lenin*.

### General Essay Guidelines:

**No essay which fails to conform to the following guidelines will be accepted.** All essays must include:

- (1) A signed honor code pledge;
- (2) An engaging title which captures the main thrust of your argument. I will **not** accept papers with titles like "Paper #1." You must also include your name and the date;
- (3) A **final word count** of the body of your essay (not including footnotes, endnotes, bibliography, or title). This word count must be indicated on your first page of your essay;
- (4) Appropriate citations, either footnotes or endnotes, which follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Copies of this style manual are in the library and the history department office. The style manual commonly known as "Turabian" (i.e. Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*) is a shortened version of the Chicago style guide and is acceptable;
- (5) Appropriate American-style punctuation and general formatting as indicated in the *Chicago Manual of Style*;
- (6) Sequential page numbers at the bottom of each page beginning with page 1. All notes should also use numbers, not symbols or letters;
- (7) An introductory paragraph which clearly states your interpretive claim (i.e. thesis) and answers all of the following questions: (a) what is the paper about, (b) what is the reader going to find out, (c) why is this paper worth reading -- i.e. the "so what" question.

### Essays (2 Options):

**\*Option 1:** (Recommended) In this option, you will write **two short essays** (1,250 words minimum) in which you will synthesize your thoughts about what you have read, heard, and said on a given topic. There are four possible essay topics; you can write on any two essay topics of your choice. The specific questions are listed below.

**Option 2:** In this option, you will write **one longer paper** (2,500 words minimum) analyzing one of the books (Remarque, Gay, or Le Carré) and connecting the particular events that these authors describe with the larger historical context that surrounds them. You will also be required to use additional course readings to supplement your analysis. *Students interested in this option should see me at their earliest convenience to discuss the details of the assignment including due dates. You will not be able to select this option after midterm exam.*

### Class Discussion:

Discussion is an integral part of this class, and every student is encouraged to share their ideas with others. In doing so, not only do you learn more, but you also help to teach your classmates. I define "participation" as **active** engagement with the ideas, readings, and conversations that are an integral part of this course. Class attendance is necessary for class participation, since you cannot participate if you are not here. **However, you do not earn your participation grade simply by showing up to class. Rather, you must actually participate** by joining in the class discussion, posing questions, sharing ideas, and interpreting the readings with your classmates in a thoughtful and reflective way.

I reserve the right to call on any member of the class so that they might contribute to our discussion. I recommend bringing questions that you have about reading assignments or about the previous class meeting if what we discussed is not entirely clear to you. I also recommend bringing a list of comments that you wish to make during class discussion so that you will be ready to contribute. If you are someone who has difficulty speaking in class for whatever reason, please speak to me about alternative ways of participating.

### Additional Assignments:

Students may be asked to complete other assignments (which may or may not be announced in advance) during the course of the semester, including in-class quizzes and short writing assignments.

### Grades will be determined by the following formula:

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| Exams                                   | 45% |
| Essays                                  | 45% |
| Participation and Additional Assignment | 10% |

## Our Schedule for the Semester

- W 8/26 Introduction to the course
- F 8/28 **Century's End, 1870-1914**
- M 8/31 **The Age of Irrationality: Art, Philosophy, and Science in the Late Nineteenth Century**  
Reading: Textbook chapters 1-2
- W 9/2 Discussion of Documents for Chapters 1-2
- F 9/4 **World War I: From Celebration to the Horror of the Trenches**  
Reading: Textbook chapter 3  
Discussion of Reading: Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, chapters 1-7
- M 9/7 LABOR DAY
- W 9/9 **The Great War, a Troubled Peace, and Hope for a New World**  
Reading: Textbook chapter 4  
*Inform Jackson of which study group you have joined for this class*
- F 9/11 Discussion of Reading: Remarque, chapters 8-12  
Discussion of Film: *J'Accuse* (on Moodle)  
In Class Film Excerpts: *The Great War*
- M 9/14 **Lenin and the Revolutions of 1917**
- W 9/16 **Making the Revolution Permanent: Civil War, NEP, and War Communism**
- F 9/18 Discussion of Documents for Chapters 3-4
- M 9/21 **Coming Out of the Trenches: Post-War Recovery in Western Europe**  
Reading: Textbook, chapter 5
- W 9/23 **The Weimar Republic and the Challenges to Democracy in Germany**
- F 9/25 Discussion of Reading: Modris Eksteins, "Night Dancer" (faculty folder)
- M 9/28 **The Rise of Stalin and the Transformation of Revolutionary Practice**
- W 9/30 **The Creation of "Stalinism": Purges, Prisons, and Secret Police**
- F 10/2 Discussion of Reading: Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Signals from Below: Soviet Letters of Denunciation of the 1930s" (faculty folder) and Documents for Chapter 5

- M 10/5 **Representing the Twentieth Century: Surrealism, Dadaism, and the Jazz Age**  
ESSAY #1 DUE
- W 10/7 **The Great Depression and the Crisis of Capitalism**
- F 10/9 Discussion of Reading: David Clay Large, “‘Red’ Ellen Wilkinson and the Jarrow Crusade” (folder)
- M 10/12 **Fascism in Power and the Rise of Hitler**  
Reading: Peter Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich*, Chapter 1 (folder)  
ESSAY #2 DUE
- W 10/14 **Nazism in Power and the Politics of Emotion**  
Reading: Claudia Koonts, *The Nazi Conscience*, chapter 4 (folder)
- F 10/16 Discussion of Reading: Peter Gay, *My German Question*  
In Class Film Excerpt: *Triumph of the Will*
- M 10/19 FALL BREAK
- W 10/21 **“The Center Cannot Hold”: The Outbreak of World War II**  
Reading: Textbook chapter 6 and Documents for chapter 6
- F 10/23 Midterm Exam
- M 10/26 **Defining Enemies: Nazism, Racism, and the Holocaust**  
*Last Date to Choose Essay Option #2*
- W 10/28 **Dividing Up the Spoils: The Origins of the Cold War in Europe**  
Reading: Textbook chapter 7 and Documents for chapter 7  
Listening: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=92597573>  
In Class Film Excerpt: “Duck and Cover”
- F 10/30 **Political, and Moral Rebuilding in Western Europe**
- M 11/2 **“The Other Europes”: Eastern Europe Turns Toward Moscow and the Rise of the Spy Culture**
- W 11/4 Discussion of Reading: *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* and Documents for chapter 7
- F 11/6 **The “Thirty Glorious Years”: Economic Recovery, the Welfare State, and the Consumer Society**  
Reading: Textbook, chapter 8 and Documents for chapter 8

### ESSAY #3 DUE

- M 11/9 Discussion of Reading: Elizabeth Vihlen, “Jammin’ on the Champs-Elysées: Jazz, France, and the 1950s” (faculty folder)
- W 11/11 **The Creation of Dissent: 1956, 1968, and Their Legacies in the East**  
Reading: Textbook chapter 10
- F 11/13 **Challenging the Managed Society in the West: 1968, Feminism, and Environmentalism**
- M 11/16 Discussion of Documents for chapters 8 and 10 and Vaclav Havel, “The Power of the Powerless” (faculty folder)
- W 11/18 **Decolonization, Immigration, and the Legacies of the Holocaust**  
Reading: Textbook chapter 9
- F 11/20 Discussion of Documents for Chapter 9 and Film *East is East* (on Moodle)  
**ESSAY #4 DUE**
- M 11/23 **Postmodernism in Philosophy and the Arts**
- W 11/25 THANKSGIVING
- F 11/27 THANKSGIVING
- M 11/30 **The Troublesome 1970s and 1980s: Oil, Terrorism, and Punks**  
Reading: Textbook chapter 11 and Documents for chapter 11
- W 12/2 **1989 and the End of the Short Twentieth Century**  
Film: *The People’s Century: People Power 1989*
- F 12/4 Discussion of Reading: Slavenka Drakulic, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*
- M 12/7 **Legacies of the Twentieth Century**  
Discussion of Reading: Timothy Garton Ash, “The Romeo File,” Textbook chapter 12, Documents for chapter 12 (folder), and *Goodbye, Lenin*
- W 12/9 TBA
- Final Exam TBA

### Guidelines and Questions for Essay Option 1

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to think carefully about the material presented in this class by responding to specific questions. For each of the essays, **answer the questions, paying careful attention to the requirements listed for each one.** Remember: If you choose this option, during the course of the semester, you must write 2 of these 4 short essays (see syllabus for due dates). Each essay should be at least 1,250 words long.

**Be concrete and specific in offering evidence and examples** to prove your points. You should use *The Chicago Manual of Style* to format your paper including citations.

#### *An important Definition: What is “analysis?”*

When historians analyze something, they do not repeat information that everyone already knows about events or documents. Nor do they simply state obvious conclusions based on a quick set of observations. Analysis -- the heart of the historians' craft -- means taking something apart, looking at it from the inside-out, subjecting it to an intense investigation from many facets, juxtaposing it with other issues or facts that are both similar and different, identifying patterns and processes that are not necessarily easily seen or obvious, and arriving at original conclusions that will inform, enlighten, and educate the reader of your essay. Analysis is not easy, and it does not happen quickly. It requires a serious commitment to critical thinking that only comes when a scholar devotes time and energy to finding out something new rather than simply repeating what others have said.

### Questions for Essay Option 1

Essay #1: Consider the following statement:

“The twentieth century opened with two dramatic and related events: World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution. Both had profound consequences because they meant that Europeans could never look at their continent in the same way again. Political regimes that had defined European borders for decades were called into question and, in many cases, ceased to exist by 1918. But perhaps more importantly, both World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution made violence -- not only military conflict but also economic struggle, class warfare, and generational strife -- an inherent part of twentieth century life.”

Use the information in your textbook, your class notes, and the reading assignments either to support or to reject this statement. To do so, **analyze in detail three specific, concrete pieces of evidence** from this period that support your claim about this historical interpretation. **One of those pieces of evidence must be drawn from Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*.**

Essay #2: Choose **one** of the following questions:

A. One historian has called the period from 1914 and 1945 the “thirty years’ war of the twentieth century” in order to argue that the political, economic, and cultural battles fought during the 1920s and 1930s were just as much a part of the upheaval of European society as actual military warfare. Using the information in your textbook, your class notes, and the reading assignments **analyze in detail three specific, concrete pieces of evidence** from this period that demonstrate how this historian’s claim might be true. **One of those pieces of evidence must be drawn from Modris Ekstein’s essay “Night Dancer.”**

B. In what ways did the rule of Josef Stalin create a distinct way of life for everyday people in the USSR from 1920-1940? Using the information in your textbook, your class notes, and the reading assignments **analyze in detail three specific, concrete pieces of evidence** from this period that demonstrate the uniqueness of this way of life at this particular moment in time. **One of those pieces of evidence must be drawn from Sheila Fitzpatrick’s essay “Signals from Below.”**

Essay #3:

Much of the appeal of Hitler and Mussolini can be attributed to the Fascists’ and Nazis’ creation of a “politics of emotion” that played on people’s hopes, fears, and desires at a particular moment in history when those emotions were especially heightened by war and depression. Using the information in your textbook, your class notes, and the reading assignments **analyze in detail three specific, concrete pieces of evidence** from this period that demonstrate the ways in which this “politics of emotion” worked in the lives of ordinary people. **One of those pieces of evidence must be drawn from Peter Gay’s book *My German Question*.**

Essay #4:

The growing political, ideological, and economic divide between the US and the USSR in the years after World War II not only created two distinct camps on the European continent, it also effected how Europeans thought about the world and their place in it. Using the information in your textbook, your class notes, and the reading assignments **analyze in detail three specific, concrete pieces of evidence** from this period that demonstrate the various ways in which Europeans came to terms with their evolving role in world affairs when caught between the world’s new Great Powers. **One of those pieces of evidence must be drawn from John Le Carré, *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*.**

**Prof. Jackson**  
**Department of History**  
**Rhodes College**

## **Philosophy**

I believe that we are a community of scholars actively working together to discover something new about our world and ourselves. To achieve those goals, we must struggle together, asking questions about what we don't yet know and challenging our assumptions about what we think we know and believe. Teaching is also a team effort. I am asking each of you to accept a certain amount of responsibility in this class for contributing to our intellectual commonwealth by being willing to question, to challenge, and to propose new ideas and interpretations. In other words, I am asking you to be a good citizen of Rhodes College and of this classroom by contributing to the success of everyone in it.

History is not a list of facts and events, but an ongoing series of debates about what those facts and events mean. In taking this class, you are joining in a world-wide discussion that continually asks about the ongoing meaning and significance of life's events both past and present.

But while teaching and historical debates are group activities, learning is, in the end, an individual act. No one can make another person learn something if they do not want to, and only you can choose to receive something from your time in this class. To that end, think carefully about how you prepare each day for class, how you study for exams, and how seriously you approach your essays. Your grades will reflect your individual performance, and the amount of effort you apply will directly affect your outcomes.

My personal goals for all my classes are: (1) that everyone succeeds to the best of their abilities, (2) that everyone improves in their capability to think analytically and creatively, and (3) that everyone grows in their capacity to express themselves, to create knowledge, and to engage with their world.

## **Class Policies and Procedures**

### General

1. I expect you to come to each class prepared to listen, ask questions, discuss readings, and take notes. You should bring all necessary materials to class including all reading assignments for the day, your reading notes, notes from previous classes, and materials that I may ask you to prepare for a particular class session.

2. I expect each of you to be actively engaged in the functioning of this class, and you should come prepared to participate in our ongoing class discussion. I reserve the right to call on any member of the class so that they might contribute to our discussion. I recommend bringing questions that you have about reading assignments or about the previous class meeting if what we discussed is not entirely clear to you. I also recommend bringing a list of comments that you wish to make during class discussion so that you will be ready to contribute. If you are someone



who has difficulty speaking in class for whatever reason, please speak to me about alternative ways of participating.

3. You should come to every class session. There is no such thing as an “excused absence” (with the possible exception of a medical leave that is officially approved by the College administration). Absences for athletics or other extra-curricular activities are not “excused” even if they are officially announced. Therefore, you are allowed to miss ***the equivalent of one week’s worth of class time*** (for Monday/Wednesday/Friday classes, three (3) class periods; for Tuesday/Thursday classes, two (2) class periods; for classes which meet once a week, one (1) class period) for any reason. Additional absences will adversely affect your grade for the course since you cannot participate in our community of scholars if you are not here.

If you are absent from class, it is ***your responsibility*** to talk to me and to fellow classmates to find out what you have missed. I frequently distribute handouts or make additional assignments in class, so you need to check with me to find out if I have done so for the day of your absence. You are still responsible for all material covered in each class period regardless of whether you attended it.

I will take attendance at the beginning of every class meeting to establish your presence. If you are not present when attendance is taken, you may be counted absent, so please arrive to class early or on-time.

4. Each of you is bound by the Honor Code as elaborated in the Student Handbook, and no violation will be tolerated. Please review the Student Handbook if you are unclear about the details of the Honor Code, particularly the definitions in Article I, Section 3. If you are unfamiliar with the definition of “plagiarism,” you can find it there. On every assignment, you should reaffirm the Honor Code by writing the entire honor pledge and signing your name. No work will be accepted without an Honor Code pledge. Studying together and reading one another’s papers is always a good idea, but make sure that your work is your own. Collaboration on an assignment that results in remarkably similar results, whether intentional or accidental, is a violation of the honor code.

5. I reserve the right to make changes in the syllabus as the semester progresses, but I will always make changes known to you as soon as possible, and I will make reasonable accommodations for assignment due dates should the schedule changes warrant. I also reserve the right to give unannounced quizzes in class or to make short assignments for the next class period with no advance notice.

6. All assignments must be turned in to be eligible for a passing grade in this course. No student will be allowed to pass without having turned in every assignment.

### Essays

7. Essays are due in class as indicated on the syllabus. No papers will be accepted under my door, in my mailbox, under my office door, or electronically except in the event of extreme circumstances which must be approved by me in advance of the due date. I will accept papers only

from students who are present in class on the date on which the paper is due; I will not accept papers submitted by proxy. Late papers will not be accepted except in extreme circumstances which must also be approved by me in advance of the date on which the paper is due.

You are responsible for keeping a backup copy of each writing assignment for the course. In the unlikely event that I misplace your essay, I will ask you for another copy as soon as I realize that I need it. If you cannot provide a copy of any assignment to me upon request, you will forfeit your entire grade for that assignment.

### Courtesy

8. Turn off all cell phones during class time unless I have approved their continued activation in advance. If you leave the classroom to answer a cell phone call, do not return.

9. Learning happens when done in an environment in which everyone feels free to express themselves openly without fear of ridicule or recrimination. I will not tolerate any disrespect of other students or their viewpoints during class.

### Disabilities

10. I am happy to make reasonable accommodations to people with *documented* disabilities. Please consult the appropriate College administrators before coming to see me. Once you have done so, please discuss your particular needs with me as soon as possible.

revised 11/2008