

Fall 2012

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
HIS 376 – Germany 1914-1945

Instructor: Dr. Cristina Bejan

E-mail: cabejan@uncg.edu

Office: MHRA 2117

Office Hours: Thursday 3.30 – 4.30

Time: Tuesday/Thursday (TR) 2 – 3.15

Required Texts

Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (original in 1928)

Otto Friedrich, *Before the Deluge: a Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* (1995 ed.; original in 1972)

Joseph Bendersky, *A History of Nazi Germany*, 2nd ed. (2001)

Christian Leitz, ed., *The Third Reich Essential Readings* (1999)

Dietrich Orlow. *A History of Modern Germany*. (6th ed. 2007)

Christopher Browning. *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1998)

Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives in Interpretation*, 4th ed. (2000)

Roger Griffin *The Nature of Fascism* (1991)

Course Description

At the beginning of the 20th Century German power and prestige were at an all-time high. The German Empire was poised to challenge Great Britain for world leadership – in politics, economics and military might. In addition, German cultural institutions commanded world-wide respect and admiration- in particular, its universities, medicine, science, music and literature. A major theme of this course is what went wrong with this powerful and cultured nation. This course traces German developments through three critical eras of the early twentieth century: the First World War (1914-1918), the turbulent and often brilliant Weimar years (1919-1932), and the Nazi Third Reich (1933-1945).

In August 1914 Germans entered World War I confident of a quick victory, probably by Christmas. Things turned out quite differently. The war lasted more than four years, exacted unprecedented sacrifices of life and treasure, and ended in a defeat that Germans resented and were unable to understand or accept. The defeat of 1918 and the subsequent socialist/democratic revolution threw German society into economic and political turmoil, seriously handicapping its sometimes brilliant experiment in the 1920s with democracy and cultural modernity. The hated Versailles Treaty of 1919, the hyperinflation of 1923 and the Great Depression of 1929 created the resentments that Adolf Hitler, a charismatic war veteran, shaped into a “gospel” of racism and national redemption. He promised the German people a racially pure world in which they would rule supreme for a thousand years. Instead, Hitler’s promise led to a brutal dictatorship, a devastating war, the attempt to destroy a people (the Jews) in its entirety, and finally a defeat in 1945 that was total and absolute.

Course Requirements

Attendance Policy: Regular class attendance is absolutely essential. Attendance will be taken.
More than four unexcused absences can lead to being dropped from the course.

Examinations: The **Mid-term Exam** is scheduled for Thursday October 4, the **Final Exam** for Tuesday December 11.

Course Paper: This will be an assigned research paper.

Grading Scale: Mid-Term Exam=50%; Final Exam=50%

Class Discussion: Participation in class discussion is vital. Active participation in these discussions can add as much as 10% (bonus) to your final grade. In many cases in the past this has led to a full letter upgrade.

Learning Goals for History Majors: Thinking in Time

History Graduates will be able to:

- 1. Analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods. [Historical Comprehension]**
- 2. Use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view. [Historical Analysis]**
- 3. Conduct original research by investigating and interpreting primary and secondary sources. [Historical Research]**
- 4. Use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument, orally and in writing. [Historical Interpretation]**

All students are expected to abide by the rules of the Academic Integrity Policy found in the UNCG Student Policy Handbook. Any failure to abide by the Academic Integrity Policy will be handled as outlined in the Handbook.

TECHNOLOGY RULES

All technological devices (e.g. computers, cellphones) are banned during classtime. No exceptions.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

READING ASSIGNMENT

August

Tues 21 Course Introduction

Germany: Era of World War I – 1900-1918

Reading: E.M. Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*
Dietrich Orlow. *A History of Modern Germany*. (6th ed. 2007)

Thurs 23 Pre-War Diplomacy/a “Grab for World Power”?
Orlow: Chapter 2
Remarque: parts 1 - 4

Tues 28 The Euphoric Expectations of August 1914
Orlow: Chapter 3
Remarque: parts 5 - 8

Thurs 30 The Great Battles of 1916/Verdun and the Somme
Orlow: Chapter 3
Remarque: parts 9 - 12

Defeat, Revolution, Democracy

Reading: Otto Friedrich, *Before the Deluge: a Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s*
Dietrich Orlow. *A History of Modern Germany*. (6th ed. 2007)

September

Tues 4 1918: Collapse at the Front/Abdication of the Kaiser
Orlow: Chapter 3 -4
Friedrich: Chapter 2

Thurs 6 Revolution: Communist? Socialist? Democratic?
Orlow: Chapter 4
Friedrich: Chapter 3

Tues 11 The Treaty of Versailles (the *Diktat*)
Orlow: Chapter 4
Friedrich: Chapter 3

Thurs 13 The Unsteady Democracy. 1919-1923
Orlow: Chapter 4
Friedrich: Chapter 4 -5

Tues 18 *Voelkisch Racism: the Protocols of Zion; Hitler’s Beer Hall Putsch*
Orlow: Chapters 4 and 5
Friedrich: Chapter 5

Thurs 20 1924-1928 The “Good Years”
Orlow: Chapter 5

Friedrich: Chapters 8 - 12

Tues 25 Weimar and Cultural Modernism/ The *Bauhaus*
Orlow: Chapter 5
Friedrich: Chapter 8, Chapter 16

Thurs 27 Culture and “Conservative Revolution”
Orlow: Chapter 5
Friedrich: Chapters 8 - 12

October

Tues 2 Review for the Mid-Term

Thurs 4 MID-TERM EXAM

Reading: Joseph Bendersky, *A History of Nazi Germany*
Christian Leitz, ed., *The Third Reich*
Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship*
Christopher Browning. *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the
Final Solution in Poland*
Roger Griffin *The Nature of Fascism*
Dietrich Orlow. *A History of Modern Germany*. (6th ed. 2007)

Tues 9 1929: The “Great Depression” and Political Radicalism – Nazi and Communist
Orlow: Chapter 5
Bendersky: Chapter 1
Friedrich: Chapter 13

Thurs 11 Crisis and Charisma: Adolf Hitler and the Nazis – 1929-1932
Orlow: Chapter 6
Bendersky: Chapters 2 – 4
Leitz: Chapter 9

Tues 16 FALL BREAK

Thurs 18 January 30, 1933/Hitler’s “Seizure of Power”
Orlow: Chapter 6
Bendersky: Chapters 5-7
Leitz: Chapter 2

Tues 23 *Gleichschaltung*/ The Consolidation of the Dictatorship – 1933-1936
Orlow: Chapter 6
Bendersky: Chapters 8 -10
Leitz: Chapter 2

Thurs 25 Purifying the Aryan race/ Dealing with the “Jewish Problem”
Orlow: Chapter 6

- Bendersky: Chapters 9 - 10
- Tues 30 1938-39/*Kristallnacht*; *Anschluss*; The Rape of Czechoslovakia
Orlow: Chapter 7
Bendersky: Chapter 11
- November
- Thurs 1 Hitler's War/Why 1939? Why *Blitzkrieg*?
Orlow: Chapter 7
Bendersky: Chapters 11 and 12
- Tues 6 Hitler's War against the Jews/ Why the "Final Solution" **Course Paper Due**
Orlow: Chapter 7
Leitz: Chapter 11
Bendersky: Chapter 14
- Thurs 8 *Generalplan Ost*- Nazi Plans for Post-War Eastern Europe
Orlow: Chapter 7
Bendersky: Chapter 13
- Tues 13 The Plots to Kill Hitler/July 20, 1944/the Resistance
Orlow: Chapter 7
Leitz: Chapter 10
Bendersky: Chapter 14
Kershaw: Chapter 8
- Thurs 15 From Stalingrad to Berlin
Orlow: Chapter 7
Bendersky: Chapter 12-13
Leitz: Chapter 7
- Tues 20 The Final Days of the Third Reich
Orlow: Chapter 7
Bendersky: Chapter 14
- Thurs 22 THANKSGIVING
- Tues 27 The Holocaust
Orlow: Chapter 7
Browning: Chapter 18
Kershaw: Chapter 5 and 9
Bendersky: Chapter 14
- Thurs 29 April 30, 1945/ Hitler's Suicide and the Last Week of the Third Reich
Orlow: Chapter 7

Bendersky: Chapter 14
And Assessing the Third Reich and its Meaning
Kershaw: Chapters 1 and 2
Griffin: Chapter 1 and 4

December

Tues 4 Reading Day

Sat. 8 3:30–6:30 P.M. FINAL EXAM