

***HIS 740: SEMINAR ON GERMANY, 1945-2000***

GENERAL INFORMATION:

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Office Hours: Tues/Thurs – 10:45-12:00  
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BASIC TEXTS:

Henry Ashby Turner, Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification* (rev. ed. )  
Konrad H. Jarausch, *After Hitler; Recivilizing Germans, 1945-1995* (2006)  
*Der Spiegel* (English online) <[www.spiegel.de/international/](http://www.spiegel.de/international/)>

PAPER REQUIREMENTS:

A research paper of ca 25 pages will be required and will be due on May 6, 2010. The research topic is to be selected in conjunction with, and the approval of, the seminar director. Turabian will provide the style for reference citations, bibliography listings, etc.

**I want to meet with you separately during the first week of the semester to discuss possible research topics.** It is obviously important to settle on a topic as soon as possible; but it is equally important that the topic be clearly defined and “doable.” This latter necessity may make work to exclude some attractive or favorite topics.

DISCUSSION REQUIREMENTS:

We are scheduled to meet weekly. The first meetings will be devoted to general background discussions based on the required readings shown above. After that we will focus more intensively upon the Jarausch book. By the third week we should begin to add your progress reports to the discussion,

When seminar members are fully engaged in research projects we may choose to skip a weekly meeting occasionally. Individual consultations will very likely take the place of the skipped general meetings.

GRADING SCALE:

The quality of the research and writing in the final paper will account for ca. 75% of the course grade. The remaining 25% will be based on the lucidity and organization of progress reports and participation in discussions.

DEADLINES:

Deadlines for prospectuses will be on February 9. Deadlines for outlines and first drafts will be determined once the semester is underway in order to accommodate those of you taking M.A. Comprehensive Exams. The final paper will be due (hard copy) on May 6, 2010.

**SEMINAR DESCRIPTION**

This seminar will examine critical developments in “Germany”\* between the end of World War II in 1945, sometimes called the “Year Zero” by Germans, and the year 2000, the end of the first decade following the reunification of the two post-war German states – The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR).

Seminar members are asked to develop a research project (in consultation with the seminar director) and, as a final product, submit a 25-30 page paper on the topic they have selected.

#### Aids to selecting a topic.

Possible topics range across the political, cultural, religious, social, and economic spectrum of post-war German life. In many respects Germans in 1945 were “starting over” in the making of their history – with the “assistance”, of course, of American, Russian, British, and, to a lesser degree, French occupiers. Conceptually, however, the problems Germans faced in 1945 were often similar to the problems faced by their great-grandparents a century and more earlier. For our purposes this similarity can be instructive.

Educated Germans, beginning early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, often spoke of a series of problems they faced in the constructing of their society. These problems had been created, or at least reshaped, by the revolutionary upheaval in the German world wrought by the ideas of the French Revolution and the armies of Napoleon. In the confused, and confusing, world of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Germans spoke of a “German Question” (*die Deutsche Frage*) rooted in the question of how “Germany” was to be defined; a “Jewish Question” (*Judenfrage*), which related to how the newly emancipated Jews were to be fitted into the new society; a “Woman Question” (*die Frauenfrage*) which dealt with how, or whether, women were to be allowed greater independence from male domination and empowered to participate more fully in social and public life; and, finally, a “Social Question” (*die Sozialfrage*) which asked how political stability could be achieved in the face of widespread poverty, or, in crasser terms, wasn’t there the danger that the poor might rise up against the rich. Historians investigating how these questions came to be perceived and then addressed have yielded extraordinary insights into the history of Germany in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Germans of 1945 found themselves in a world much more confused and beaten down than did their nineteenth ancestors. But they faced the same sorts of problems.. Once again, there was a German Question,” this time because there was no answer to how Germany might be defined – or, more likely, redefined. The “Jewish Question” had taken on a horrendously new dimension because of Adolf Hitler and the Nazis. The “Woman Question” was once again up in the air. And, the possible answers to the “Social Question, given the extent of the deprivations and post-war poverty, were seemingly held hostage to the ideological differences between the occupying powers of the United States and the Soviet Union. Germany did indeed become the cockpit of the Cold War between these two powers.

SO: My recommendation is that you try to fit your research topic into the framework of one (or two—there could easily be overlap) of these larger questions. I don’t want the framework provided by these conceptual questions to be seen as a strait-jacket, so I append a list of sample topics,, each one of which could be fitted into the framework I propose. Your progress reports and, obviously, your final paper should related, at least tangentially, one or more of the conceptual “questions.”

“German Memory and the Holocaust”	“German-Israeli Relations”
“Socialism or the Social Market Economy --Ludwig Erhard”	“Stalin’s 1954 Note”
“The West German Economic Miracle of the 1950s”	“1989 People’s Revolution”
“The Division of Germany – East and West”	“Neo-Nazism”
“The Re-establishment of a Jewish Community after 1945”	“Helmut Kohl and Reunification”
“The ‘Guest Worker’ Problem”	“West Germany and NATO”
“The Woman Question in East and/or West Germany”	“West Germany and the EU”
“The Nature of the East German Dictatorship” (Stasi?)	
“The Effects of the American (or Soviet, or British, or French Occupation”)	
“The Making of the Constitution for the Federal Republic”	
“The Moscow Treaty of 1990”	
“Student Radicalism – the Baader-Meinhof Gang”	
“The Americanization of German Popular Culture”	
“The Churches and German Memory of the Holocaust”	
“Willy Brandt and <i>Ostpolitik</i> ”	

