

## Modernity, Revolution and Totalitarianism

History 635, Section 001, Fall 2017  
Tuesdays, 7:20-10:00 pm, Location: Robinson A250

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**Drop in office hours** Mondays, 10:30-12:00.

[I realize these drop-in office hours are probably terribly inconvenient for most of you. I am also available during other hours. Contact me for an appointment, or drop by if my office door is open. I am always willing to stay after class on Tuesday nights to talk.]

### Course Description:

This course analyzes the evolution and nature of revolutionary and totalitarian regimes and societies through the reading of monographs on the Puritan Reformation, French Revolution, turn of the 20th Century, interwar, and Second World War eras. Among topics explored are the essence of modern ideology, the concept of the national and social body, the modern state, state terror, charismatic leadership, private and public spheres, and identities and practices in totalitarian regimes and societies.

### Course Requirements:

#### 1) Participation:

Participation is crucial to the success of this course. Consequently, participation in each week's discussion will contribute substantially to the final grade. Attendance in class is crucial. If you do not attend, you cannot participate and your participation grade will suffer accordingly.

#### 2) Discussion Leaders:

One and occasionally two students will be required to lead the week's discussion. They should begin briefly introducing the book and raising some of the broad issues raised by the week's readings. This initial presentation should be no longer than 10 minutes. **This should not be a summary of the week's reading.** After this, the presenters should **prepare discussion questions** around the broad issues and themes raised by the readings.

#### 3) Written Assignments:

Students will write 2-3 page double-space papers on the readings for 7 of the 13 class sessions. It is your choice which weeks you choose not to write an assignment. These assignments are **due at**

**the beginning of the class session for which they are written.** These reviews **should not capsule the book**, but should raise the points you see as most relevant for class discussion.

Additionally, students will write a final paper of 10-12 pages. In consultation with the instructor, students will be asked to find a small selection of primary sources related either to the Nazi German or Fascist Italian periods and to analyze these sources using the approaches discussed throughout the class as a way both to illuminate the sources, but also to illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of the various historiographical approaches that we will read. Details will be discussed further in class. No additional secondary source reading will be required. The final paper will be **due via e-mail on Friday, December 15.**

### **Grade Breakdown:**

Participation in discussion	30%
7 small papers – counting the six best grades at 5% each	30%
Final Paper	40%

### **Course Policies – READ CAREFULLY:**

*Policy on Late Work:* No extension on assignments will be granted. Grades on assignments will be reduced by 5 percent for each day of lateness.

*Email Addresses:* The professor will communicate with students via email. Therefore, all students must activate and check their official GMU email addresses frequently. You may forward it to another account, but you are responsible for the information that is sent via your official account.

*ADA:* Students with learning disabilities who need special accommodation must present appropriate documentation to me by the third week of class. Contact the Disability Resource Center (<http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc>) to obtain documentation.

*Cheating and Plagiarism:* All work in this class must be your own unless otherwise directed by the professor. If you haven't already, read the George Mason University Honor Code ([http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#honor\\_system\\_and\\_code](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#honor_system_and_code)). For purposes of this course, cheating and plagiarism are defined as follows:

- Cheating encompasses the following:
  1. The willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students.
  2. The above may be accomplished by any means whatsoever, including but not limited to the following: fraud; duress; deception; theft; trick; talking; signs; gestures; copying from another student; and the unauthorized use of study aids, memoranda, books, data, or other information.

3. Attempted cheating.
- Plagiarism encompasses the following:
  1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.
  2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment.

Violators will be referred to the Honor Board. For first time violations of the Honor Code, I always recommend failure of the course. If you have any questions on what constitutes cheating or plagiarism after reviewing these materials, please talk to me. If you are unsure when completing an assignment, ask me. Do not take a chance of your case winding up before the Honor Board.

### **Course Reading:**

The readings for the course are listed below.

#### **Week 1 (August 29)                      Introduction**

#### **Week 2 (September 5)**

Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics*

#### **Week 3 (September 12)**

Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution*

#### **Week 4 (September 19)**

Eugen Weber, *Peasants to Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*

#### **Week 5 (September 26)**

James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*

Peter Holquist, "Information is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work": Bolshevik Surveillance in Its Pan-European Context, *The Journal of Modern History*, 69 (September 1997) 415-50.

#### **Week 6 (October 3)**

William Allen Sheridan, *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1922-1945*

**NOTE: No class on Tuesday, October 10. Your Monday classes will meet on Tuesday during this week.**

**Week 7 (October 17)**

Ian Kershaw, *The 'Hitler Myth'*

**Week 8 (October 24)**

Omer Bartov, *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich*

**Week 9 (October 31)**

Robert Gellately, *Backing Hitler: Consent and Coercion in Nazi Germany*

**Week 10 (November 7)**

Wendy Lower, *Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields*

**Week 11 (November 14)**

\*Nathan Stoltzfus, *Hitler's Compromises: Coercion and Consensus in Nazi Germany*

**Week 12 (November 21)**

\*Alexander De Grand, *Italian Fascism: Its Origins and Development* (For background: optional)  
Joshua Arthurs, *Excavating Modernity: The Roman Past in Fascist Italy*

**Week 13 (November 28)**

\*Jonathan Dunnage, *Mussolini's Policemen: Behaviour, Ideology and Institutional Culture in Representation and Practice*

**Week 14 (December 5)**

Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of Power in Mussolini's Italy*