

To Hell and Back: Germany and Europe in the 19th & 20th Century

Dr. Martin Jander

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FU-BEST Course Number:	FU-BEST Online 2
Live Sessions:	Monday, 6 – 7:30 p.m. CET (Berlin time)
Duration:	Feb. 8 – May 10, 2021
Language of Instruction:	English
Contact Hours:	30
ECTS Credits:	4

Course Description

In order to understand European history of the 19th and 20th century, a focus on Germany is indispensable and unavoidable. It took a long time before the German society transformed into a modern, open and democratic society. The “Revolution of Modernity” (Ralf Dahrendorf) was pushed back before World War I and failed 1933 in the Weimar Republic. Freedom and rule of law were brought to Germany by the allied Armies. The main antimodernist ideologies that caused the Shoah and the German war against the “Jewish Enemy” (Jeffrey Herf) were: antisemitism, racism and nationalism. In the first part of the 20th century Germany attempted to destroy civilization under a blanket of propaganda and by violence, both brutal and coldly mechanistic. Today we experience a Germany that presents itself as one partner among equals in the European Union. This new identity follows 40 years of ideological, social, political, and cultural division between two German states – the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany). Germany now enjoys the political stability, peace and prosperity of a democratic system. The change in German identity and the meaning of identity within the German context offers a fascinating angle from which to approach German history. From this angle, one gains a new understanding of Germany's contradictions, catastrophes, abysses, and moral bankruptcies before and after the Shoah, and the miraculous reconstruction after enormous casualties and destruction that resulted from the total war between 1939 and 1945.

Within these parameters, the course addresses various topics in German and European 20th century history: different political ideas, systems and movements, as well as social and cultural developments. We will compare and contrast the German variety of these phenomena with other European varieties. Two major themes are the struggles between democracy and dictatorship, and capitalism and communism, which played out through the 20th century. The course will connect these essentially ideological struggles to the two World Wars and the ensuing “Cold War”, to memories of trauma, to the history of everyday life, pop culture and gender, and to the experience of youth and immigrants in Germany. Through analyses of the interconnections and distinctions between all these aspects, the course will provide participants with a better understanding of German society today.

Learning Objectives

In this course, the students (1) get an overview of the history of Germany in the European context. The time frame covers the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. The participants of the course will also (2) learn to deal with different concepts of historiography about Germany in the European context. In addition, the students (3) learn about the different ways in which historians deal with the concept of “modernity”. The course also encourages students (4) to improve their own ability to write historical essays. Last but not least, the course (5) points the students to important places and memories in Berlin and other European cities.

Student Prerequisites

Students should have completed at least three semesters of higher education when the course starts and need to possess English language abilities in speaking and writing on the Upper Intermediate Level (at least B2, preferably above).

General Requirements

Attendance of the weekly live sessions is mandatory (for the specific time slot, see above). These live sessions will be combined with recorded video lessons and intensive work through the online course platform, both individually and in groups. Please see course requirements for the various formats and weight of the course assignments as well as forms of assessment.

This course features a certain amount of independent coursework and thus expects you to be able to set up a self-disciplined study routine. We recommend that you make sure to have a quiet and appropriate working space. To ensure a comfortable learning environment for all, please adhere to our [Code of Online Conduct](#).

Technical Requirements

Stable internet connection.

Fully functional device, such as computer, laptop or tablet (use of smart phones is not recommended) with camera and microphone, headset recommended.

Recommended operating systems: Windows 7 or higher or MacOS 10.13 or higher. Avoid using a VPN.

Software: Webex Meetings.

Course Requirements

Term Paper: 350 Points (35%)

Midterm Exam: 250 Points (25%)

Live Online Attendance (min. 75% required) & Participation: 200 Points (20%)

Independent Research Project and Paper: 200 Points (20%)

Grading

FU Grade	Points of 500	Points of 1,000
1.0	490-500	980-1,000
1.3	475-489	950-979
1.7	450-474	900-949
2.0	425-449	850-899
2.3	400-424	800-849
2.7	375-399	750-799
3.0	350-374	700-749
3.3	325-349	650-699
3.7	300-324	600-649
4.0	250-299	500-599
5.0	< 250	< 500

Literature

Provided online.

Course Schedule

Calendar	Topics, Reading, etc.
<p>Week 1</p>	<p>19th and 20th Century Germany in European Context Introduction to the class. Dr. Jander explains the class, its topics, the way we want to work together. Students explain what they are interested in and what they are looking for in this class. The system of “student presentations” will be discussed.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ralf Dahrendorf, “The Question Is Posed”, in: Ralf Dahrendorf, <i>Society and Democracy in Germany</i> (Anchor Books, 1969), pp. 3-16. • Ian Kershaw, “Europe’s Era of Self-Destruction”, in: Ian Kershaw, <i>To Hell and Back. Europe, 1914 – 1949</i> (Penguin Books 2016), pp. 1-8. • Ian Kershaw, “Preface”, in: Ian Kershaw, <i>Roller-Coaster. Europe, 1950-2017</i> (Allen Lane 2018) pp. 1-5. <p>Where and what do we learn about German Colonialism and racism in the city of Berlin? Students research for the next seminar session (week 2).</p>
<p>Week 2</p>	<p>Modernity without Democracy (1871-1918) Before the end of World War I, Germany did not transform into a democracy. Other industrial societies did. What are the reasons for that? Why did the ruling elites in Germany push back most ideas of democratic reform? Why did democratic opposition fail?</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Konrad H. Jarausch, “The European Paradox”, in: Konrad H. Jarausch, <i>Out of Ashes</i>, (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 1-16. • Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, Susanne Zantop, “Introduction”, in: Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, Susanne Zantop, eds., <i>The Imperialist Imagination</i> (University of Michigan Press 1999), pp. 3-29. <p>Student Presentations</p> <p>Where and what do we learn about Albert Einstein in the city of Berlin? The students research for the next seminar session (week 3).</p>
<p>Week 3</p>	<p>Germany and the First World War (1914-1918) World War I was provoked by Germany. It was the last chance for the ruling elites to stay in power. But instead of gaining a new position as a world power, Germany was defeated and the constitutional monarchy dissolved.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Mazower, “Preface”, in: Mark Mazower, <i>Dark Continent. Europe’s Twentieth Century</i> (Vintage Books Edition 2000), pp. ix-xvi. • Jochen Oltmer, “To Live as German Among Germans – Immigration and Integration of ‘Ethnic Germans’ in the German Empire and the Weimar Republic”, in: Leo Lucassen, David Feldmann & Jochen Oltmer, eds., <i>Paths of Integration. Migration in Western Europe 1880-2004</i> (Amsterdam University Press, 2006), pp. 98-115. <p>Student Presentations</p>

	<p>Where and what do we learn about the history of LGBTI people in Berlin? The students research for the next seminar session (week 4).</p>
<p>Week 4</p>	<p>Failed Republic (1918-1933) For the first time, after World War I, Germany had a structure of a fully democratic, parliamentary republic. But many people were unhappy with this. Hitler and many others tried to destroy the republic. They were supported by large parts of society.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Diner, “Regimes: Democracy and Dictatorship”, in: Dan Diner, Cataclysms. A history of the Twentieth Century from Europe’s Edge (The University of Wisconsin Press 2015), pp. 106-152. • Andrei Markovits, “European Anti-Americanism: A Brief Historical Overview”, in: Andrei Markovits, Uncouth Nation. Why Europe Dislikes America (Princeton University Press 2007), pp. 38-80. <p>Student Presentations</p> <p>Where and what do we learn about resistance to Hitler in the city of Berlin? The students research for the next seminar session (week 5). Students write an independent report about their findings.</p>
<p>Week 5</p>	<p>The Jewish Enemy and the Shoah (1933-1945) For the first time in the history of mankind, the attempt was made to kill one group of people, Jews, in its entirety. All parts of German society participated in that singular mass murder. German society turned into the opposite of an open, democratic society, which is led by rational ideas. Antisemitism became the leading ideology of society.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Mazower, “Hitlers New Order”, in: Mark Mazower, Dark Continent. Europe’s Twentieth Century (Vintage Books Edition 2000), pp. 141-184. • Jeffrey Herf, “Conclusion”, in: Jeffrey Herf, The Jewish Enemy (Harvard University Press 2008), pp. 264-278. <p>Student Presentations</p> <p>The students will receive study questions to prepare for midterm exam in the next seminar session (week 6).</p>
<p>Week 6</p>	<p>MIDTERM EXAM During this session, students will write their midterm exam. They are not allowed to use books, papers or notes. Students have to answer four questions in a digital format (details to be announced in class).</p>

<p>Week 7</p>	<p>Nuremberg Trials and Cold War (1945-1948) Directly after World War II, the USA, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union wanted to get German society to conduct a critical self-reflection of its past. The “Nuremberg Trials” later on became the masterpiece for similar attempts in societies that had turned to dictatorship and genocide. With the beginning of the Cold War, however, all powers stopped denazification.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timothy Garton Ash, “European Question”, in: Timothy Garton Ash, In Europe’s Name (Vintage 1994), pp. 1-13. • Ian Kershaw: “Quiet Transitions in the Dark Decades”, in: Ian Kershaw, To Hell and Back. Europe, 1914 – 1949 (Penguin Books 2016), pp. 408-469. <p>Student Presentations</p> <p>Where and what do we learn about Jews in the city of Berlin? The students research for the next seminar session (week 8).</p>
<p>Week 8</p>	<p>Communist Modernity without Democracy (1949-1968) After the Cold War had started, Germany was split into two parts. In the German Democratic Republic (GDR), which became a member of the Warsaw Pact, a Communist dictatorship started that tried to integrate former Nazis.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arno Lustiger, “The Fate of the JAFK after the War”, in: Arno Lustiger, Stalin and the Jews. The Red Book (Enigma Books 2003), pp. 115-144. • Mark Mazower, “Building the People’s Democracy”, in: Mark Mazower, Dark Continent (Vintage Books 2000), pp. 250-285. <p>Student Presentations</p> <p>Where and what do we learn about the history of the “Freie Universität Berlin” in Berlin? The students research for the next seminar session (week 9).</p>
<p>Week 9</p>	<p>America’s Germany (1949-1968) After the Cold War had started, Germany was split into two parts. In the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), which became a member of the NATO, a new democratic system was established. Step by step, Germans started to deal with the German past.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeffrey Herf, “Atonement, Restitution, and Justice Delayed: West Germany, 1949-1963”, in: Jeffrey Herf, Divided Memory (Harvard University Press 1997), pp. 267-333. • Thomas Alan Schwartz, “Conclusion”, in: Thomas Allan Schwartz, America’s Germany (Harvard University Press 1991), pp. 295-311. <p>Student Presentations</p> <p>Where and what do we learn about the history of Communism in Berlin? Students will research for the next seminar session (week 10).</p>

<p>Week 10</p>	<p>The Demise of Communism in Europe (1961-1989) Long before the Soviet-style dictatorships in Eastern Europe collapsed, signs of an internal crisis of the Warsaw Pact were visible. Even in the GDR, conflicts could be seen.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorothee Wierling, “The Hitler Youth Generation in the GDR: Insecurities, Ambitions and Dilemmas”, in: Konrad H. Jarausch, ed., Dictatorship as Experience. Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR (Berghahn Books 1999), pp. 307-319. • Jeffrey M. Peck, “East-Germany”, in: David S. Wyman (Ed.), The World Reacts to The Holocaust (The Johns Hopkins University Press 1996), pp. 447-472. <p>Student Presentations</p>
<p>Week 11</p>	<p>West Germany and the creation of Europe (1961-1990) Long before the Soviet-style dictatorships collapsed, the democracies of Western Europe started to work together. They created, step by step, the European Union.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaspar Maase, “Establishing Cultural Democracy: Youth, ‘Americanization’, and the Irresistible Rise of Popular Culture”, in: Hannah Schissler, ed., Miracle Years. A cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968 (Princeton University Press 2000), pp. 428-450. • Andrei S. Markovits, Beth Simone Noveck, “West Germany”, in: David S. Wyman (Ed.), The World Reacts to the Holocaust (Johns Hopkins University Press 1996), pp. 391-441. <p>Student Presentations</p> <p>Which are the most important museums in the city of Berlin? The students do research for the next seminar session in the next week (week 12).</p>
<p>Week 12</p>	<p>Modernity, Difference and Democracy After the unification of the FRG and the GDR, signs of an unfinished democratic republic are visible in Germany. As in many other European societies, right-wing populist tendencies and other anti-modern movements are growing. The democracy in Germany and in other European countries is in a critical situation.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rita Chin and Heide Fehrenbach, “German Democracy and the Question of Difference (1945-1995)”, in: Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, & Atina Grossmann, eds., After the Nazi Racial State (University of Michigan Press, 2009), pp. 102-136. • Amadeu Antonio Stiftung, ed., Germany after 1945. A Society confronts Antisemitism, Racism, and Neo-Nazism, (Berlin 2016), pp. 16-56. <p>Student Presentations</p>

Week 13

Modernity, Democracies and History Writing

In our last session, we discuss in retrospect to German history from 1871 to 1989, the concept of modernity. It is the leading concept of history writing when we look at German history from 1871 to 1989/90. But there is a lot of criticism, too. We will have a look at this criticism in this last session.

Reading

- Konrad H. Jarausch, “A chastened Modernity”, in: Konrad H. Jarausch: Out of Ashes (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 773-788.
- Dan Diner, “Introduction”, in: Dan Diner, Cataclysms. A history of the Twentieth Century from Europe’s Edge (The University of Wisconsin Press 2015), pp. 3-10.

Student Presentations