HISTORY 36

Modern Germanies

This course examines German politics, society and culture in the 19th and 20th centuries, starting with the unification of Germany in 1871 and concluding with the fall of the Berlin Wall. The course focuses in particular on the challenges and struggles of building national community, creating national values, and popularizing national forms of identification under several regimes, starting with Bismarck’s creation of a new state in Central Europe called “Germany” in 1871, and ending with the post-Cold War annexation of the German Democratic Republic by the Federal Republic of Germany.

Course Requirements:

1) Regular attendance and participation. This class is not a lecture course, although I will combine occasional background lectures with daily discussions. It is essential to your success in the course that you come to class prepared to discuss the massive amounts of assigned reading for each session. To help you to prepare I will provide guides to the reading with questions for class discussion. In addition, the History Department’s draconian policy on attendance states that unexcused absences will be penalized by a lower grade.

2) Two take-home essay exams, ca. 5-7 pages (1250-1750 words), due respectively by 5:00 pm on Friday October 5 and Friday, November 9. Questions will be distributed at least a week in advance of the due dates.

3) A ten-page page (minimum) (2500 word) interpretative essay on either the Nazi period, the post 1945 period, or on a larger cumulative question of German historiography. Please consult with me in November about possible paper topics. You should email your topic to me no later than Friday, December 5. This paper will be due at the end of the Exam period.

Students should submit both a hard and an electronic version of each writing assignment.

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Leslie Hempling in the Office of Student Disability Services (Parrish 130) or e-mail lhempli1@swarthmore.edu to set up an appointment to discuss your needs.

Readings:

The following paperbacks have been ordered for you at the College Bookstore and placed on General Reserve at McCabe Library:
Anonymous, A Woman in Berlin. Eight Weeks in the Conquered City
Jane Caplan, ed., Nazi Germany (short Oxford History of Germany series)
Sebastian Conrad, German Colonialism A Short History
James Retallack, ed., Imperial Germany, 1871-1918 (short Oxford History of Germany series)
Edith Sheffer, Burned Bridge. How East and West Germans Made the Iron Curtain

In addition, the following useful background text has been placed on General Reserve:
Volker Berghahn, Modern Germany. Society, Economy and Politics in the Twentieth Century

Other readings for the class are available on Moodle.

For their final papers, students should be aware of the vast bibliographic resources at their disposal in McCabe Library and (for the Nazi and Weimar periods) on the Honors Reserve shelves for History 125 Fascist Europe.

Schedule of Meetings and Topics

Tue 9/4  Introduction to the Course: What did “Germany” mean?
Reading: von Fallersleben, “Das Lied der Deutschen”

Thu 9/6  Blood and Iron: Forging a New State and a New National Society
Reading: K. Lerman, “Bismarckian Germany” in J. Retallack ed, Imperial Germany 1871-1918, 18-39

Tue 9/11 Economic Power, Political Authoritarianism, and Reform Debates
Reading: B. Fairbairn, “Economic and Social Developments” in Retallack ed, Imperial Germany, 61-81
M. Hewitson, “Wilhelmine Germany” in Retallack ed, Imperial Germany, 40-50
T. Kühne, “Political Culture and Democratization” in Retallack ed, Imperial Germany, 174-193

Thu 9/13 Insiders and Outsiders: Religion and German Society
Reading: C. Clark, “Religion and Confessional Conflict” in Retallack ed, Imperial Germany, 83-105
Tue  9/18  Defining the Nation: Pressure Groups, Radicalism, and Brinksmanship
       Reading: Hewitson, “Wilhelmine Germany” in Retallack ed, Imperial Germany, 50-55
                S. Conrad, “Between the Poles: Mobility and Nation in Germany’s ‘Real Colony’ in Globalization and the Nation in Imperial Germany, 144-184

Thu  9/20  Colonial Empire Shapes Nationhood at Home
       Reading: S. Conrad, A Short History of German Imperialism, 21-35; 136-152
                L. Wildenthal, “Race, Gender, and Citizenship in the German Colonial Empire,” in F. Cooper & A. Stoler, eds., Tensions of Empire, 263-281

Tue  9/25  A Place in the Sun
       Reading: Conrad, A Short History of German Imperialism, 36-123

Thu  9/27  A German “Genocide”?
       Reading: Conrad, A Short History of German Imperialism, 153-168
                I. Hull, Absolute Destruction. Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany, 5-45; 98-109; 182-196;

Tue  10/2  Soldiers and Civilians Face Total War
       Reading: J. Verhey, “War and Revolution,” in Retallack ed, Imperial Germany 1871-1918, 242-259
                B. Davis, Home Fires Burning, Food, Politics, and Everyday Life in World War I Berlin, 24-47; 190-218

Thu  10/4  Revolution and Counterrevolution
       Reading: Davis, Home Fires Burning, 219-236
                V. Berghahn, Modern Germany, 57-81

Tue  10/9  War, Defeat, and New Meanings for German Nationhood
       Reading: Sammartino, The Impossible Border, 18-70; 96-119
                Judson, “Nationalism in the Era of the Nation State”, 508-513
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<td><strong>Fall Break</strong></td>
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<td>Tue 10/23</td>
<td>Weimar’s Golden Years (With Rumblings on the Right)</td>
<td>Berghahn, <em>Modern Germany</em>, 82-115</td>
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<td>R. Steigman-Gall, “Religion and the Churches” in Caplan, ed., <em>Nazi Germany</em>, 146-167</td>
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<td>Judson, “Nationalism in the Era of the Nation State”, 513-521</td>
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Tue 11/13 The Nazi War
Reading: G. Weinberg, Foreign Policy in Peace and War” in in Caplan, ed., Nazi Germany, 196-218

Thu 11/15 Perpetrators in the Nazi Race War
Reading: Christopher Browning, Ordinary Men, 1-77
Elizabeth Harvey, Women and the Nazi East, 152-174

Tue 11/20 Collapse
Reading: Anonymous, A Woman in Berlin, at least 3-133

Thanksgiving

Tue 11/27 Constructing the Cold War on the Ground
Reading: E. Sheffer, Burned Bridge, How East and West Germans Made the Iron Curtain, 34-141

Thu 11/29 Memory and the Reconstruction of Identity in West Germany
Reading: R. Moeller, “The Third Reich in Postwar German Memory” in Caplan, ed., Nazi Germany, 246-266

Tue 12/4 Socialism’s Social Contract: Consumerism and Complaints
Reading: Sheffer, Burned Bridge, 142-149; 157-177
P. Betts, Within Walls, Private Life in the German Democratic Republic, 21-35; 38-46; 173-193
Young-Sun Hong, “Cigarette Butts and the Building of Socialism in East Germany” in Central European History, 35/3, 2003, 327-344

Thu 12/6 The 1960s: Sexual Evolution in the East versus Revolution in the West
Reading: D. Herzog, “East Germany’s Sexual Evolution,” in K. Pence and P. Betts, eds., Socialist Modern, 71-95

Tue 12/11 The End of the Cold War
Reading: Sheffer, Burned Bridge, 191-257