

**Georgia Institute of Technology**  
**School of History, Technology, and Society**  
**HTS 1031**  
**EUROPE SINCE THE RENAISSANCE**

**Instructor: Prof. Nikolay Koposov**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:05 – 1:25**

**D.M. Smith 207**

**Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30 – 3:00**

**Course overview:**

The course provides an overview of European history from the fifteenth to the late twentieth century. We shall consider the main stages of Europe's economic and social development, the formation and evolution of the modern state, key political events and most important cultural phenomena.

The course will be a combination of lectures and discussions. There will be no textbook. Powerpoints will be made available to students after lectures. Usually, we shall have lectures on Tuesdays. Thursday sessions will be partly lectures and partly discussions.

Students are required to attend classes and observe the Georgia Tech Honor Code.

**Learning outcomes:**

Students in this class will demonstrate:

- A knowledge of basic facts of European history from the fifteenth to the late twentieth century;
- The ability to describe the process of modernization and an understanding of the differences between pre-modern and modern societies;
- The ability to analytically distinguish between general tendencies of historical development and specific forms that these tendencies took in different regions and countries; the capacity to describe the specificity of European history;

- An understanding of major types of factors (ranging from economic development to religion) influencing the historical process; the capacity to critically discuss the reasons for this or that historical event;
- An appreciation of historicity of things human, an understanding of the specificity of historical approach to social and cultural phenomena and an experience of “thinking historically” about them;
- An understanding of the difference between historical analysis and value judgment;
- An understanding of historical roots of the conceptual vocabulary of social and human sciences and the capacity to critically use main historical concepts (like capitalism, modernity, revolution, democracy, etc.);
- An understanding of the difference between primary and secondary sources and an experience of their critical examination.

### **Readings:**

Readings will be of two different kinds: primary sources (classical texts of social and political thought including those of Machiavelli, Cardinal Richelieu, Rousseau, Tocqueville, Marx and Engels, Lenin) and secondary sources (including texts of some of the twentieth-century leading historians and social theorists like Max Weber, Fernand Braudel, Reinhart Koselleck, François Furet, Eric Hobsbawm, etc.).

### **Requirements:**

Grades for this course will be based on several criteria:

**Class participation (10%):** Make sure you do the readings by Thursday of each week and come prepared for discussion; the grade will be based on frequency and quality of your comments.

**Quizzes (20%):** Multiple-choice and short-answer questions covering readings

**Midterm (30%):** Multiple-choice and short-answer questions and short (1 page) essay covering readings and power-points

**Final essay (40%):** Multiple-choice and short-answer questions and two short (1 page) essays covering readings and power-points

## Weekly Schedule

### Week 1: The Legacy of the Middle Ages and the Problem of Modernity

#### Reading:

- Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London, New York: Routledge, 1992), "Author's Introduction," pp. XXVIII-XLII; chapter 4 "The Spirit of Capitalism," pp. 13-38.

### Week 2: Renaissance and Reformation

#### Reading:

- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdf/machprin.pdf>

#### Quiz 1

### Week 3: Geographic Discoveries and the Struggle for Hegemony in Early Modern Europe

#### Reading:

- Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), vol. II, chapter IV.1 "The Origin of Empires," pp. 657-81.

### Week 4: Early Capitalism

#### Reading:

- Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism: 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Century* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), vol. I, *The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible*, chapter "Guessing the World Population," pp. 31-51; vol. II *The Wheels of Commerce*, chapter "Capital, Capitalism, Capitalists," pp. 232-49.

### Week 5: Absolutism and the Emergence of the Modern State

#### Reading:

- Cardinal Richelieu, *Political Testament* (fragments), pp. 178-89, <http://www.unz.org/Pub/MeeArthur-1910v10-00178> ;
- Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), vol. II, chapter IV.2 "The State: Resources and Weaknesses," pp. 681-703.

## **Week 6: Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment**

### **Reading:**

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse of Inequality*, part II, pp. 23-41,  
<http://www.nutleyschools.org/userfiles/150/Classes/5377/DiscourseonInequality.pdf>

### **Quiz 2**

## **Week 7: Acceleration of History and Conceptual Revolution**

### **Reading:**

- Reinhart Koselleck, "Is There an Acceleration of History?" *High-Speed Society: Social Acceleration, Power, and Modernity*, ed. Hartmut Rosa and William E. Scheuerman (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), pp. 113-34

## **Week 8: The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars**

### **Reading:**

- Alexis deTocqueville, *The Old regime and the Revolution*, Book 1; Book 2, chapters 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 20,  
[http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com\\_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=2419](http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=2419)

### **Midterm**

## **Week 9: Industrialization. Classical Capitalism and Its Discontent**

### **Reading:**

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*,  
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf> ;

### **Quiz 3**

## **Week 10: Community and Modernity. Nationalism and the Crisis of Reason**

### **Reading:**

- Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital: 1848-1875* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), chapter 5, "Building Nations," pp. 82-97;
- Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), chapter 6, "Waving Flags: Nations and Nationalism," pp. 142-164; chapter 10, "Certainties Undermined: The Sciences," pp. 243-261.

## **Week 11: World War I and the Russian Revolution**

### **Reading:**

- *The Structure of Soviet History: Essays and Documents*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Ronald Grigor Suny (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 7-22 (R.G. Suny, "Toward a Social History of the October Revolution"); pp. 39-42 (V.I. Lenin, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution"); pp. 131-3 (Joseph Stalin, "The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists").

## **Week 12: Communism and Fascism**

### **Reading:**

- François Furet and Ernst Nolte, *Fascism and Communism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001).

### **Quiz 4**

## **Week 13: World War II and the Holocaust**

### **Reading:**

- Saul Friedländer, "From Anti-Semitism to Extermination: A Historiographical Study of Nazi Policies Toward the Jews and an Essay in Interpretation," *Unanswered Questions: Nazi Germany and the Genocide of the Jews*, ed. François Furet (New York: Schocken Books, 1989), pp. 3-31;
- Paul Hilberg, "The Statistics," *Ibid.*, pp. 155-71.

## **Week 14: The Postwar: Thirty Glorious Years**

### **Reading:**

- Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), chapter XI, "The Social Democratic Moment," pp. 360-389; chapter 14, "Diminished Expectations," pp. 453-83.

## **Week 15: The Fall of Communism and the Rise of Neoliberalism**

### **Reading:**

- Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), chapter 16, "End of Socialism," pp. 461-99;

## **Week 16: General Discussion: Europe and the World, Lessons from the Twentieth Century**

- Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), epilogue, "From the House of the Dead: An Essay on Modern European Memory," pp. 803-31.

## **Final exam**