

UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
SPRING 2018

IR231

The Cold War: Europe between the US and the USSR

Place: Morey 205/Goergen 109

Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays
15:25-16:40

Office Hours: Tue & Wed, 14:00-15:00

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Description:

The Cold War is typically seen as a political struggle between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., yet it was played out on and directly affected the peoples of Europe – Western, Central and Eastern. Through the prism of its societies, the course will trace the splitting of the continent, the deepening divides, and the overriding consequences for states across Europe. From a socio-political perspective focused especially on Central Europe, we will analyze the most dramatic and significant turning points such as the Berlin Airlift in 1949 and the Polish Solidarity strikes in 1980. We will survey internal as well as external, actions and reactions spanning nearly five decades until the implosion of the entire communist system between 1989 and 1991. The course will close with a look at currently rising tensions between Europe and Russia, already referred to as a new Cold War.

General Announcements:

- On the dates of our three film-screening sessions – the last Tuesday of each month in February, March & April – class will be held later and in a different venue. The 2.5 hour screening & discussion will be on February 27, March 27, and April 24, from 6:15-8:15PM in Goergen 109.
- Once a month – on Thursday, 15 February (1940s&50s); Thursday, 8 March (1960s&70s); and Thursday, 17 April (1980s&90s) – the class meeting will be dedicated to a team presentation of a 2-decade timeline of key events. A closer look will be on the split city of Berlin with subsequent periods of the Cold War analyzed through the prism of this singularly symbolic city. Student teams will be responsible for a *powerpoint* or other visual presentation (approx. 20 minutes per team) to be narrated equally by all members of the team. Discussion will follow. To prevent technological mishaps, the visual file MUST be emailed to me by 12 noon on the day of the presentation; it will be downloaded onto my computer and ready to go at the start of class time.
- The course textbook is *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* by Tony Judt. A full syllabus – with exact page assignments for consecutive weeks – follows below. Additional reading materials should be considered (*unless otherwise specified*) as highly recommended for the final.
- This syllabus – as well as materials which we accumulate over the semester – will also be available on Blackboard.

Course requirements:

- **Participation:** Students are expected to contribute actively to our meetings; this will influence the final grade. All students are required to attend each class: students who miss more than five meetings without a serious and explicit reason cannot expect to pass, regardless of how well they do in other course requirements. One class can be missed without excuse; each subsequent absence will incur a 2 percent lowering of the final grade. Attendance and participation accounts for 15 percent of the course grade.
- **Reading assignments:** Students are required to read the assigned pages from the textbook as specified. Recommended, supplementary materials from this syllabus or of the students' choosing are highly encouraged throughout the semester.
- **Examinations:** Each student will choose (or be assigned to) a "timeline team," responsible for a particular Cold War decade. Two teams will do presentations on the designated dates in February, March and April; performance in this activity will account for 10 percent of the course grade. The mid-term examination will be held on Thursday, 20 March (60 minutes; multiple choice, short answer & matching columns), accounting for 25 percent of the course grade. The final examination, accounting for 50 percent of the course grade, will be a cumulative, *open book* examination – you may use any and all hard copy notes and sources (multiple choice, short answer, matching columns & essays).

Week One – Understanding the European Continent as God's Playground

1. *January 18*

Assignment: Review 18th-19th century European history to get a grasp of how the continent got conceptually as well as physically divided. North, South, East, West: which countries are today assigned to which compass point? What is the political and civilizational geography of the continent? Especially look at the role of modern history in Central and Eastern Europe: empires versus nations, subjects versus citizens, groups versus individuals, and multiculturalism versus monoculturalism.

2. *January 23*

Discussion: What historical, geopolitical, and social circumstances led Hitler and Stalin feel that they could carve up Central Europe between them? What eased the way for Churchill and Roosevelt to hand this region over to the Soviet Union in exchange for the end of WWII?

Davies, N., *Europe: A History* – skim Chapters VIII-X for history of formation of nation states in West and empires in the east, read Chapter XII (1057-1117, up to *Integration and Disintegration, 1985-1991*) for background of the Cold War period
Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Introduction, 1-10

Week Two – The Re-Dividing of Europe

3. *January 25*

The legacy of Yalta, Tehran, and Potsdam: The establishment of the communist states in Europe after WWII. Communism versus democracy/capitalism; NATO & the budding EEC, the Warsaw Pact & Comecon. Totalitarian politics and the centrally planned economy

4. *January 30*

Symbolic ruins, reconstruction, new constructions: Reichstag, Dresden, Warsaw, and Nowa Huta
Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter III: The Rehabilitation of Europe, 82-99; Chapter IV: The Impossible Settlement, 100-128

Gaddis, J.L., *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* – Chapter 2: Cold War Empires: Europe

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W., *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part I, Chapters 1, 2 and 5

Week Three – Negotiating Central Europe

5. *February 1*

The Dividing and Divided Germany: Eliminating Perceived and Real Threats of Germany, of the Soviet Union

6. *February 6*

Negotiating buffer states: Yugoslavia, Austria, Albania & Romania. How Tito managed to satisfy both West and East, how Austria broke away from the Soviet Union, and how Albania and Romania forged their own path

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter V: The Coming of the Cold War, 129-181; Chapter VIII: The Politics of Stability, 241-247, 260-265

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W., *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part I, Chapters 10 and 13

Week Four – The Soviet Bloc: The first decades thru a Polish Looking Glass

7. *February 8*

Case Study – Poland under communism, 1944-1956. Eastern Europe under Soviet grip, the Cold War on two sides, and the first cracks appear in the political-economic system

8. *February 13*

Protesting in the Soviet Paradise: Berlin, Poznań, Budapest

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter VI: Into the Whirlwind, 187-196

Week Five – The Divided City, Country & Continent: The first decades

9. *February 15*

Presentations – The 1940s and 1950s (focus on Berlin)

10. *February 20*

The sociopolitical role of religion in Europe. Separation of church and state and secularization in the West vis-à-vis churches battling states and increased religiosity in the East

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Coda: The End of Old Europe, 226-237;
Chapter VIII: The Politics of Stability, 247-260

Gaddis, J.L., *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* – Chapter 5: The German Question, 113-151

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W., *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part I, Chapter 14

Week Six – Freezes & Thaws in the Cold War

11. February 22

Solidification accompanied by loosening of the divides; shifts, renegotiations, changes in fault lines; proxy wars emerging

12. February 27 – **CHANGE OF TIME & VENUE** – *Goergen 109, 6:15-8:15*

Film Screening: Krisztina Goda, *Children of Glory (Szabadság, szerelem)*, Hungary 2006 (123 minutes)

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter IX: Lost Illusions, 309-323

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W., *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part II, Chapter 29

Week Seven – Economic, Military, and Political Alliances in Action

13. March 1

The military alliances: The effects of Israel's 6-Day War on Cold War politics

14. March 6

Economic booms and failures: the beginnings of the European Union, the cementing of Soviet "friendships"

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter XV: Politics in a New Key, 484-503

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W., *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part I, Chapters 7, 8, 12; 15; Part II, Chapter 24, 26, 32

Week Eight – Upheavals: Returning to Berlin, East and West

15. March 8

Presentations – The 1960s and 1970s (focus on Berlin)

SPRING BREAK – no classes on 13 & 15 March

16. March 20

Midterm Examination

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter XVI: A Time of Transition, 504-534

Week Nine – Détente: The US & USSR vis-à-vis Europe

17. March 22

The gains and losses, the advantages and disadvantages of détente for Europe, East and West

18. March 27 – **CHANGE OF TIME & VENUE – Goergen 109, 6:15-8:15**

Film Screening: Jan Sverak, *Kolya (Kolja)*, Czech Republic 1996 (105 minutes)

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter XIII: The End of the Affair, 422-449; Chapter XIX: The End of the Old Order, 585-633

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W, *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part III, Chapter 37; Part IV, Chapter 51

Week Ten – Human Rights across the Continent

19. March 29

Protest in the West: 1968 and Human Rights under democracy

20. April 3

Protest in the East: 1968 and Human Rights under communism

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter XII: The Spectre of Revolution, 390-421

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W, *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part III, Chapter 48; Part IV, Chapter 57

Week Eleven – Of Spies and Sports

21. April 6

The Information Cold War

22. April 8

The Sports War

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter XXIV: Europe as a Way of Life, 777-787

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W, *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part V, Chapter 72

Week Twelve – The End in Sight

23. April 13

Poland: Solidarity, Martial Law and the June 1989 Elections

24. April 17

Presentations – The 1980s and 1900s (focus on Berlin)

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter XX: A Fissile Continent, 637-664

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W, *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part V, Chapter 67;
Part VI, Chapter 76

Week Thirteen – Reunification of city, country & continent: Falling walls

25. April 19

The reunification of Germany & Berlin (moving & reconstructing the capital city); new members in old clubs (NATO, the EU)

26. April 24 – ***CHANGE OF TIME & VENUE – Goergen 109, 6:15-8:15***

Film Screening: Wolfgang Becker, *Goodbye Lenin*, Germany 2003 (121 minutes)

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter XXIII: The Varieties of Europe,
768-776

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W, *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part VI, Chapter 75,
80

Week Fourteen – The End in Sight

27. April 26

The New Cold War: The Old, New European (dis)Union vs. Russia

28. May 1

Reviewing the Past, Viewing the Future: Democracies or Despotisms?

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Chapter XXIV: Europe as a Way of Life,
787-800

Gaddis, J.L., *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* – Chapter 10: The New Cold War
History: First Impressions, 281-295

Judge, E.H.; Langdon, J.W, *The Cold War: A History through Documents* – Part VI, Chapter 85,
86

CUMULATIVE, OPEN BOOK FINAL EXAMINATION