Reading Seminar HIST 72m, Spring 2013

**Living under a Dictatorship:**
Everyday Life in 20th Century European Totalitarian Regimes

Meeting Time: Tu., 3-5pm, Robinson Hall 107
Instructor: Dr. Julia Timpe
Office Hours: M/Th, 1.30-2.30pm @ CES, room 411 (27 Kirkland)
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**Course Description:**
What was daily life like under the totalitarian regimes in Europe in the Twentieth Century? How did ideology and politics affect the lives of “ordinary people” – and how did it affect the daily lives of those who were persecuted by this totalitarian regime? What kinds of acts of resistance and what forms of oppression occurred on (a more or less) daily basis in Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia or Communist Eastern Germany? And, on the flip side, how much support for these totalitarian regimes and adaptation to their rules, structures and demands can we discern amongst their populations? These and other questions will be tackled in this reading seminar, which explores the everyday lives of people in Europe’s totalitarian dictatorships of the twentieth century. The course will introduce students to scholarly approaches to, and debates about, the history of the everyday, both theoretically and through a wide array of historical studies that deal with themes such as youth, consumption, women's lives, work and housing.

**Aims & Objectives**
This course aims to familiarize students with the historiography of totalitarian regimes in Europe during the 20th century, with a special focus on historians' work on topics of everyday life in Fascist Italy, Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany and the GDR. Students will learn different methodologies and approaches employed in the writing of these histories, and will evaluate their potential and shortcomings. In addition, this course aims to enhance students' skills in reading, interpreting, and critiquing historical arguments.
Books recommended for purchase (also on reserve on Lamont):


All other assigned readings will be made available on iSites or can be found on j-stor.

Course Requirements and Grading:

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Book Review</td>
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<td>In-class Presentation</td>
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<td>Reading Response Papers</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Diary Exercise</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Historiographical Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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[*Amount of presentations subject to change/contingent on class size.*]

Readings, Discussions, Class Participation:

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to complete the readings. Furthermore, active participation in group assignments during class time is an essential part of the course. Regular postings to a discussion board on iSites (or the lack thereof) will also be counted towards the participation grade. Not fulfilling class requirements (such as failing to bring a primary source for the last class) will be penalized accordingly. Overall, participation is worth 20% of each student’s final grade.

Oral Assignments:

In-class Presentation: 15% (or 10% each)

Once or twice during the semester, students are in charge to introduce the weekly readings. This includes giving a very brief introductory presentation on the theme of the week and providing a list of questions (3-5) that should be discussed during the week. (These questions have to be emailed to me no later than Monday, 9 pm.)

*The goal of these assignments is to introduce students to the critical reading of scholarly literature. They function as preparatory exercises for the later book review, the reading response essays and the final historiography paper. Furthermore, both presentations aim to further students’ in-class participation and presentation skills.*
Written Assignments:
[All page counts refer to texts that are double-spaced, standard margins, 12-point font.]

Reading Response Essays: 15%
Students are asked to write brief (ca. 1 page) response papers comparing two (or more) of the weekly assigned readings (five times in the semester). Importantly, these essays are not to summarize the readings, but rather outline on how/where their arguments overlap/contradict/ could be questioned/ leave space for further inquiry, etc. The response papers are due the day BEFORE the respective texts are discussed in class, i.e. each Monday at 5 pm on week 3-6, 9 and 10 and 12 and 13. (Students can choose to pass on essays on three non-consequent weeks; i.e. each student has to hand in five essays.)
This assignment aims to train and develop students abilities to critically read scholarly texts. The essays – and the feedback students receive for them – also have the goal to prepare students for the writing of the final historiographical paper.

Book Review:
Students are asked to write a scholarly book review about one of the books assigned in class. This book review is due on March 26 (week 9) and should ca. 1000 words long. The goal of this assignment is to develop and assess students’ ability to critically engage with scholarly literature on topics in the class. Together with the reading response papers, this assignment will prepare students for the writing of the final research paper.

Diary Exercise:
Throughout the semester, each student will create one 'avatar' and record (parts of) his or her life in a fictional diary. These entries should be brief and reflect on themes we discussed in class. Diaries are due on April 16 (week 12.)
The goal of this exercise is to ensure that students pay attention to the continuities and the chronologies of the specific national history of one of the countries under scrutiny in this class. This aims to be a “counter-balance” to the thematic, non-chronological outline of the course. The diary exercise also aims to increase students sensibilities and understanding of potential sources for the practice of everyday history.

Historiographical Essay:
As a final paper, students are expected to write a historiographical essay which discusses (in 10-12 pages) a theme related to everyday life under totalitarianism employing either a comparative perspective or within the framework of one national history. This paper is based on at least 5 books, the majority of which are to be found by the student. The paper is due on Tuesday, May 7. (There will be no Final Exam.)
The goal of this paper is to develop and evaluate students' understanding of issues that were discussed in class, as well as their abilities in reading, interpreting, and critiquing historical arguments.
Other Assignments:
[All counting towards the participation grade.]

I-Sites Discussion
Students are expected to post questions/comments/critiques of the readings (before class) on a discussion board available on I-Sites (restricted to class members.)
This assignment aims to develop ongoing debates on the topic of our course outside the classroom and will also enable me to monitor students' interest and structure class discussions accordingly.

Primary Source Exercise:
In our last meeting (April 30), our class discussion will center around primary sources. For that class, students are asked to identify brief primary sources (in English, no longer than 4 pages) that deal with issues of everyday life in 20th-Century totalitarian regimes, and circulate copies no later than April 23. We will discuss these primary sources together on April 30 (after each student has briefly introduced his/her primary source).
Similar to the previous assignment, the primary source exercise has the goal of ensuring that class discussions are structured around the interest of individual students. In addition, this assignment aims to develop students' abilities to research primary sources on historical topics.

Some Important General Policies

Academic Integrity:
Students in this course must adhere to the standards of academic integrity set forth by Harvard University. All of the written work submitted must be the student's own work and must contain citations of the sources consulted. Suspected violations of academic integrity will be referred to the appropriate Administrative Board for arbitration.

Policy on Collaboration:
Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics and to share sources. You may find it useful to discuss your chosen topic with your peers, particularly if you are working on the same topic as a classmate. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing and that it reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you received any help with your writing (feedback on drafts, etc), you must also acknowledge this assistance.
WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1 (January 29) : Introduction

No assigned readings.

Week 2 (February 5): 20th Century Dictatorships and Everyday Life

Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, 3-40. [PdF]

Alf Lüdtke, “What is the History of Everyday Life and Who are its Practitioners?,” In Ibid., *The History of Everyday Life. Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life*, 3-40. [BOOK]


(= Section “The atomisation of everyday life”)

[UNTIL WEEK 5: Lee S.J. European Dictatorships1918-1945, xi-xv; 24-220.]

Week 3 (February 12): Being Young

(Ch. 8, “Young people: mobilisation and refusal”)


Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities*, 93-122. [PdF]
(= Ch. 4, “Class Dismissed: Fascism's Politics of Youth”)

(= Ch. 5, “Growing Up.”)

[UNTIL WEEK 5: Lee S.J. European Dictatorships1918-1945, xi-xv; 24-220.]
Week 4 (February 19): Women's Everyday Lives

(= Ch. 3 “Motherhood” and Ch. 4 “The Family versus the State.”)

Rebecca Balmas Neary, “Domestic Life and the Activist Life in the 1930s Soviet Union,” in *Borders of Socialism: Private Spheres of Soviet Russia*, ed. by Lewis H. Siegelbaum, 107-122. [ONLINE ON HOLLIS]


[UNTIL WEEK 5: Lee S.J. European Dictatorships 1918-1945, xi-xv; 24-220.]

Week 5 (February 26): Love and Sexuality

Lorenzo Bernadusi, *The Enemy of the New Man: Homosexuality in Fascist Italy*, 111-167. [PdF]
(= Ch. 4 “The Repression of Homosexuality”)

Orlando Figes, *Just Send me Word. A True Story of Love and Survival in the Gulag*, 60 – 110. [PdF]

(= Ch. 4 “The dictatorship of love’: sex, love and state hypocrisy”)

Week 6 (March 5): Working

Luisa Passerini, *Fascism in popular memory: The cultural experience of the Turin working class*, 1-15 and 42-93. [PdF]


(= Ch. 5, “Speaking Bolshevik.”)
**Week 7 (March 12): Leisure**

Discussion of the case study Nazi leisure organization “Strength Through Joy”
*Primary source material and readings will be distributed prior to class.*

**Week 8 (March 19): SPRING BREAK**

**Week 9 (March 26): Consumption**

**MIDTERM BOOK REVIEWS DUE TODAY**

(= Ch. 4, “Increasing Variety”)


Jonathan Wiesen, “Driving, Shopping and Smoking: The Society for Consumer Research and the Politics of Pleasure in Nazi Germany”[PdF]

**Week 10 (April 2): Living**

(= Ch. 2, “Living in Common Places: The Communal Apartment.”)

Andrew Bergerson, *Ordinary Germans in Extraordinary Times*, 131-169. [PdF]
(= Ch. 5, “Coordination”)

**Week 11 (April 9): Policing, Informing and Resisting**


**Week 12 (April 16): Cinematic Representations of Everyday Life**

*Life of Others*

**DIARIES DUE TODAY!**

**Week 13 (April 23): (Diaries of) Victimhood**

Victor Klemperer, *I will Bear Witness: Diary of the Nazi Years*, TBA. [Pdf]

Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on my mind*, TBA [Book/ Online on Hollis]

**Week 14 (April 30): Primary Sources & Concluding Discussion**

We will be discussing a selection of primary sources on everyday life in Fascist Italy, Stalinist Russia, Nazi Germany and the German Democratic Republic. These sources will be identified, brought to class and introduced by the members of the class (after consultation with me.)

**FINAL PAPER (HISTORIOGRAPHICAL PAPER) IS DUE ON TUE., MAY 7.**