

History 354: Europe in the Twentieth Century
Fall Semester, 2021

430 Armory
TR 11:00 a.m.–12:20 p.m.

Ryan Allen
rallen11@illinois.edu

300B Gregory Hall
TR 12:30–1:30 p.m. and by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course will explore the major episodes, ideologies, and cultural forces that defined European experience in the twentieth century. Over the course of the semester, we will follow the events that took Europe from the mire of 1914 to the untethering of 1989. An age of unprecedented growth and unthinkable violence, the twentieth century brought technological innovation and an expansion of liberal democracy as well as wrenching upheaval and the rise of fascism. Topics covered will include: World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution, Nazism, World War II, the Holocaust, consumer society, the Cold War, the end of European empires, and the end of the Soviet Bloc. We will examine films, memoirs, novels, and paintings, and pay close attention to relations between cultural expression and historical experience. We will focus on six major themes—utopia, resentment, memory, consumption, violence, and nostalgia—in the work of European writers and artists.

Assigned Readings

Seven books are required for the course. They are available for purchase at the Illini Union Bookstore. All other readings are available through the course's Compass website, which can be found at: <https://compass2g.illinois.edu>

Yevgeny Zamyatin, *We* (Penguin, 1993)

Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *Journey to the End of the Night* (New Directions, 2006)

Ruth Kluger, *Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered* (Feminist Press, 2012)

Georges Perec, *Things: A Story of the Sixties* (Verba Mundi, 1990)

Henri Alleg, *The Question* (Bison, 2006)

Daniel Anselme, *On Leave* (Faber and Faber, 2014)

Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern* (Vintage, 1999)



Assigned Films

Seven films are required for the course. Films can be purchased or rented. Some films are available to borrow or stream through the University Library.

Jean Renoir, *Grand Illusion* (1937, 114 minutes)

Sergei Eisenstein and Grigory Aleksandrov, *Old and New* (1929, 92 minutes)

Federico Fellini, *Amarcord* (1973, 127 minutes)

Andrei Tarkovsky, *Ivan's Childhood* (1962, 96 minutes)

Jacques Tati, *Mon oncle* (1958, 117 minutes)

Gillo Pontecorvo, *The Battle of Algiers* (1966, 122 minutes)

Wolfgang Becker, *Good Bye Lenin* (2003, 121 minutes)

Course Requirements and Grade Distribution

Participation: 20% of course grade

Attendance is required. For each class meeting, complete the assigned reading or viewing before class. You should bring a copy of the reading and any notes you have made to class. You are expected to participate in class discussions throughout the semester.

Two Short Papers: 40% of course grade (20% each)

For the first paper, you will examine the theme of utopia in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution or the politics of resentment between 1919 and 1939. This paper is due in class on Tuesday, October 19. In the second paper, you will analyze the culture of consumption that emerged after 1945 or the culture of remembrance that grew up around World War II and the Holocaust. The second paper is due in class on Tuesday, November 16. These papers should be between five to seven double-spaced pages. Detailed instructions will be distributed before the papers' due dates. These papers are designed to evaluate the quality of your engagement with course readings, films, and lectures. Your success in this class is important to me, and I encourage you to speak with me about paper ideas, outlines, and drafts.

Presentation: 20% of course grade

You will prepare one in-class presentation that examines a film in the light of our course readings. Rather than summarizing the film's plot, this short presentation will connect specific scenes to themes and topics raised in class. I will provide more detailed instructions in class on Tuesday, August 31.

Final Paper: 20% of course grade

You will write a final paper comparing the end of European empires with the end of the Soviet Bloc. Detailed instructions will be distributed before the paper's due date. I encourage you to speak with me about paper ideas, outlines, and drafts. The paper should be between six to eight double-spaced pages and is due no later than 5:00 pm on Friday, December 17.

Academic Integrity

As with all your courses at the University of Illinois, you are required to adhere to the University's policy on academic integrity. This policy is described in detail at: <https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1/part4/1-401/>

Accommodation and Disabilities

The University of Illinois provides reasonable accommodations to students with documented physical and learning disabilities. The Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES), located at 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, IL 61820, coordinates all documentation and accommodation of disabilities. The DRES telephone number is (217) 333-4603 and their website can be found at: <http://disability.illinois.edu>

Course Schedule

This course schedule may change. Students will be notified of changes in class.
NB. Readings marked with an * are available on our course Compass website. Films marked with a † can be purchased or rented.

Introduction The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age

T August 24	Syllabus
R August 26	* Modris Eksteins, "Preface" and "Paris," <i>Rites of Spring</i> , xiii-xvi, 9-54
T August 31	† Jean Renoir, <i>Grand Illusion</i> , 114 min Instructions for Presentations
R September 2	* Modris Eksteins, "Rites of War," <i>Rites of Spring</i> , 139-69

Part One The Soviet Union: Dazzling Utopia or Mechanized Dystopia?

T September 7	* John Reed, "Preface" and "Victory," <i>Ten Days That Shook the World</i> , xlvi-liii, 291-323
R September 9	Yevgeny Zamyatin, <i>We</i> , 3-113
T September 14	Yevgeny Zamyatin, <i>We</i> , 114-225
R September 16	† Sergei Eisenstein and Grigory Aleksandrov, <i>Old and New</i> , 92 min

Part Two Fascism, Nazism, and the Politics of Resentment

- T September 21 Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *Journey to the End of the Night*, 1–93
- R September 23 Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *Journey to the End of the Night*, 94–203
- T September 28 † Federico Fellini, *Amarcord*, 127 min
- R September 30 * Friedrich Reck, *Diary of a Man in Despair*, 3–79
Instructions for First Paper

Part Three Remembrance Culture: World War II and the Holocaust

- T October 5 * W. G. Sebald, “Paul Bereyter,” *The Emigrants*, 25–63
- R October 7 † Andrei Tarkovsky, *Ivan’s Childhood*, 96 min
- T October 12 Ruth Kluger, *Still Alive*, 13–131
- R October 14 Ruth Kluger, *Still Alive*, 132–214

Part Four Consumer Culture: The Great Acceleration

- T October 19 * Roland Barthes, “The New Citroën,” *Mythologies*, 88–90
* Guy Debord, “Theses on Traffic,” *Situationist International*, 56–8
First Paper Due
- R October 21 † Jacques Tati, *Mon oncle*, 117 min
- T October 26 Georges Perec, *Things*, 13–95
- R October 28 Georges Perec, *Things*, 96–126
Instructions for Second Paper

Part Five Violence and the End of Empire: The Algerian Case

- T November 2 Henri Alleg, *The Question*, 33–102
- R November 4 † Gillo Pontecorvo, *The Battle of Algiers*, 122 min
- T November 9 Daniel Anselme, *On Leave*, 1–70
- R November 11 Daniel Anselme, *On Leave*, 71–194

Part Six From Liberation to Loss: The Dissolution of the Soviet Union

- T November 16 Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*, 11–77
Second Paper Due
- R November 18 Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*, 78–156
- November 20–28 **No Class Meeting:** Fall Break
- T November 30 * Svetlana Alexievich, “On the Little Red Flag and the Smile of the Axe,”
Secondhand Time, 248–67
- R December 2 † Wolfgang Becker, *Good Bye Lenin*, 121 min
Instructions for Final Paper
- T December 7 Course Wrap-up
- F December 17 **Final Paper Due:** Your final paper is due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 17. Please e-mail your paper to me as an attached Microsoft Word document at rallen11@illinois.edu