Course description: This class surveys European history from 1900 to 1945, a period referred to as an “Age of Extremes”\(^1\) rife with ideological conflict, mass politics, and two world wars. The course seeks to explore the forces behind these extremes, with a particular focus on changing tides in culture and politics in the decades preceding two cataclysmic world wars. In particular, the course integrates films and explores the role of media, culture, and propaganda. Through the use of film and primary sources, it seeks to expose students to the nature of debates and life in Europe during this tumultuous half-century. The course also addresses the relationship between Europe and other continents.

Assignments: 1) Students are responsible for reading the assigned material and reflecting on the contents before each class meeting. To that end, students are required to bring three discussion questions to each class. These questions should be emailed to the instructor no later than three hours before the start of the course. The questions are factored into the participation grade. 2) Each student will write a total of four short response papers (700-1000 words) focusing on a primary source (or collection of primary sources). One paper will be submitted for each week of the course, due by 10 a.m. Monday of the following week (i.e. students have the weekend to prepare their papers). 3) Periodically, students may be asked to present on a particular primary source or on the life of a certain historical figure. This exercise gives individuals the opportunity to explore a particular source or biography in depth and to present it for everyone’s benefit and is an integral part of the participation grade. 4) A final 5 page essay will be due at the end of the course on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor. The paper topic will build off of one of the themes of the lectures. Paper topics must be approved by the instructor by Thursday, 5/24 and submitted on Friday, 6/8 (one week after the date of the last class).

Attendance: Attendance to each meeting is mandatory. Repeated or prolonged absences without explanation will result in a lower participation grade. In the event of a planned absence or illness, please contact the instructor in advance.

Grading breakdown:

- Short response papers: 40% (each 10%)
- Participation (three weekly discussion questions, attendance, mini-presentations, and general engagement): 30%
- Final essay: 30%

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Materials: Reading material will be posted on OAK. Alternatively, students may opt to purchase a bound course packet. Students will be required to watch several films over the course of the Maymester. These films must be viewed prior to the meeting. The instructor will organize a screening several days before the planned discussion in consultation with students. Attendance at these screenings is not mandatory but is strongly encouraged. In the event that students cannot attend the screenings, all films will either be available online or made available on reserve at the Central Library Circulation Desk for private viewing.

Academic integrity: All students should be aware of their responsibilities under Vanderbilt's honor system. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will be treated as such. Historians use the Chicago Manual of Style for citations; students are expected to use Chicago-style citations in their papers. Please refer to the relevant passages in the Student Handbook or consult with the instructor in cases of doubt.

Outline:

Week One: Europe at the fin-de-siècle

Course goals and expectations

T 5/8- Can we speak of a European culture? Cosmopolitanism vs. Nationalism
Fritzsche, Reading Berlin 1900 [selections] and either Schorske, Fin-de-siècle Vienna [selections] or Thomas Ort, Art and Life in Modernist Prague: Karel Čapek and his Generation, 1911-1938 [selections]

W 5/9- Ideologies I
Marx and Engels, “The Communist Manifesto,” parts 1 and 2; Marinetti, “Futurist Manifesto”

R 5/10- Manor to Machine: European cities and their hinterlands
Selections from Pieter Judson, Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria

F 5/11- European empires
Rudyard Kipling The White Man’s Burden; Carl Peters, New Light on Dark Africa [selections]

Week Two: The Great War
M 5/14- The Great War and the system of alliances
   Clark, Sleepwalkers [selections]
   **First response paper due by 10 a.m.**

T 5/15- On the Battlefield
   *All Quiet on the Western Front* [film and/or text selections: students choose], Jünger, *Storm of Steel* [selections]

W 5/16- Soviet Union: Revolution and War
   Vera Figner, *Memoirs of a Revolutionary; October 10 Days That Shook the World* [film]

R 5/17-The The Paris Peace
   Wilson’s Fourteen Points; Clemenceau, response to German delegations’ objections to proposed peace, 1919; Excerpts, Treaty of Versailles, 1919

F 5/18- Colonies and Mandates

**Week III: Interwar Europe**

M 5/21- Lost Generations: Commemorating war in Britain, France, Germany
   Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth*; McCrae “In Flanders Fields”
   **Second response paper due by 10 a.m.**

T 5/22- Modernism and Weimar Germany
   *Metropolis* [film], Isherwood, *Goodbye to Berlin*

W 5/23- Brutalization and Violence
   Mazower, *Dark Continent*, [selections, pp. 41-75]; presentations on Walther Rathenau, Matthias Erzberger, Free State of Fiume, Spanish Civil War, others

R 5/24-Ideologies II
   Mussolini, "The Doctrine of Fascism," pp. 1-20; Leon Trotsky, “What is Fascism, and How to Fight It”; Carl Schmitt, *Concept of the Political* [selections]

F 5/25- 1933 in Germany: the role of Nazi propaganda
   *Triumph of the Will* [film]; *German History in Documents and Images* [selected primary sources]

**Week IV: World War II**
M 5/28- Munich Agreement and the Road to War
   Chamberlain, “Peace in Our Time”, Selections from *Documents on British Foreign Policy* and *Documents on German Foreign Policy* collections; newspaper activity
   **Third response paper due by 10 a.m.**

T 5/29- Collaboration and Resistance

W 5/30- the end of the War
   Conversation between deGaulle and Stalin, 1944; Churchill Iron Curtain speech

R 5/31- Holocaust

F 6/1- Postwar Europe: Recovery and reckoning
   Marshall European Recovery Plan speech, 1947

**6/4- Fourth and final response paper due by 10 a.m.**

**6/8- Final paper due**