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East Central Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

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**Prerequisite / Co-requisite:**

None

**Description:**

It is impossible to understand contemporary Europe without analyzing the joint influence of Nazism and Stalinism on the continent. The two totalitarian systems left a particularly complicated and traumatic legacy in East Central Europe, a large and diverse region, which Timothy Snyder recently described as Europe's "bloodlands." The effects of totalitarianism in this area were mediated not only by the local political regimes, but also by the region's socio-cultural makeup – its diverse populations, languages, cultures, ethnic tensions, and competing historical memories.

In this course, we will examine twentieth-century East Central European history by focusing on the interrelated themes of nationalism, dictatorship, and civil society. We will combine an analysis of historical narratives with study visits of two cities, which are emblematic for the study of reconciliation - Warsaw, the capital of Poland erased during WWII and Wrocław, formerly a German city of Breslau cleansed of its German population, which became a part of Poland as a result of the post-WWII redrawing of the European borders. Students will have an opportunity to work with both Polish historians and public intellectuals and study sites illuminating uneasy processes of conflict and reconciliation in this part of the world. By the end of the course, students will be able to identify major turning points in recent East-Central European past and ways in which they still influence Europe's ongoing dilemmas.

The course is divided into two parts - the first will take place in Warsaw in September, the second in Wrocław in November. Before arriving in Warsaw, students will receive a packet of readings and questions. The readings will provide an outline of the most difficult turning points of the last few decades. After discussing the interwar period and the emergence of independent republics – and later dictatorships – from the ruins of the Habsburg, Russian, and German empires, the readings will focus on World War II and the

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Holocaust. They will then turn to the postwar years, the Cold War, and Soviet domination of the region, with special attention to 1956, 1968, the 1980s, and the transformation of 1989-91. The nonviolent revolutions of 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union will receive particular attention, as will the Balkan Wars of the 1990s. The readings will also emphasize Jewish history in the region, and examine anti-communist dissident movements that emerged throughout the Soviet Bloc. Our geopolitical focus will be on Poland, Hungary, and the former Czechoslovakia.

During an intensive 6-day study visit in Poland's thriving capital city of Warsaw, students will get a practical exposure to issues to which they were introduced in their readings. The experiential segment of the program will include: the former Jewish Ghetto, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, former communist government sites and prisons, Museum of the Warsaw Uprising, Museum of the City of Warsaw (showing the unique American footage of the destruction of Warsaw by Julian Brian), headquarters of *Gazeta Wyborcza* – the region's most influential newspaper, the reconstructed Old Town district, and NGOs engaged in the questions of historical memory and reconciliation in the region (e.g., the Geremek Foundation, the Center for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding, and the Warsaw of Many Cultures Project). Each site visit will be accompanied by readings of primary historical documents, and critical discussion of the ways in which various Polish institutions present, incorporate, or seek to shape images of Polish and East Central European history. Students will thus compare, for example, how two historical museums represent the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943 and the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, or how the past is represented in contemporary institutions. While in Warsaw, students will meet major European historians, journalists and public intellectuals.

In November, the course will continue in Wrocław, where studies will focus on exemplary sites of shifting borders, ethnic cleansings, forced migrations and related traumas that marked the lives of populations in this part of the world. A site of pogroms, wars, and frequently shifting borders, this part of Europe has also long harbored a rich community of artists and intellectuals who have played a pivotal role in negotiating the meaning of public engagement in modern politics and culture, including, Vaclav Havel, Milan Kundera, Günter Grass, Czeslaw Milosz, Leszek Kolakowski, and Adam Michnik.

At a time when societal hope seems to be in a state of indisputable deficit, this part of the course will explore sites and narratives of societal hope that began to emerge three decades ago behind the Iron Curtain in Central Europe, and will seek out the factors that made it possible for hope to take root. Though the collapse of the one-party regimes in 1989 has been labeled unpredictable and even miraculous, this course will examine a

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process of negotiated transformations and transitions to democracy that arose from indigenously inspired democratic initiatives.

Looking at politics through the lens of arts, literature and film, we will examine how Central Europe became the home of the first written European constitution, but also of nationalism and Communism, as well as the site of the peaceful anti-authoritarian revolts of 1989, and – most recently – part of an expanded European Union. We will discuss the role writers, poets, artists and workers have played in instigating and nourishing modern movements in politics and culture. Finally we will explore the problems and challenges of the uncanny era of post-communism, among them the politics of gender.

**Learning Outcomes\* (definition and examples at end of form):****After taking this course, the students will be able to:**

- Provide a basic narrative of twentieth-century East Central European history
- Identify the key turning points in this narrative, and discuss controversial issues that continue to attract historian's interest
- Explain how Nazism and Stalinism affected East Central Europe, and how their legacies are still perceptible today
- Clearly articulate the difference between primary and secondary historical sources
- Critically evaluate primary historical documents and discuss how such documents can help undermine stereotypes and one-sided historical interpretations
- Discuss the concept of 'historical memory' and explain how it differs from 'history'
- Critically analyze competing interpretations of the fall of communism in East Central Europe
- Critically analyze how contemporary cultural and political institutions in Warsaw represent historical themes, and apply the skills gained in this analysis to other socio-cultural settings

**Bibliography/ Texts / Supplies – Required:**

Selections from the following texts:

Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* ("What is a nation?"), The Nationalism Reader,

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E. A. Radice, "General Characteristics of the Region Between the Wars," in Michael Kaser, ed., *An Economic History of Eastern Europe*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1984-1985, vol. 1, 23-65.

Leszek Kolakowski, *Hope and Hopelessness*, *Survey*, 17, no.3 (summer) 1971.

Adam Michnik, *The New Evolutionism*, *Letters From Prison*, U.of Calif.Press, 1985

Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, Vintage, 2000

Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, 2010

Vladimir Macura, *The Mystifications of a Nation: "The Potato Bug" and Other Essays on Czech Culture*, 2010

Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (Penguin)

Eva Hoffman, *Exit Into History: A Journey Through the New Eastern Europe*, 1993

Elzbieta Matynia, *Invitation to Performative Democracy*, in: *Performative Democracy*, Paradigm Publishers, 2009, pp. 1-15

Antony Polonsky, *The Little Dictators*, 1975.

Elzbieta Matynia, *Furnishing Democracy at the End of the Century: Negotiating Transition at the Polish Round Table & Others*, [in *1 Eastern European Politics and Society*, Winter 2001; vol.15, no 2

Adam Michnik, *After the Round Table, and, Your President our Prime Minister*, in *Letters from Freedom*, University of California Press, 1998

Ion Elster, *Roundtable Talks and the Breakdown of Communism*, 1996

George Schoepflin, "The Political Traditions of Eastern Europe," *Daedalus*, 119:1, 1990, 55-90.

Norman Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001, 57-84, 108-138.

George Hodos, *Show Trials. Stalinist Purges in Eastern Europe 1948 – 1954*, 1987

Charles Gati (2006), *Failed Illusions. Moscow, Washington, Budapest and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution*

Paul Lendvai, *Anti-Semitism Without Jews: Communist Eastern Europe*, 1971

Timothy Garton Ash, *Polish Revolution: Solidarity*, 1991

Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*, 1993.

Tina Rosenberg, *Introduction and Haunted Lands, The Haunted Land: Facing Europe's Ghosts after Communism*, New York, 1996, (pp. xii-xxiv; 398-407)

*Memory, History, Forgiveness – a conversation between Paul Ricour and Sorin Antohi*, <http://www.janushead.org/8-1/Ricoeur.pdf>

Elzbieta Matynia, *Engendering Democracy: Women Artists and Deliberative Art in a Transitional Society*, *Performative Democracy*, pp. 141-161

Timothy Garton Ash and Timothy Snyder, "Ukraine: The Orange Revolution," *New York Review of Books*, 28 April 2005, 28-32.

Marci Shore, *The Taste of Ashes: the Afterlife of Totalitarianism in Eastern Europe*, 2013

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Primary sources:

*Charter 77 Declaration*

Gale Stokes, *From Stalinism to Pluralism: A Documentary History of Eastern Europe Since 1945*, 2nd ed., 1996

George Mason University's Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media: *Making the History of 1989* - <http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/>

Milan Kundera, *The Tragedy of Central Europe*, *New York Review of Books*, 04126/1984

Khrushchev's "Secret Speech" given at the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the CPSU (on line)

Zdenek Mlynar, *Nightfrost in Prague*

Vaclav Havel, *Power of the Powerless*

Adam Michnik, *The New Evolutionism*, and *Letter to General Kiszczak*

Jan J Lipski, *KOR. The Workers' Defense Committee*

Janos Kis, *Politics as a Moral Problem*, 2009

Aleksander Wat, *My Century: The Odyssey of a Polish Intellectual*, 2003

Tadeusz Borowski, *This Way to the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen*, New York: Penguin, 1976

**Bibliography/ Texts / Supplies– Additional:**

Students will be encouraged to consult these texts for additional background:

Joseph Held (ed.) *The Columbia History of Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century*, 1993

Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe Between the Two World Wars*, 1977

Joseph Rothschild and Nancy Wingfield, *Return to Diversity: A Political History of East-Central Europe since World War II*, 4th ed., 2007

George Schopflin, *Politics in Eastern Europe, 1945-1992*, 1993

Ralf Dahrendorf, *After 1989: Morals, Revolution, and Civil Society*, 1997

Optional film screenings will include:

Andrzej Wajda, *Diamonds and Ashes*

Andrzej Wajda, *Man of Marble*

Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah*

Richard Adams, *Citizens*

"Trial in Prague" – a documentary on Stalinist show trials

Workers '80 – a documentary about Poland's Solidarity

*Poklosie*, Poland, 2012

**Requirements:**

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Before arriving in Warsaw, students are required to complete the assigned portion of the readings and prepare one page of turning points in recent history of Central Europe. They are required to actively participate in all seminar discussions, site visits, and meetings. Students are required to write a final paper in close working collaboration with the instructors (4500 words, approximately 15-pages). The paper will be due two days before the end of the semester (i.e., two days before students' return to the US). In these final papers, students will explore key themes or events that left to conflict, traumas and difficult reconciliations in this part of the world.

**Grading:**

Active participation in seminar discussion and site visit activities – 35%

Final paper – 65%

**Course Specific Policies on attendance, late work, make up work, examinations if outside normal class time, etc.:**

Students are required to complete all their work on time and attend all class meetings and site visits. In cases of illness or other excused absences, students will have a chance to make up missed work by completing alternative assignments.

**Academic Integrity**

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort.

For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>

**Disability-Related Accommodations**

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services(ODS), <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

**Religious Observances Policy**

SU religious observances policy, found at [http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp\\_ben/religious\\_observance.htm](http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm), recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to are religious observance provided they notify

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their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available through **MySlice/StudentServices/Enrollment/MyReligiousObservances** from the first day of class until the end of the second week of class.

We will make every effort not to schedule seminars and site visits on major religious holidays. If a student has to miss class time for religious reasons, he or she will have a chance to make-up the missed work by submitting an alternative assignment within 2 weeks of the missed class.

Enter week/ lecture, topic for the week/lecture, and required reading in the appropriate columns below. Use the Tab key to move around in the table. To insert rows, click on the table, the **Table** menu appears, highlight **Insert** and select the action you want. To delete rows, highlight the rows you want to delete, right click and select **Delete** and then on the **Table** menu, point to **Delete** and click on **Rows**.

Because this is an intensive study visit that combines seminar discussions with site visits, a detailed course plan will depart significantly from a typical syllabus. The 9-day stay in Warsaw will give more than enough time to complete the required 45 hours of teaching. Before arriving in Warsaw, students will receive a detailed schedule of seminar meetings and site visits, which will depend on the availability of guest speakers, and historical site visiting hours (e.g. the Museum of the History of Polish Jews will open to the public in October 2013).

<b>Week/Lecture</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Required Reading and Assignment</b>
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\*Learning Outcomes definition and examples:

Learning outcomes are statements that specify what learners will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity or course or program. Learning outcomes help instructors communicate more clearly to students what is expected of them. Outcomes also help instructors develop effective strategies for evaluating student work and learning. Outcomes are usually expressed, using action verbs, as knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes. They should be observable and measurable.

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1. You/students will be able to explain the six reasons for conducting a needs assessment.
2. You/students will be able to demonstrate the ability to analyze texts using various critical and theoretical approaches
3. You/students will be able to explain in writing the importance of cultural diversity in the workplace.
4. You/students will be able to describe, analyze, compare, and contrast socio-cultural data from diverse cultural settings.
5. You/students will be able to apply logical reasoning methods and approaches in constructing arguments and positions.
6. You/students will be able to use INFOMAP's MAP routine to draw and print a dot map and then give a verbal description of the pattern revealed.

**Note:** *This template was designed by the College of Arts & Sciences It is designed to help ensure that the proposal meets the requirements of the Senate Committee on Curricula.*