

Idea of Europe Spring 2021
European Studies 360:401/History 510:401
Mondays 1:10-4:10 p.m.
Zoom link to follow

DRAFT

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Ofc. hrs. TBD
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Europe. The West. The “civilized,” or “free,” or “advanced” world. Such phrases have little to do with geography. They represent values and ideals—ideals often contradictory, and always in tension with lived realities. They have been used to distinguish what is “European” from what is not—and to divide as well as unite those living on the (sub-)continent. But what *is* Europe—even in terms of geography? Who is a European? How have such notions been useful, and in what ways less so? Is the collection notion of “Europe” rapidly losing any meaning? This course will examine enduring and transforming answers to these questions proposed in the last centuries, focusing on their relevance for today’s Europe and its place in the world—and on how this matters to us.

Learning goals for this course include the ability to assess assumptions and analyze ideas and arguments in our sources; to employ critical reasoning; and to understand different notions of cultural, social, economic, and political organization, drawing on methodologies from a variety of different disciplines. Students should be able to demonstrate these abilities and express their views in written and oral form. Class assignments (including discussion participation) help to assess your ability to evaluate documents, place them in broader context, and draw conclusions concerning their collective significance—and their contradictions. Our materials and discussions should regularly provoke challenges to received ideas about the meaning of “Europe,” and it is expected students will demonstrate evidence of thinking deeply about such challenges.

Course Requirements This course is a seminar: each class session will be based nearly entirely on our discussion and analysis of assigned sources. To be successful in this course, you will need to complete each session’s readings and consider questions I have posted before coming to class, and be prepared to participate actively, thoughtfully, and regularly in discussion. You should always have access to the week’s readings in class (whether in hard or electronic form). This is what will make the course work for everyone. Evaluation is heavily based on **participation (30%)**; written work, in the form of **two 4-5 pp. essays (15% each)** and a **take-home final essay exam (30%)**; and **attendance at two related talks or other events outside of class** (remote is fine; including a one-paragraph write-up) **(10%)**. I will help you identify appropriate events; additionally, the Center for European Studies website, europe.rutgers.edu, offers a calendar of Europe-related events on campus. Questions for the short essays will be posted at least one week in advance on our course Canvas site; for the final, at least two weeks in advance. Successful participation in class discussion, finally, includes a brief presentation to the class of at least one piece of media you find concerning Europe, as it relates to broader issues of the course; you are strongly encouraged to identify a non-Anglophone source, as possible.

Because this course is based on student participation, and because we meet only once a week, more than two absences may be grounds for a lower final grade. Please be prepared to arrive on time and to stay until the end of class (aside from a common break in the middle of each session). You should not plan to take the course if you have other commitments that will necessitate regular late arrival or early departure. Plan to submit the essays and final exam on

the dates indicated below. Unexcused late submission of assignments is grounds for lowering the grade on the assignment. If you need to request a late submission of any assignment, you must contact me as far in advance as possible to ask about it; I will consider such exceptions on a per-case basis. Faculty are encouraged to turn cases of plagiarism over to the relevant dean; first-time known offenses can result in suspension for a semester. Please just don't plagiarize. If you have any question about what constitutes plagiarism, see <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>; see me if you have further concerns. Among other departments, the History department offers a writing tutor (Van Dyck 101D) for aid in conceptualizing and writing assignments; check for hours and further information at <http://history.rutgers.edu/undergraduate/history-writing-tutor>. (Non-history majors may also visit the tutors!) Finally, to reach class members between class sessions, I will send out announcements via the course Canvas site. These will go out to whatever email the university has for you. Please make sure you have your site set to send these announcements to your email, and please check this email regularly, so that you do not miss any important class information.

Required Texts include

Baron de Montesquieu, *Persian Letters* (NY: Penguin, 2004) 9780140442816 \$13.00

Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions* (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1997) 9780810115187 \$14.95

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (NY: Signet, 2008) 9780451531032 \$4.95

Slavenka Drakulic, *Cafe Europa: Life After Communism* (NY: Penguin, 1999) 978-0140277722 \$15.00

Ian Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam* (NY: Penguin, 2006) 9780143112365 \$16.00

These books will be available for purchase in hard copy (new and used) at the BN/Rutgers University Bookstore, 100 Somerset St.; you may of course purchase them wherever you wish to. Readings will also be on reserve as available at Alexander Library, but may be in different editions and/or pagination. Outside of the texts above, all readings, etc., will be available on the appropriate week's module on the course Canvas site, along with a copy of this syllabus, course announcements, and other important material and information.

Week 1

Jan. 25 Introduction: What Makes Europe Europe?

NB: Because we meet only once a week, we will do more than *just* go over the syllabus during our first session. Please read the following in *advance* of our first meeting:

<https://www.newstatesman.com/international/2020/06/history-wars>

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jun/10/columbus-king-leopold-ii-statues-could-be-next-to-fall-black-lives-matter-protests>

Week 2

Feb. 1 Europe as “The West”

Baron de Montesquieu, *Persian Letters*: Preface; Letters 1-2; 6-7; 11-14, 19, 23-24, 29-30; 36-38; 54-61; 72-88; 94-107; 116-118; 128-131; 147-150 **NB: references are to letter numbers!**

Web: Raising/Siege of Vienna; Tyrtaeus/Solon; Petrarch; Varnhagen; Novalis; Schliemann; Mill;
Images: “Chinoiserie”; Moghul Influence; “Hindoo Style”

Week 3

Feb. 8 Europe: “Universal Values”: Possibilities; Paradoxes; Limits?

Web: National Assembly, et al; Slave Insurgents; Al Jabarti; Place; Lombroso; League of Nations
Covenant; Labour Party Platform 1945; Affaire Foulard; Posner

Week 4

Feb. 15 East and West *within* Europe?

Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*

Web: Peter I; Images: Enlightenment Cartography of Europe; Catherine II; Czartoryski; Scouteris;
Stern

Week 5 First Paper DUE

Feb. 22 A Europe of Nations: More Perfect Unions?

Web: Obradovic; Herder; Mickiewicz; Lissauer; *The Sun*; Marc-Álvaro, et al; Zweig, *World of
Yesterday*, Part I; National Indifference; Image: Bros. Grimm; Little Mermaid

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/mar/26/terrorism>

Week 6

Mar. 1 Colonization: Civilization and Barbarity; Exoticism of the Other; North v. South?

Web: Montaigne; Sober & Wholesome; Equiano; Chamberlain; Mukhopadhyay; Ferry; Butler; Hitler;
Images: Léopoldville; Siberians; Etc.

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

Week 7

Mar. 8 From Summit of “Civilization” to the Decline of the West?

Web: Zweig, Part II; Barrès; Marinetti; Spengler; Eliot; Freud; Hesse; Massis

*****SPRING BREAK--Enjoy!*****

Week 8

Mar. 22 A New World Order?

Web: Coudenhove-Kalergi; Stopes; Lukàcs; Mayakovsky; Rathaus; Kayser; Pilsudski; Mussolini; Pittsburgh Gazette

Week 9

Mar. 29 War Transforms Europe (Again): “Zero Hour”?; A “Second World”

Web: Dmowski; UNRAA; Nkrumah; Council of Europe; Schuman; Servan-Schreiber; Welfare State; Emecheta; Šik; Images: “Coca-Colonization”

Week 10 2nd Paper DUE

Apr. 5 A “United States of Europe”?; What Kind of Unity? Where is Europe? Web:

Churchill/Stalin; Atlantic Charter/North Atlantic Treaty; Monnet; *Telegraph*; CIA/State Dept. (2 files); Tito; DeGaulle; Dutschke; Public Opinion;

Week 11

Apr. 12 Cold War Blues

FILM Jerzy Skolimowski, *Moonlighting* (1982), available via the Canvas site

Web: Kundera Šimečka, Vajda; Kelly; Gorbachev; Adomako

Week 12

Apr. 19 A New Europe—Yet Again: East and West Within Europe

Slavenka Drakulic, *Cafe Europa*

Web: Maastricht; *El Pais*; Struharova; Fischer; Davydov; *Der Spiegel*; Schäuble; Image: Zetterling

Week 13

Apr. 26 “Eurabia”?

Ian Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam*, excerpts

Web: Markaris; Van Rompuy; RT News; Goodhart; Malik; *Politico*; Ruiz; Erpenbeck; Image: Europe by Religion

Week 14

May 3 A Europe of Crises?

Web: Al Jazeera; Taibbi; Varoufakis; Habermas; Lagarde; Kavanaugh; Mardell; Bove; Judt; Selection of recent press, to come

Final paper due by noon on Monday, May 10th, on the Canvas website

