

CLARK UNIVERSITY

HIST 165

# Nazi Germany and the Holocaust

FALL 2020

Professor Thomas Kühne

Time: Tuesday/Thursday, 9:00-10:15 am

Office Hours: by appointment, via Zoom

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## Description

This course introduces students to the rise, the fabric, and the collapse of Nazi Germany, its conquest of Europe, its perpetration of the Holocaust, and to the victims of Nazi persecution. The course focuses on two related issues, both addressing the success and the impact of Nazi politics in Germany and in Europe: How could Hitler and the Nazi Party establish and maintain a criminal dictatorship for twelve years in a country that saw itself as the heart of Western culture and civilization? Why did so few Germans oppose Hitler and his racist, terrorist regime? To explore these questions, the course will examine the Nazi ideology (racism, antisemitism, a leadership cult, the concept of a people's community) and the techniques and agencies of its propaganda, seduction, coercion, and terror. Many Germans supported Nazi politics, but they did so in different ways and to different degrees. We will examine the lower and middle classes, youth, family life, gender relations, and opposing and resistant groups in the Third Reich. The response of the victims, Jewish and non-Jewish, to discrimination and persecution will be discussed as well. The Nazis' war on Europe and their genocidal ambitions will be explored in the second half of the course in order to show why only Total War and the Holocaust guaranteed the realization of Nazism and Nazi ideology.

## Grading

Participation counts for 10% of the grade. You are supposed to attend class regularly. One or two absences of class will not affect your grade. Further absences without convincing documentation (e.g., a signed doctor's note) will result in a deduction of two points each. Exemplary participation entails coming to class prepared, having done the

required readings, come up with comments and questions to discuss with the class, and engaging respectfully in discussions and in class activities. Reading sessions with the TAs will be held on a regularly basis, typically once a week. It is highly recommended to attend them (one per week, normally with the same TA) consistently. *Regular* attendance of the reading sessions is not required but highly recommended and counts toward the 10% of the grade in this section.

Two pre-lecture responses, each 20% of the grade (together 40%). Choose one session from nos. 2 to 13 in the course outline below and one from nos. 14 to 25. Read the literature assigned to that session, including what is recommended for further study. Write an essay of 2,500 to 3,500 words about it and submit it the day before the respective session, electronically as word document (no pdfs) to the instructor ([tkuehne@clarku.edu](mailto:tkuehne@clarku.edu)). When thinking about the paper, imagine you would have to convey to your parents, friends, or peers the *essence* of this session, i.e. general issues, developments, key terms, or alike. *Your* assessment of these essentials is appreciated; I don't expect you to anticipate my lecture. The paper is accepted if you receive a confirmation the morning after, before class starts. *Late papers will not be accepted.*

Two post-lecture responses, each 10% of the grade (together 20%). Choose one session from nos. 2 to 13 in the course outline below and one from nos. 14 to 25. Do NOT choose sessions about which you have written your pre-session papers (as above). Write a response paper of two pages *after* the respective class and submit it within seven days electronically as word document (no pdfs) to the instructor. Ideally, this paper relates the class content, or aspects of it, to your *personal* interests, opinions, visions and experiences (academic, private, political, etc.). A simple summary of the class lecture will be accepted but *not* receive the maximum of points.

Final paper, 30% of the grade. For your final paper, you have two choices – a book review (a) or a primary source analysis (b). The first option gives you much more time to work toward the paper but requires more reading. The second option requires less reading but gives you only the last two weeks of the semester to work on it.

For the book review (a), choose one of the following memoirs, diaries and letter collections:

- Gad Beck, *An Underground Life. Memoirs of a Gay Jew in Nazi Berlin* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999).
- Rebecca Boehling & Uta Larkey, *Life and Loss in the Shadow of the Holocaust. A Jewish Family's Untold Story* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
- Rudolf Hoess, *Commandant of Auschwitz. The Autobiography* (London: Phoenix, 2000) [German orig. 1958, Engl. Transl. 1959.]
- Ruth Kluger, *Still Alive. A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered* (New York: Feminist Press, 2001). [German orig. 1992.]
- Hans J. Massaquoi, *Destined to Witness. Growing Up Black in Nazi Germany* (New York: William Morrow, 1999).
- Robert Scott Kellner, ed., *My Opposition: The Diary of Friedrich Kellner - A German against the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

- Shlomo Venezia, *Inside the Gas Chambers. Eight Months in the Sonderkommando of Auschwitz* (Cambridge: Polity, 2009).

Note that these books are not available on Moodle; you need to purchase or borrow it. Any edition will do it; internet bookstores offer cheap used and paperback copies.

Read the book thoroughly cover to cover, line by line, and consider the themes of the book. Your paper of 4,500 to 5,000 words should include a summary of the book but also an assessment. Imagine you were to convince the reader of your review to read (and even buy) the book. What would you say? Why is the book worth the read? What does the reader learn from it? Alternatively, you may come to the conclusion that the book is not worth to be read. Then you have to substantiate your critic. What is wrong with the book?

The second option (b) is a thorough interpretation of one major *primary source* related to the class topics. You will receive five different sources or sets of sources, from which you chose one. Analyze it in a paper of 2,500 to 3,500 words. The five sources will be posted on Moodle on Thursday morning the week before Thanksgiving (when you go back home). There will be a chance to talk about them in class.

The challenge is to read the source critically and to extract from it as much intelligence as possible and yet be aware of, and address, possible shortfalls, biases, errors, lies, obfuscations, misrepresentations in that source. What does the source say? What does it hide? Does it lie? Is it biased? If it reflects subjective views, in which ways do they fit into the larger historical context?

In order to produce the book review (a) or to analyze the primary source (b), you need additional knowledge to 'contextualize' the book or the source. You may use the class lectures, PowerPoints (on Moodle), and the literature assigned to this class. In order to produce a first-class paper, however, you will need to consult other sources, especially scholarly books, articles, and respectable internet sources. (Be aware of unreliable internet sources.) Whatever you use, cite it properly. Any common citation style (MLA, Chicago) will be accepted as long as you include the numbers of the pages from a book or article you cite, or the respective URLs.

I will be available in the Thanksgiving week and in the Course Completion Week to answer questions you may have or offer advice if you need it via email, via Zoom or otherwise.

You have to submit your paper by December 4, 11:59 pm. (Word document, no pdf, via email to me.) The paper is accepted if you receive a confirmation within 24 hours. If you do not receive that confirmation, be in touch with me.

### **Practical Arrangements**

Plagiarism: Make sure to observe the school's regulations on plagiarism, <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/aac/integrity.cfm>.

Laptops: Checking emails on a regular basis and staying connected with friends and the rest of the world is important. Do not do it in class, though. Laptops, cell phones, iPods, iPads, game boys, DVD players and other electronic devices are inclined to distract you or your classmates from lectures and discussions. Usually, I do not allow any of them in class, not even for note taking (this, because I think, in concurrence with many studies, that taking notes by hand is more effective than doing so electronically.) Under the conditions of the current pandemic, I do allow and actually encourage using a laptop or tablet (but no phone) in class.

Student Accessibility Services (SAS): Clark University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you have or think you have a disability and require academic accommodations, you must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). If you are registered with SAS and qualify for accommodations that you would like to utilize in this course, please request those accommodations through SAS in a timely manner.

Diversity and Inclusion: Your perspectives, your talents, your history, and your voice are critical toward sustaining a campus that celebrates difference and fosters respect for all. Clark nurtures an inclusive learning environment that links with our academic mission to build new knowledge and seek truth everywhere. It is my intent that *all* students will be well-served by this course and that the diversity that students bring to the class will be valued as a resource, benefit and strength in our discussions in and outside of class. I aim to create an environment that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and honors your diverse identities. Please notify me if something is done or said in class, either by myself or other classmates, that creates unease or that discourages your ability to thrive in our course in any way. Your suggestions are always welcome and appreciated. Relatedly, if you feel that experiences outside of our class are impacting your performance, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Faculty Members are “Responsible Employees”: This notice is to inform you that the Faculty member(s) and Teaching Assistant(s) associated with this course are considered “Responsible Employees” by Clark University. As such, they are required to report all alleged sexual offenses to the University’s Title IX Coordinator, Lynn Levey, [llevey@clarku.edu](mailto:llevey@clarku.edu). The only exceptions to this reporting responsibility are the community members who have been designated and/or trained as “Confidential” Sources. This includes the professional staff in Clark’s Center for Counseling and Personal Growth and the medical providers at the Health Center, as well as other individuals listed at <http://bit.ly/2eUOGGx>.

GENERAL CLASSROOM POLICIES in the LIGHT OF COVID-19 – see at the end of this syllabus; watch out for updates as needed during the semester.

## Engaged Academic Time

This course will require “ENGAGED ACADEMIC TIME” of 180 hours:

39 hours = in-class activities (3 hours per week)

11 hours = reading sessions (1 hour per week, 11 weeks)

50 hours = assigned readings (2 hours first week, 4 hours remaining weeks)

35 hours = two pre-lecture responses

10 hours = two post-lecture responses

35 hours = final paper

## Textbooks, Anthologies, and Monographs

All reading assignments are available on Moodle or otherwise accessible online.

Required readings are due before class starts.

If you are interested in deepening your knowledge beyond the assigned readings, I recommend purchasing or borrowing one or more of the following books that are marked by one or two asterixis. Short and concise textbooks carry one \*, more comprehensive ones two \*\*.

- Shelley Baranowski, Armin Nolzen, and Claus-Christian W. Szejnmann (eds.), *A Companion to Nazi Germany* (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley Blackwell, 2018).
- Michael Berenbaum & Abraham J. Peck, eds, *The Holocaust and History. The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed and the Reexamined* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).
- Doris Bergen, *War & Genocide. A Concise History of the Holocaust*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).\*
- Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich. A New History* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2000).
- Michael Burleigh & Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany, 1933-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1991).
- Jane Caplan, ed., *Nazi Germany. The Short Oxford History of Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- David Cesarani, *Final Solution. The Fate of the Jews, 1933-1945* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2016).\*\*
- Thomas Childers, *The Third Reich. A History of Nazi Germany* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017).
- David M. Crowe, *The Holocaust. Roots, History, and Aftermath* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2008).\*\*
- Martin Doerry, ed., *My Wounded Heart. The Life of Lilli Jahn, 1900-1944* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2004).
- Deborah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt, *Holocaust. A History* (New York: Norton, 2002).\*\*

- Catherine Epstein, *Nazi Germany. Confronting the Myths* (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2015).\*
- Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (New York: Penguin, 2004).\*\*
- --, *The Third Reich in Power, 1933-1939* (New York: Penguin, 2005).\*\*
- --, *The Third Reich at War* (New York: Penguin, 2009).\*\*
- --, *The Third Reich in History and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).
- Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO), *Holocaust and Human Behavior* (Brookline, MA: FHAO, 2017), <https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior>\*
- Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews. The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997).\*\*
- --, *The Years of Extermination. Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007).\*\*
- Christian Gerlach, *The Extermination of the European Jews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
- Simone Gigliotti and Berel Lang, eds., *The Holocaust. A Reader* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005).
- Norman J.W. Goda, *The Holocaust. Europe, the World, and the Jews, 1918-1945* (London: Routledge, 2013).
- Neil Gregor, ed., *Nazism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- Peter Hayes and John K. Roth, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) [Online through Goddard!].
- Steve Hochstadt, ed., *Sources of the Holocaust* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2004)
- Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship. Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (London: Arnold, 2000)
- Ernst Klee, Willy Dressen, and Volker Riess, eds., *"The Good Old Days." The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders* (New York: William S. Konecky Associates, 1991).
- Victor Klemperer, *I Will Bear Witness. A Diary of the Nazi Years*, 2 Vols. (New York: Random House, 1998-2000).
- Thomas Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide. Hitler's Community, 1918-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010, pb 2013).
- Otto Dov Kulka and Eberhard Jäckel (eds.), *The Jews in the Secret Nazi Reports on Popular Opinion in Germany, 1933-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).
- Neil Levi and Michael Rothberg, eds., *The Holocaust. Theoretical Readings* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003)
- Alan Mitchell, ed., *The Nazi Revolution. Hitler's Dictatorship and the German Nation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).
- Frank McDonough, *The Holocaust* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
- Robert G. Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society. A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford, 2010).

- Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham, *Nazism, 1919-1939. A History in Documents and Eyewitness Accounts*, 2 Vols. (New York: Schocken Books, 1983, 1988).
- Jeremy Noakes, *Nazism, 1919-1945*. Vol. 4: *The German Homefront in World War II* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1998).
- Robert Paxton and Julie Hessler, *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Independence, KY: Cengage Learning, 2011).
- Lisa Pine, *Hitler's 'National Community.' Society and Culture in Nazi Germany* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2007).
- Anson Rabinbach and Sander L. Gilman, eds., *The Third Reich Sourcebook* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).
- Benjamin Sax and Dieter Kuntz, eds., *Inside Hitler's Germany. A Documentary History of Life in the Third Reich* (Lexington, MA: Heath, 1992).
- Roderick Stackelberg and Sally A. Winkle, eds., *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook. An Anthology of Texts* (London: Routledge, 2002).
- Volker Ullrich, *Hitler. Ascent, 1889-1936* (New York: A. Knopf, 2016).

Some of these books are (physically and/or electronically) on reserve at Goddard and/or Rose Libraries.

## Course Outline

### Week 1

(1) Aug 25

#### **Why Are We Obsessed with Hitler?**

This initial session serves to introduce the topic of the class, its present relevance, the syllabus, and the practicalities of the course. Selections of the movie *The Downfall* (2004), a choice of Hitler memes, and recent Hitler analogies will be discussed in class.

Suggested Reading: Richard Evans, "Why are we obsessed with the Nazis?" *The Guardian*, 6 Feb 2007; Sylvia Taschka, "Trump-Hitler comparisons too easy and ignore the murderous history," *The Conversation*, 12 March 2018.

(2) Aug 27

#### **How Did the Nazis Come into Power?**

Generations of scholars and journalists have tried to answer these questions. In this class, we will consider the essence of these answers and discern long- and short-term

reasons for the rise of the Nazis and Hitler's empowerment, including the aftereffects of the First World War, structural flaws of the German democracy in the 1920s, and the impact of the Great Depression.

Required Reading: Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society*, pp. 1-10.

Further Study: Matthew Stibbe, "The Weimar Republic and the Rise of National Socialism," in Gellately, *Oxford Illustrated History of the Third Reich*, ch. 1.

## Week 2

(3) Sept 1

### ***Gleichschaltung* and "Dual State": The Essence of Nazi Power**

Even in the no longer free general elections in spring 1933, the Nazis did not get the majority of votes. How they managed to stabilize and maintain their dictatorship, is the subject of this session. We will be looking at the respective steps they took in 1933 and 1934, the terror apparatus established under Himmler, and the juxtaposition of seemingly constitutional and openly dictatorial power techniques. The latter was analyzed by the German-Jewish emigre Ernst Fraenkel in a famous book, published in 1941 in the United States.

Required Reading: Epstein, *Nazi Germany*, pp. 45-62; excerpts from Ernst Fraenkel, *The Dual State* (orig. 1941).

Further Study: FHAO, *Holocaust and Human Behavior*, ch. 5,  
<https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior/chapter-5>

(4) Sept 3

### **The *Führer*: Charisma and Pathology**

Why did Germans fall for Hitler? We will analyze the concept of charisma and apply it to Hitler, and we will look into popular ideas and historical facts about Hitler's pathologies. Footage of Hitler's Berlin Sports Palace Speech, 10 February 1933, to be watched in class.

Required Reading: excerpts on charisma from Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (1978, German orig. 1922); Bryan Clark, "What Makes People Charismatic, and How You Can Be, Too," *New York Times*, 15 Aug 2019; Albert Speer, "On Joining the Nazi Movement in 1931" (1969); Epstein, *Nazi Germany*, pp. 62-65.

Further Study: selections from Mitchell, *The Nazi Revolution*, part III; Richard J. Evans, "Was Hitler Ill?" idem, *The Third Reich in History and Memory*, pp. 142-149.



### Week 3

(5) Sept 8

#### **The Politics of Antisemitism: April Boycott, Nuremberg Laws, and “Kristallnacht”**

When Hitler came into power in 1933, many Germans were doubtful of Nazi antisemitism; many Jews in Germany, unable to anticipate the Holocaust, hoped to outlast the Nazi dictatorship; and the Nazis themselves had no concrete plans for a genocide against the Jews yet. The subject of this class is the radicalization of Nazi antisemitism and anti-Jewish politics from 1933 through 1938 and the responses of non-Jewish and Jewish Germans.

Required Reading: Hochstadt, pp. 36-46; selections from Doerry, *My Wounded Heart*.

Further Study: Childers, *The Third Reich*, ch. 11; FHAO, *Holocaust and Human Behavior*, Ch. 7, Readings 9-16, <https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior/chapter-7>.

(6) Sept 10

#### **Nazi Medicine: Eugenics into Euthanasia**

Eugenics was a scholarly program to rid the human population of genes that were considered undesirable. Popular throughout the Western world, it inspired in many countries, including the U.S., the sterilization of mentally or physically disabled individuals, or of those who were perceived as such. Only the Nazis radicalized this program into euthanasia, the killing of people considered carrying ‘unhealthy’ genes. We will explore parallels and differences of these policies in Nazi Germany and America, the ideological background of Nazi euthanasia, and the response of ordinary Germans to it. Sections of the documentary movie, *Nazi Medicine* (1997), will be watched in class.

Required Reading: Crowe, *The Holocaust*, pp. 132-137, 149-158.

Further Study: Burleigh & Wippermann, *The Racial State*, pp. 136-167; Stefan Kühl, “The Cooperation of German Racial Hygienists and American Eugenicists before and after 1933,” in Berenbaum & Peck, *The Holocaust and History*, Ch. 11.

### Week 4

(7) Sept 15

#### **Welfare and Leisure: The Politics of Inclusion I**

In the mindset of the Nazis, the German nation was to be rebuilt along the model of a military unit in war. This unit would be on the frontlines against (1) racial and political 'enemies' of Germany and (2) the erasure and suppression of any internal conflicts, especially class and religious ones, within the (Aryan and Nazified) national community, the *Volksgemeinschaft*. A plethora of policies served this goal. They included the fight against mass unemployment, mass consumerism, leisure and welfare programs, and a sophisticated system of controlling the mindsets of ordinary Germans. Selections from Leni Riefenstahl's movie, *Triumph of the Will* (1935), to be watched and discussed in class.

Required Reading: Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide*, pp. 32-37; secret reports on the working class, Sax & Kuntz, *Inside Hitler's Germany*, pp. 288-290, 294-301.

Further Study: Jill Stephenson, "Inclusion: building the national community in propaganda and practice," in Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, ch. 4.

(8) Sept 17

### **Youth Under Hitler: The Politics of Inclusion II**

The Nazis knew that they needed to win the German youth more than any other part of the society to secure the future of their regime and the Third Reich. They did so mainly through their state youth organization, the Hitler Youth, into which German boys were increasingly coerced (girls as well, but to a lesser degree). We will analyze how the Nazis tried to make life in the Hitler Youth attractive, how successful they were in doing so, and what role other institutions such as elementary and secondary schools played in this process of indoctrination. NS propaganda footage of the Hitler Youth will be shown in class.

Required Reading: selections from Sebastian Haffner, *Defying Hitler* (2002), and from Jost Hermand, *A Hitler Youth in Poland* (1997).

Further Study: Noakes & Pridham, *Nazism*, Vol. I, pp. 416-430.

## Week 5

(9) Sept 22

### **Poland: The Laboratory of Genocide**

Hitler's vision of the Nazi empire included the territorial expansion of Germany into Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and the 'cleansing' of Europe from peoples perceived as inferior or hostile to Germany. This combination of war and genocide was first practiced in fall 1939 in Nazi-occupied Poland. You will learn about Hitler's ideas about *Lebensraum*, or living space; his foreign policy through 1940; the attack on Poland in 1939 and the subsequent Nazi terror on Poles, both Jewish and non-Jewish, and the

ghettoization of the Jews; and the 'Germanization' of Poland. We will analyze how the occupation of Poland began a 'learning' process of the Nazis that eventually led to the Holocaust. Parts of section 4 of the BBC documentary, *The Nazis: A Warning from History* (1997), to be watched in class.

Required Reading: FHAO, *Holocaust and Human Behavior*, Chapter 8, Readings 6-13, <https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior/chapter-8>

Further Study: Bergen, *War & Genocide*, pp. 130-158.

(10) Sept 24

### **The Conquest of Europe, Operation Barbarossa, and the *Einsatzgruppen***

This session will give an overview of (1) the Nazi conquest of major parts of Western, Northern and Southern Europe in 1940 and 1941 and (2) the attack on the Soviet Union in summer 1941, codenamed "Operation Barbarossa." Considered as the core piece of the *Lebensraum* vision and a crusade against Bolshevism and Judaism, its planning included the mass death of Soviet POWs and the mass murder of millions of Jews. Particular attention will be paid to the organization and activities of the SS mobile killing units, the *Einsatzgruppen*.

Required Reading: McDonough, *The Holocaust*, pp. 47-60.

Further Study: selected documents on Operation Barbarossa, in Stackelberg & Winkle, *Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, pp. 272-282, 342-343.

## Week 6

(11) Sept 29

### **Holocaust Perpetrators: Choices and Motivations**

Unlike popular images often suggest, most Holocaust perpetrators were not pathological sadists or maniacs but 'ordinary' men (and a few women) who, before and after, lived seemingly normal lives. Why did they become mass murderers? We will be discussing major theories on the motivations of these perpetrators: their ideological dispositions such as antisemitism and hypermasculine norms and situational factors such as command structures and group conformity.

Required Reading: Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men. Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), pp. 55-70; excerpts from the private diary of SS officer Felix Landau, summer 1941, as in Klee, Dressen, and Riess "*The Good Old Days*"; and from Rudolf Hoess, *Commandant of Auschwitz* (1959; German orig. 1958; written 1946/47 in Polish captivity), as in Sax & Kuntz, *Inside Hitler's Germany*, pp. 444-448.

Further Study: Jürgen Matthaeus, "Historiography and the Perpetrators of the Holocaust," in Dan Stone, ed., *The Historiography of the Holocaust* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 197-215; Edward B. Westermann, "Killers," in Hayes & Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, chapter 9 (online through Goddard).

(12) Oct 1

### **Battlefields and Murder Sites: The Soldiers' War**

How did ordinary German soldiers of Hitler's army, the *Wehrmacht* (most of them drafted and not members of the NSDAP) become complicit in the Holocaust and other Nazi crimes? How and why did they help the SS killing units murder civilians, kill or let millions of Soviet POWs die, and destroy the livelihoods of Soviet and East European citizens? Parts of the documentary movie, *The Wehrmacht* (2007), to be watched in class.

Required reading: excerpts from Willy Peter Reese, *A Stranger to Myself. The Inhumanity of War: Russia, 1941-1944* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005).

Further Study: Waitman W. Beorn et al, *Ordinary Soldiers: A Study in Ethics, Law, and Leadership* (Washington DC & West Point NY, 2015); Thomas Kühne, "Male Bonding and Shame Culture: Hitler's Soldiers and the Moral Basis of Genocidal Warfare," in Olaf Jensen, Claus-Christian W. Szejnmann & Martin L. Davies, eds., *Ordinary People as Mass Murderers. Perpetrators in Comparative Perspectives* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 55-77.

## Week 7

(13) Oct 6

### **Auschwitz and the Death Camps: The Climax of the Holocaust**

The subject of this session is the period from late 1941 to 1943 during which more Jews were murdered than before or after, mostly in the killing centers Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka and Auschwitz-Birkenau. We will be inquiring into the decisions that led to their establishment, the way they operated, and the deportation of Jews from all over Europe to them. Parts of BBC Documentary *Auschwitz—Inside the Nazi State* (2005) to be watched in class.

Required reading: Goda, *The Holocaust*, pp. 214-226. Kurt Gerstein's eyewitness account of gassings at Belzec and Treblinka, in Stackelberg & Winkle, *Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, pp. 354-357.

Further Study: Christopher R. Browning, "Problem Solvers," and Karin Orth, "Camps," in Hayes & Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, chapters 8 and 24 (online through Goddard)

(14) Oct 8

### **The “Gray Zone”: Jewish Agency, Resistance, and the Problem of Complicity**

Unlike the previous session, this session zeroes in on the perspective, the suffering, the dilemmas, and the survival strategies of the victims of the Holocaust, mainly the Jews. Rather than perceiving them as impotent and helpless subjects, we will be analyzing the agency and the choices they still had, despite all disempowerment; the many shades of their resistance to Nazi persecution; and the cruel techniques their oppressors used to make them ‘complicit’ in their own peoples’ annihilation. Sections from the movie, *Lodz Ghetto* (1988,) to be watched and discussed in class.

Required Reading: *Either Primo Levi, The Drowned and the Saved* (New York: Summit Books, 1989), Chapter II, or Emanuel Ringelblum, *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto* (1942), as in Simone Gigliotti and Berel Lang, eds., *The Holocaust. A Reader* (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 313-332.

Further Study: what is left from the two above; Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 119-142; Dan Michmann, “Jews,” in Hayes & Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, chapter 12 (online through Goddard)

## Week 8

(15) Oct 13

### **Gender and Sexuality in the Holocaust**

While the Nazis persecuted Jews independently for their gender identity and sexual orientation, both informed the way they experienced and suffered from the persecution and the ways they responded to it. We will be looking into meanings and practices of sexual violence and sexual agency in the Nazi camps, and we will be examining how certain gender identities, ideas about femininity and masculinity informed Nazi racism, and vice versa, and how these identities and ideas changed in the Holocaust.

Required Reading: Sarah M. Cushman, “Sexuality, Sexual Violence, and Sexual Barter in the Auschwitz-Birkenau Women’s Camp,” in Thomas Kühne & Mary Jane Rein, eds., *Agency and the Holocaust* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2020), pp. 105-122.

Further Study: Marion Kaplan, “Gender: A Crucial Tool in Holocaust Research,” in Larry V. Thompson, ed., *Lessons and Legacies IV* (Evanston, IL, 2003), 163-170; Leonore J. Weitzman, “Women,” in Peter Hayes and John K. Roth, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (Oxford, 2010), chapter 13 (Goddard online).

(16) Oct 15

### **Racism's Hierarchies: A Mosaic of Victims**

The Nazis aimed at the annihilation of all Jews in Europe and beyond, but they persecuted several other groups as well, on racial, ideological, and political grounds. We will analyze why the Nazis persecuted these groups, and how their persecution differed from each other and from the persecution of the Jews.

Required Reading: any two of the following sections from the USHMM online Holocaust Encyclopedia:

a) Disabled:

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/euthanasia-program>

b) Homosexuals:

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/persecution-of-homosexuals-in-the-third-reich>, and <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/tags/en/tag/persecution-of-gays-and-lesbians>

c) Jehovah's Witnesses:

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/nazi-persecution-of-jehovahs-witnesses>, and <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/jehovahs-witnesses-in-germany-from-the-1890s-to-the-1930s?parent=en%2F5070>

d) Communists and Socialists:

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/political-prisoners>

e) Roma and Sinti:

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/genocide-of-european-roma-gypsies-1939-1945>

Further Study: *all* sections above; Pine, *Hitler's 'National Community,'* Ch. 8; Burleigh & Wippermann, *The Racial State*, pp. 136-167.

### Week 9

(17) Oct 20

### **Collaborators: Europe Under Hitler's "New Order"**

The Germans planned, initiated and organized the Holocaust all over Europe, wherever they could. And yet, without many local, non-German helpers it would not have been possible to kill 6 million Jews (and millions of other civilians) within a very short time. This local collaboration played out rather differently in the various Nazi-occupied territories and in the 'satellite' states that allied with the Third Reich. In some countries, almost the entire Jewish population perished; in other countries, only a small share. We

will examine the different occupational regimes under Hitler's "New Order" of Europe as well as the different levels of local collaboration with the Nazis in Europe.

Required Reading: Radu Ioanid, "Occupied and Statelike States," in Hayes & Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, chapter 21 (online through Goddard).

Further Study: Dwork & van Pelt, *Holocaust*, chapter VII.

(18) Oct 22

### **On-Lookers: The Allied Powers and the European Neutrals**

What could the Americans and/or other countries have done to prevent or mitigate the Holocaust? Could they have done anything? Questions like these, morally loaded, have been discussed since the Holocaust. Possible answers need to be based on careful examinations of the options that existed and their possible consequences. Focusing on the United States, we will analyze political and moral aspects of the onlookers' responses to the Nazi mass crimes in Europe, and the lack of such responses.

Required Reading: Paul A. Levine, "On-Lookers," in Hayes & Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, chapter 10 (online through Goddard).

Further Study: Shlomo Aronson, "The Allies," in Hayes & Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, chapter 17 (online through Goddard); Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), pp. 19-59.

## Week 10

(19) Oct 27

### **Operation Valkyrie: German Opposition to the Nazi Regime**

Many Germans followed Hitler and even supported the Holocaust. Yet there were some that didn't do either. Who were they – and why weren't they more effective? Colonel Count Stauffenberg's attempt to assassinate Hitler on July 20, 1944 was the most spectacular act of resistance. It failed. The Third Reich came to an end through military defeat by the Allies, not through a revolution from inside. Why? In this class, we will consider various groups and types of resistance against the Nazi regime within Germany and discuss their failure.

Required Reading: selections from Sax & Kuntz, *Inside Hitler's Germany*, chapter 15 (documents no. 107-113; 119-120; 122; 125).

Further Study: selections from Noakes, *Nazism, 1919-1945*. Vol. 4, chapter 50.

(20) Oct 29

### **Women in Nazi Germany: Subjugation and Empowerment**

When the Nazis assumed power, they took action to reverse women's emancipation as it had progressed in the 'roaring twenties' in Germany. Women were not to pursue professional careers but commit themselves to the private sphere of motherhood and family. And yet, the Nazi regime pushed (non-Jewish) German girls and women into the public sphere of state youth and mother organizations. During the war (and the genocide), they allowed them to pursue, or even lured them into, jobs that had been considered male monopolies for a long time. The juxtaposition of women's subjugation and empowerment in Nazi Germany will be examined in this class in order to explain why not only men but also women stuck to Hitler.

Required Reading: selections from Melita Maschmann, *Account Rendered. A Dossier on my Former Self* (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1964).

Further Reading: Adelheid von Saldern, "Victims or Perpetrators? Controversies about the Role of Women in the Nazi State," in *Nazism and German Society, 1933–1945*, ed. David F. Crew (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 141–166.

### Week 11

(21) Nov 3

### **Unconditional Surrender: The Allied Powers and the End of the Third Reich**

Could Nazi Germany have won the war? Probably not. But there is no conclusive answer to this question. Why that is so, will be the subject of this class. It will start with an overview on the Allied Powers' war on Germany and their war goals from 1941 to 1945 and also include a discussion on the techniques, the effectiveness, and the morality of British and American strategic bombing of German cities.

Required Reading: Paxton & Hessler, *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 389-409; Martin Shaw, *War and Genocide* (London: Polity, 2005), pp. 126-127.

Further Study: Max Hastings, *Inferno. The World at War, 1939-1945* (New York: A. Knopf, 2011), chapter 19.

(22) Nov 5

### **The Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft*: Cohesion and Coercion in the Third Reich**

This class will inquire into the fabric of German society at the end of the Third Reich. Why did Germans continue to fight? Why didn't they quit? Only because the SS terror apparatus left them no other choice, or did they still believe in Hitler's magical power and his promise to lead Germany to a "final victory"? Particular attention will be paid to



the knowledge of Germans about the Holocaust and how this knowledge informed their mindsets in the face of the increasingly obvious defeat of Germany.

Required Reading: Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide*, pp. 159-171; excerpts from Goebbels' *Sportpalast* speech, 18 Feb 1943.

Further Study: selections from Noakes, *Nazism, 1919-1945*. Vol. 4, chapter 51.

## Week 12

(23) Nov 10

### **Restoring Justice: Trials and Restitution**

Is it possible for societies to restore justice or to heal after the experience of genocide, atrocities, terror, and mass-scale injustice? We will examine the rather different ways the Allied Powers in Nuremberg, the Germans, and the Israelis, respectively, have prosecuted, put on trial, punished, or, let get way those who had committed crimes against humanity and war crimes. Footage of the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, 1961, to be watched and discussed in class.

Required Reading: Rebecca Wittman, "Punishment," in Hayes & Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, chapter 34 (online through Goddard).

Further Reading: FHAO, *Holocaust and Human Behavior*, Chapter 10, <https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior/chapter-10>; David H. Jones, "Human Rights Law," in Hayes & Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, chapter 46 (online through Goddard).

(24) Nov 12

### **Negative Memory: The Germans and the Nazi Past**

Germans have become "Weltmeister," or world champions, in "the cultural reproduction of their own country's versions of terror," said the renowned Oxford historian Timothy Garton Ash a while ago. Instead of glorifying or obfuscating the past, Germany is committed to expose terror and destruction committed by Germans in the Third Reich. Germany's negative memory of the Holocaust, however, did not drop from heaven in 1945. It was the result of decades of struggles about the legacy of the Nazi past. We will examine these struggles and the changing efforts of Germans to come to terms with their evil past. Sections from the movies, *The Murderers Are Among Us* (1946) will be watched and discussed in class.

Required Reading: Speech by Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker at the Ceremony Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the End of War in Europe and of National-Socialist Tyranny, 8 May 1985, German Bundestag, Bonn.

Further Reading: Aleida Assmann, "Memories of Nazi Germany in the Federal Republic of Germany," in Baranowski et al., *A Companion to Nazi Germany*, chapter 35; Jeffrey Herf, "Germany," in Hayes & Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, chapter 41 (online through Goddard)

### Week 13

(25) Nov 17

#### **Memory and Identity: The Holocaust in America**

Long before Germany established a national monument for the victims of the Holocaust, Americans discussed and decided to build such a memorial, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Since then, the Holocaust has been a privileged focus of collective memory in America, more so than, as critics often say, their own history of slavery and crimes against indigenous peoples. In this class, we will discuss the reasons and consequences of the prominence of Holocaust memory in the United States.

Required Reading: excerpts from Peter Novick, "The Holocaust in American Life" (1999), as in Levi and Rothberg, *The Holocaust*, chapter 62.

Further Reading: James E. Young, "America's Holocaust: Memory and the Politics of Identity," in *The Americanization of the Holocaust*, ed. Hilene Flanzbaum (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999) pp. 68-82; Alan Mintz, *Popular Culture and the Shaping of Holocaust Memory in America* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), pp. 3-35.

(26) Nov 19

#### **Review, Concluding Discussion, and Comments on the Final Take Home Exams**

### Week 14

(27-28) Nov 30 – Dec 4

#### **Course Completion Week**

Work toward your final take home exam and be in touch with the instructor (or the TAs) if you run into problems. Upon request, I will schedule Zoom meetings with individual students, or with groups of students working on the same topic.

## **GENERAL CLASSROOM POLICIES in the LIGHT OF COVID-19**

In the context COVID-19, there will be unique challenges this term and it is critical that we all strictly adhere to the Healthy Clark COVID guidelines

- <https://www.clarku.edu/healthy-clark-covid-plan/>.

Here are a few rules you need to follow if/when you are **attending in-person**:

- 1) Please arrive at the classroom (Jefferson 320) as close as possible to the start time for class such that we minimize any congregating outside the doors. If you are early, please maintain social distancing in the foyer outside of Jefferson 320.
- 2) Sanitize your hands at the hand sanitizer station in the hallway just outside the entrance to Jefferson 320.
- 3) When you are able to enter, please do so in single file, maintaining social distancing. There is only one entryway and one exit door for the room – both clearly marked.
- 4) When you enter, you should go to the chair/table across the room where you will find disinfectant spray bottles and wipes that you should use to clean the desk and armrests on the seat you will be sitting in for that day. Return the spray bottle to the table when you are finished with it. Cleaning will take a few minutes, but it is essential for maintaining as sanitary an environment as is possible.
- 5) Available seats are the ones that do not have a sticker on them or tape blocking access to them. Do not sit in any seat marked “this seat is not available”, please only sit in non-marked seats.
- 6) There is a total of 50 available seats for students in the classroom, two of these being assigned to the TAs, meaning that 48 students can be present in-person for any given class.
- 7) When class is over, please maintain social distancing and exit single file through the exit only door near the front of the classroom. And please exit as efficiently as possible so that the class that follows ours has sufficient time to settle in.
- 8) If you have not kept up on your COVID-19 testing requirements, or if you have any symptoms, or feel ill in any manner do not come to in-person class. Instead, notify the instructor and attend class remotely via Zoom.
- 9) Wear a mask and please wear it properly (e.g., we do not want to see your nose peeking out from it) or the professor will be forced to ask you to leave the room or adjust your mask accordingly.
- 10) Food/eating are not allowed at any time in the classroom. You may drink liquids but please do so with quick sips to minimize the length of time that your mask is down.
- 11) To the fullest extent possible, please refrain from bathroom and other out-of-classroom breaks during class in order to minimize disruptions and the need to re-sanitize your hands

**For Zoom attendees:**

- 1) To prevent unauthorized people from joining the Zoom meeting, there will be a “waiting room” for the course such that I can authorize each student to enter. Because of this, your name needs to be clear and it should match the name you are officially registered under – i.e., not an obscure nickname, phone number, or generic title (e.g., John’s IPad). If I cannot match the name to the class roster, I will not be able to allow you to enter the Zoom meeting. Please be patient at the start of class as the professor needs to authorize every person individually.
- 2) For those joining the course remotely, please mute your microphone unless you are cleared to make a comment or ask a question
- 3) If you wish to ask a question, the best way to do so is to use the chat function in Zoom, rather than the hand-raising emoji given the professor/TAs will not be able to see everyone simultaneously on their screens. You can either write out your question in the chat, or indicate in chat that you want to make a comment or ask a question such that I can then allow you to speak.
- 4) Due to consent and privacy concerns, classes will not be recorded meaning that attendance is critical.