

BETWEEN POLITICS AND CULTURE: GERMAN IDEAS 1890-1970

The course will examine some of the major intellectual debates in Germany in the twentieth century. The course will make students familiar with important philosophers of the respective period and how they made sense of the society they lived in. It will introduce a variety of texts by German intellectuals including Friedrich Nietzsche, Max Weber, Georg Simmel, Sigmund Freud, Walter Benjamin and Jürgen Habermas. In doing so it will offer an introduction to the field of intellectual history, and a means of understanding how basic concepts and ideas have been shaped by the course of recent German history. The seminar will focus on different reactions to and interpretations of 'modernity' in its varied meanings and understandings, and follow the development of these from the late nineteenth to the twentieth century.

PRELIMINARY READING

Peter Gay, Weimar Culture. The Outsider as Insider. New York 1968.
Jeffrey Herf, Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich. Cambridge 1984.
Mathew Jefferies, Imperial Culture in Germany, 1871-1918. Houndsmills et. al. 2003.
Dirk A. Moses, German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past. Cambridge 2007.
Reinhart Koselleck, The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts. Stanford 2002.
Anson Rabinbach, In the Shadow of Catastrophe: German Intellectuals between Apocalypse and Enlightenment. Berkeley/Los Angeles 1997.

Code: SEHI7004

Course title: Between Politics and Culture: German Ideas 1890-1970
Course code: SEHI7004
Course-unit value: 0.5
Level: Advanced
Availability 2009/10: Yes
Open to: All second and final-year undergraduates
Prerequisites: Students should normally have passed at least one full History course-unit at Intermediate Level

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Aims:

1. To examine the history of ideas, its approaches, methods, and meanings.
2. To introduce modern German intellectual history, in lectures and coursework.

Objectives: By the end of the course, you will have acquired:

1. an enhanced ability to understand and to appreciate how people have reacted to, commented on and interpreted the past and present in the context of the complexity and diversity of historical situations, events and intellectual traditions.
 2. an enhanced ability to use and evaluate texts critically. The critical evaluation of texts should include an understanding of the questions which historians ask and why they do so. By the end of the course students will have read and mastered a selection of original texts and historical works drawn from the period.
 3. an enhanced ability to frame an argument in a sustained manner both orally and in writing. Arguments should be structured, coherent, relevant, and concise, and should take into account all aspects of a given problem.
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<u>Teaching & Learning Methods:</u>	<u>Number of Hours:</u>
Lectures	6-8
Classes	12-14
Private Study	130

ASSESSMENT:

Coursework: One short essay, of 1,500-2,000 words, with full bibliography and footnotes, to be completed and submitted by the end of Reading Week.

One long essay of about 5,000 words, with full bibliography and footnotes, to be completed by the beginning of term 3.

The mark for the short essay will count for 25%, the long essay will count for 75% of the total mark of the course. Written coursework is moderated by an internal examiner, and samples will be submitted for scrutiny to the external examiner.

AFFILIATE STUDENTS: See regulations posted elsewhere

100% fulfilment of coursework is required for the successful completion of this course. If this requirement is not met by the final departmental deadline, it will normally lead to you being debarred from the exam and the course unit being marked as incomplete on your final degree transcript.