

# To Hell and Back: Modern German History in European Context

Dr. Martin Jander

Email Address:	info@fubest.fu-berlin.de
Time Slot:	Mondays, 1:30 p.m.
Language of Instruction:	English
Contact Hours:	45
ECTS Credits:	6

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## Course Description

In order to understand European history of the 19th and 20th century, a focus on Germany is indispensable and unavoidable. It took a long time before the German society transformed into a modern, open and democratic society. The “Revolution of Modernity” (Ralf Dahrendorf) was pushed back before World War I and failed 1933 in the Weimar Republic. The main antimodernist ideologies that also caused the Shoah and the German war against the “Jewish Enemy” (Jeffrey Herf) were: antisemitism, racism and nationalism. Freedom and rule of law were only brought to Germany by the Allied armies after World War II.

Whereas in the first part of the 20th century, Germany attempted to destroy civilization under a blanket of propaganda and by violence, both brutal and coldly mechanistic, today we experience a Germany that presents itself as one partner among equals in the European Union. This new identity follows 40 years of ideological, social, political, and cultural division between two German states – the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany). Germany now enjoys the political stability, peace and prosperity of a democratic system.

The change in German identity and the meaning of identity within the German context offers a fascinating angle from which to approach German history. From this angle, one gains a new understanding of Germany's contradictions, catastrophes, abysses, and moral bankruptcies before and after the Shoah, and the miraculous reconstruction after enormous casualties and destruction that resulted from the total war between 1939 and 1945.

Within these parameters, the course addresses various topics in German and European 20th-century history: different political ideas, systems and movements, as well as social and cultural developments. We will compare and contrast the German variety of these phenomena with other European varieties.

Two major themes are the struggles between democracy and dictatorship, and capitalism and communism, which played out through the 20th century. The course will connect these essentially ideological struggles to the two World Wars and the ensuing “Cold War”, to memories of trauma, to the history of everyday life, pop culture and gender, and to the experience of youth and immigrants in Germany. Through analyses of the interconnections and distinctions between all these aspects, the course will provide participants with a better understanding of German society today.

## Learning Objectives

In this course, students get an overview of the history of Germany in the European context within a time frame covering the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. The participants of the course will also learn to deal with different concepts of historiography about Germany in the European context. The course also encourages students to improve their own ability to write historical essays. Last but not least, the course points the students to important places and memories in Berlin.

## Student Profile

Should be in their fourth semester of college/university education or beyond.

### Assignments and Grading

Class Participation: 150 Points

Independent Project: 150 Points

Student Presentation: 150 Points

Midterm Exam: 200 Points

Term Paper: 350 Points

Completion of the Midterm Exam as well as the Term Paper is needed for a grade.

FUB Grade	Points of 1,000
1.0	980-1,000
1.3	950-979
1.7	900-949
2.0	850-899
2.3	800-849
2.7	750-799
3.0	700-749
3.3	650-699
3.7	600-649
4.0	500-599
5.0	< 500

### Attendance

Attendance in class is **mandatory**. We also expect you to be **punctual** out of respect to both your instructor and your fellow students. An absence for more than half of a particular day's session will be considered an absence for that day.

If you cannot attend class because you are ill, please **notify your instructor** by e-mail (not via messenger service or through another student) before class. Any absence **without a notification** of your instructor before class will automatically be considered **unexcused**.

Absences because of **illness** are **excused**; however, for the **third** sick day and every other sick day after that (per course), you will need to turn in a **doctor's notice** ("Attest" in German) in order for them to count as excused, too. It is **your** responsibility to keep track of your absences and to know when a doctor's note is required. No doctor's notice issued more than three days after the day of illness will be accepted.

If you miss an **exam** due to an excused absence, your instructor and the FU-BEST team will arrange a make-up exam for you; you may also be entitled to a term paper **deadline extension**. If you, however, do not fulfill all course requirements needed for a grade by the (later) date determined by the program, passing the course is no longer possible.

Please also note that if you miss **more than half** of a course's sessions (even if due to excused absence), passing the course is no longer possible.

Personal travel and visits by relatives or friends are **not** accepted as reasons for absence (i.e., absences for these reasons always count as **unexcused**).

Regarding **unexcused** absences, please note the following:

- Any unexcused absence has consequences for at least the participation portion of the grade.
- Two unexcused absences lead to a lowering of the course grade by a fraction.
- Three unexcused absences will result in a 5.0 (equivalent to an "F") on the transcript.

**Literature**

Konrad H. Jarausch, *Out of Ashes, A New History of Europe in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2016).

Digitized readings posted on the online learning platform Blackboard.

**Course Schedule**

Calendar	Topics, Readings, etc.
<p><b>Session 1</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: Introductory Session</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad H. Jarausch, Introduction: The European Paradox, in: Konrad H. Jarausch: <i>Out of Ashes. A new history of Europe in the Twentieth Century</i> (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 1-16.</li> <li>• Shulamit Volkov, Introduction: A Jewish Gaze – Plural and Unique, in: Shulamit Volkov, <i>Germany Through Jewish Eyes</i>, Cambridge 2024, pp. 1-10.</li> <li>• Harvard College, “A Brief Guide to Writing the History Paper”, 2007 (Dan Wewers, for the Writing Center at Harvard College)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 2</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: German Nation State</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad H. Jarausch, Global Domination, in: Konrad H. Jarausch: <i>Out of Ashes. A new history of Europe in the Twentieth Century</i> (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 19-46.</li> <li>• Lili Reyels, Failure – Revolution. What if: A Dream Comes True, in: Fritz Backhaus et. al (Eds.), <i>Roads not taken</i>, Munich 2023, pp. 252-258.</li> <li>• Shulamit Volkov, Learning to know Germany: 1780 – 1840, in: Shulamit Volkov, <i>Germany through Jewish Eyes. A History from the Eighteenth Century to the present</i>, Cambridge University Press 2024, pp. 11-59.</li> <li>• Seymour Martin Lipset, Conditions of the Democratic Order and Social Change: A comparative Discussion, in: S. N. Eisenstadt (Ed.), <i>Democracy and Modernity</i>, Leiden, New York, Köln 1992, pp. 1-14.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 3</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: Imperial Germany and WW1</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad H. Jarausch, Waging Total War, in: Konrad H. Jarausch, <i>Out of Ashes</i> (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 73-101.</li> <li>• Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, Susanne Zantop, Introduction, in: Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, Susanne Zantop, eds., <i>The Imperialist Imagination</i> (University of Michigan Press 1999), pp. 3-29.</li> <li>• Robbie Aitken, Eve Rosenhaft, Introduction, in: R. Aitken, E. Rosenhaft, <i>Black Germany</i>, Cambridge University Press 2013, pp. 1-21.</li> <li>• Stefan Paul Jacobs, Abyss – August. What if: Can the Social Democrats prevent the war?, in: Fritz Backhaus et. al (Eds.), <i>Roads not taken</i>, Munich 2023, pp. 222-230.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Session 4</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: Weimar Republic</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad Jarausch, Democratic Hopes, in: Konrad Jarausch, Out of Ashes (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 128-154.</li> <li>• Dan Diner, “Regimes: Democracy and Dictatorship”, in: Dan Diner, Cataclysms. A history of the Twentieth Century from Europe’s Edge (The University of Wisconsin Press 2015), pp. 106-152.</li> <li>• Jeffrey Herf, Reactionary Modernism, the Jews, and Anticapitalism in Weimar and Nazi Germany, in: J. Herf, Three Faces of Antisemitism, London 2023, pp. 8-19.</li> <li>• Andrei Markovits, “European Anti-Americanism: A Brief Historical Overview”, in: Andrei Markovits, Uncouth Nation. Why Europe Dislikes America (Princeton University Press 2007), pp. 38-80.</li> <li>• Heinrich August Winkler, The Avoidable Catastrophe: 30 January 1933, in: Fritz Backhaus et. al (Eds.), Roads not taken, Munich 2023, pp. 173-179.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 5</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: Shoah and WWII</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad Jarausch, Unleashing World War II, in: Konrad Jarausch, Out of Ashes (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 287-313.</li> <li>• Mark Mazower, “Hitlers New Order”, in: Mark Mazower, Dark Continent. Europe’s Twentieth Century (Vintage Books Edition 2000), pp. 141-184.</li> <li>• Yehuda Bauer, What was the Holocaust? Is the Holocaust Explicable?, in: Y. Bauer, Rethinking the Holocaust, New Haven, London 2002, pp. 1-38.</li> <li>• Hyam Maccoby, Hitler and Nazism, in: Hyam Maccoby, Antisemitism and Modernity, London 2006, pp. 139-147.</li> <li>• Julia Franke, Assassination Attempt – 20 July. Too Late! Attempted Coup and Holocaust, in: Fritz Backhaus et. al (Eds.), Roads not taken, Munich 2023, pp. 132-149.</li> <li>• Konrad Jarausch, Stalinist Modernization, in: Konrad Jarausch, Out of Ashes (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 235-260.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 6</b></p>	<p><b>MIDTERM EXAM</b></p>
<p><b>Session 7</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: Nuremberg Interregnum</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad Jarausch, Democratic Renewal, in: Konrad Jarausch, Out of Ashes (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 399-425.</li> <li>• Jeffrey Herf, The “Question of Palestine” at the United Nations, in: Jeffrey Herf, Israels Moment, University of Cambridge Press 2022, pp. 131-152.</li> <li>• Elazar Barkan, The Faustian Predicament: German Reparation to Jews, in: E. Barkan, The Guilt of Nations, New York 2000, pp. 3-29.</li> <li>• Timothy Snyder, Ethnic Cleansings, in: Timothy Snyder, Bloodlands. Europe Between Hitler and Stalin, New York 2010, pp. 313-337.</li> <li>• Stefan Paul Jacobs, Systems – Cold War. What if: The Berlin Blockade Leads to War, in: Fritz Backhaus et. al (Eds.), Roads not taken, Munich 2023, pp. 102-113.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Session 8</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: Cold War and two German States</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad Jarausch, Rupture of Civilization, in: K. Jarausch, After Hitler: Recivilizing Germans 1945 – 1995, Oxford University Press 2006, pp. 3-18.</li> <li>• Konrad Jarausch, Dictating Communism, in: Konrad Jarausch, Out of Ashes (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 426-452.</li> <li>• Thomas Alan Schwartz, “Conclusion”, in: Thomas Allan Schwartz, America’s Germany (Harvard University Press 1991), pp. 295-311.</li> <li>• Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, Totalitarianism, in: Encyclopedia Britannica (<a href="https://www.britannica.com/topic/totalitarianism">https://www.britannica.com/topic/totalitarianism</a>).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 9</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and “the West“</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad Jarausch, Cold war Crises, in: Konrad H. Jarausch, Out of Ashes (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 452-479.</li> <li>• Ralf Dahrendorf, The German Federal Republic, in: R. Dahrendorf, Society and Democracy in Germany, New York 1967, pp. 412-428.</li> <li>• Stefan Paul Jacobs, Lures – The Stalin Notes. What if: The Path Leads to Reunification?, in: Fritz Backhaus et. al (Eds.), Roads not taken, Munich 2023, pp. 84-90.</li> <li>• Shlomo Shafir, An Ambiguous Balance, in: Shlomo Shafir, Ambiguous Relations. The American Jewish Community and Germany Since 1945, Detroit 1999, pp. 359-368.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 10</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: German Democratic Republic and “the East“</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dorothee Wierling, “The Hitler Youth Generation in the GDR: Insecurities, Ambitions and Dilemmas”, in: Konrad H. Jarausch, ed., Dictatorship as Experience. Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR (Berghahn Books 1999), pp. 307-319.</li> <li>• Ralf Dahrendorf, The German Democratic Republic, in: R. Dahrendorf, Society and Democracy in Germany, New York 1967, pp. 397-411.</li> <li>• Arno Lustiger, The Fate of the JAFK After the War, in: A. Lustiger, Stalin and the Jews, New York 2003, pp. 157-184.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 11</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: Reform and Revolution in Europe</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad H. Jarausch, Transforming the East, in: Konrad H. Jarausch, Out of Ashes (Princeton University Press 2015), pp. 694-720.</li> <li>• James Kirchick, Germany: The Return of Rapallo, in: James Kirchick, The End of Europe (Yale University Press 2017), pp. 71-108.</li> <li>• Sanya Romeike, Transitional Justice in Germany after 1945 and after 1990, Nuremberg 2016, pp. 3-67.</li> <li>• Anetta Kahane, From the Ideological Repudiation of Culpability to Ethnocentric Propaganda, in: Enrico Heitzer, Martin Jander, Anetta Kahane, Patrice Poutrus (Eds.), After Auschwitz: The Difficult Legacies of the GDR, New York 2021, pp. 247-258.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 12</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: Germany and the European Continent</b></p>

	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad Jarausch, Global Challenges, in: K. Jarausch, Out of Ashes, Princeton University Press 2015, pp. 721-746.</li> <li>• Rita Chin and Heide Fehrenbach, "German Democracy and the Question of Difference (1945-1995)", in: Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, &amp; Atina Grossmann, eds., After the Nazi Racial State (University of Michigan Press, 2009), pp. 102-136.</li> <li>• Andrei Markovits, Simon Reich, Europe and the German Question, Optimists and Pessimists, in: A. Markovits, S. Reich, The German Predicament, Cornell University Press 1997, pp. 23-56.</li> <li>• Amadeu Antonio Stiftung, ed., Germany after 1945. A Society confronts Antisemitism, Racism, and Neo-Nazism, (Berlin 2016). (<a href="https://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/germany-after-1945-catalog.pdf">https://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/germany-after-1945-catalog.pdf</a>).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 13</b></p>	<p><b>Topic: Modernity, Democracy and multiple Modernities</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad Jarausch, A Chastened Modernity, in: Konrad Jarausch, Out of the Ashes, Princeton 2015, pp. 774-788.</li> <li>• Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, Introduction, in: Shmuel N. Eisenstadt (Ed.), Democracy and Modernity, Köln 1992, pp. vii-xiii.</li> <li>• James Kirchick, Conclusion: The European Dream, in: James Kirchick, The End of Europe (Yale University Press 2017), pp. 224-230.</li> <li>• Harald Welzer, Grandpa wasn't a Nazi, in: AJC (Ed.), International Perspectives 54, September 2005, pp. 1-30.</li> <li>• Shulamit Volkov, Berlin is not Weimar, in: Shulamit Volkov, Germany Through Jewish Eyes, Cambridge 2024, pp. 221-226.</li> </ul>

### Assignments:

#### **Independent Project (due in Session 5)**

Dealing with one museum or memorial in Berlin (3-4 pages). In the beginning of the class, students will receive a list of possible museums and memorials that they can visit. If students want to take a place which is not listed, they can do so. But they have to discuss it with the instructor before they start to work. Your idea for an independent report is due in session 3.

#### **Presentation**

Each session, a student should present one of the reading texts to the class and lead a discussion about it. The presentation should contain three things: 1. Please talk about the author of that text. Is he or she an important writer? 2. Please give a summary of the text. 3. Please give a comment on the text from your perspective.

#### **Term Paper (due in Session 11)**

- 1.) Before you start to write your term paper, please read the article "A Brief Guide to Writing the History Paper" ([http://writingproject.fas.harvard.edu/files/hwp/files/bg\\_writing\\_history.pdf](http://writingproject.fas.harvard.edu/files/hwp/files/bg_writing_history.pdf)).
- 2.) Think about the topic you are interested in (German History, European History, World History).
- 3.) Try to find the best sources for your term paper.
- 4.) Please write an email to your professor ([mjander@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:mjander@zedat.fu-berlin.de)) that talks about your **topic**, your **question**, your **sources** and your **thesis**. Have a look at the requirements of the class "Modern German History". Make sure your email containing your **term paper outline** will arrive in time. (**due in Session 6, midterm**)
- 5.) Discuss your term paper outline with your professor (face to face or via email).
- 6.) The main structure of your paper should look like this:

A. Thesis Statement (opening paragraph) (theory) (narrative)

**B. Story or Essay?**

- Story: chronological order
- Essay: analytical order

**C. Conclusion**

7.) In the end, your paper should have about **3,000 words** and the reader of your paper should know which sources (all of them) you have used. When you use statements in your text (out of other texts), the reader should know where exactly they come from (footnotes).

Example for a footnote:

Wehler, Hans-Ulrich, Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte, Vol. 4, Vom Beginn des ersten Weltkriegs bis zur Gründung der beiden deutschen Staaten 1914-1949 (C. H. Beck, Munich, 2003). p. 700-702, quoted in Collingham, Lizzie, Taste of War: World War II and the Battle for Food. Reprint edition. New York: Penguin Books. p. 28.

8.) Please add a list of all your sources at the end of your paper.

**Grading**

When in this class assignments (independent project paper, midterm exam essays, term paper) are graded, several things count:

1. Have questions for this assignment been answered?
2. Is the question answered in detail, or only briefly?
3. Are all the details given correctly?
4. Is the answer to questions given in the form of an essay, or is only a bulleted list given?
5. Does the author (student) refer to the sources from which he\*she draws his\*her information?
6. Are the locations of the quotations precisely indicated?
7. How many scholarly sources does the author (student) use to support his\*her view?
8. Does the author make an effort to explain his\*her analytical perspective on the subject matter?
9. Does the text read well or does one have difficulty following the argumentation?

**Controversy management in class**

In cases of controversy in the seminar, whether between the lecturer and students or between students, it is essential to resolve the conflict objectively and politely. Academic debates thrive on arguments, not insults. Sometimes disagreements arise that cannot be resolved.