History of Germany, 1805 to the Present
The Interplay of Ideas and Power
Dr. Dennis B. Klein

Hist 4238 / Fall 2004

Class meetings: Fridays, 9-11:40 am

To reach Dr. Klein—

Use only the phone if you expect to miss a class or require immediate assistance. Call 908-737-4256 (on campus: 7-4256).

Make an appointment to discuss your progress in this course or to seek more substantial assistance. Office hours Mon. 3:30-6:00 pm, Wed. 3:30-4:30 pm, Fri. 11:45 am-1:15 pm & by appointment in Willis 205G.

Email is vital when used properly. For a good article on its uses and abuses, take a look at www.fdumagazine.us and click on the Summer, 2004, issue for the article by Howard Guttman. In this class, use email only to submit research or extra credit paper proposals. Email address: Dklein@Kean.edu. (Note: Email messages offering reasons for missing class or seeking substantial assistance provide inadequate information and will, accordingly, go unread. Please use the phone for these purposes.)

Key themes in this course: Any study of modern German history involves two vexing problems: How could Germans, world leaders in intellectual innovation and moral resolve, permit if not champion 19th century Wilhelmine authoritarianism, political turmoil and moral anarchy in the Weimar 1920s, and terror and destruction in the Nazi era? How could Germans simultaneously produce the best and the worst of Western culture--sing Schubert in the evening, so to speak, and torture in the morning?

Second, why did Germans, from the 18th century on, insist on charting its own political course in defiance of Western political traditions and political culture? Was it inevitable that the Germans' chosen course (the so-called "Sonderweg") would lead to tragedy? Is it possible to interpret the German past without distorting it with our present knowledge of Germany's eventual descent into fascism and genocide?

These questions not only remain the most controversial for observers of the German present and past. They also suggest a key problem in any modern society: the metamorphosis of ideas--in their purest form, religious or absolute truths transcending political realities--into ideologies, the interplay of ideas and power. To understand how Germans confused ideas with ideologies, it's best to examine their visions and anxieties in their own words; hence our reliance on primary source reading in this course.
Course requirements and grade distribution:

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<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Grade distribution</th>
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<td>Oral Reports</td>
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<td>Take-Home Exam on Part I</td>
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A note on oral reports Oral reports are scheduled reports in class. Everyone is responsible for reading each assignment in advance and should be prepared to articulate its argument, but each one of you will have the chance to open discussion of a particular article. In these oral reports, you must seek to define the reading’s main arguments, select “quotable” passages and explain why they’re important, consider unfamiliar terms, reflect on entire passages you simply don’t understand, and question aspects of the author’s argument. For complete credit, you must submit hard copy to me in class of an “In-Class Oral Report” on the day of your oral report. The “In-Class Oral Report” is located in your Source Reader.

To receive full credit for all your papers this term, including take-home exams, you must consult guidelines in the Source Reader called “Writing Effective Essays.” This is especially important for citation protocol.

Course policies and procedures

Our emphasis in this course will be on sifting and evaluating historical expression. Because of this emphasis, I will significantly reward your participation in class. I will do so by considering your active involvement periodically and by raising each of your take-home exam grades for noteworthy participation. A “B” on the first paper, for example, would be entered as “A-“ if your class participation for that part of the course was regular and informed. Many students, whose written work could have been stronger, have earned high grades (and have gotten the most from my courses) because they routinely come prepared for active participation.

Attendance is fundamental and is something I take very seriously. Missing or even arriving late to class more than two times without an reasonable excuse from me before missing class or arriving late will lower your final grade by one increment; more than four times, two increments, etc. Students who otherwise have gotten good, hard-earned grades, have received low grades in my courses due to unexcused absences. If, on occasion, you expect to miss class, you need to explain why in person or by phone. (I will not accept email messages for this purpose.) “Doctor’s notes” are unnecessary not only because I will excuse absences only before a missed class, not afterwards, but also because medical or other appointments scheduled during class are avoidable and, therefore, inexcusable. If, then, you miss class without prior permission of if you arrive to class late, you will be considered absent. Note: I will monitor class attendance only at the beginning of class. Please also note: If you miss class, it is strictly your
responsibility to ascertain subsequent class meetings and assignments (you can call me or consult another student).

*In general*, please observe customary classroom protocol by arriving to class and submitting original papers on time (late papers will incur penalties), remaining in class throughout the period, and by taking notes on reading assignments and bringing them and relevant source material to each class.

The following are dates when class will **not** meet: September 17 (religious holiday), October 1 (religious holiday), October 8 (religious holiday), November 19 (academic conference), November 26 (Thanksgiving), and other possible dates as needed. *Unscheduled class cancellations will be announced in class.*

**Required books**

- J.W. Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (available in the university bookstore)
- Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice and Seven Other Stories* (available soon in the university bookstore)
- Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (available in the university bookstore)
- W.G. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction* (available in the university bookstore)
- Hagen Schulze, *Germany: A New History* (available in the university bookstore)

**Syllabus**

*This syllabus amounts to a course outline and is essential for helping you organize key themes and supporting sources. Please bring it to each class and consult it regularly. Changes to the syllabus will be announced in class. Students who miss class are responsible for ascertaining subsequent class meetings and assignments.*

* = Source Reader

# = syllabus attachment (study questions and guidelines for these more challenging readings)

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1st Class (Sept. 3)

Introduction: “German questions”/ review and discuss the course syllabus
Lecture: "Modern Germany's Historical Yearnings: Recalling the First Reich, the German Reformation, and the Thirty Years War" (918-1648)

2nd Class (Sept. 10)

On the verge of modernity (1763-1805)

H. Schulze, Ch. 2
# J.W. Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther (1774) 3-93 94-167

3rd Class (Sept. 24)

The German Enlightenment

H. Schulze, Ch. 3

The idea of the state (1806-1833)

* J.G. Fichte, "14th Lecture to the German Nation" (1806)
* "From a speech by the student Arminius Riemann" (1817)
* Carlsbad Resolutions (1819)

Imagining the political hero

H. Schulze, Ch. 4
*# Leopold von Ranke, "The Great Powers" (1833)

First Take-Home exam-due by October 13th (Wednesday) in Dr. Klein's office mailbox, Willis 205

Part II: Revolution, War, and Politics (1864-1933)

4th Class (Oct. 15)

Lecture: “Modern and Anti-Modern Germany”

Realpolitik by day, the dream of national genius by night

H. Schulze, Ch. 5
* Otto von Bismarck, "Iron and Blood" speech (1862)
* Heinrich von Treitschke, "Politics" (1863-1896)
5th Class (Oct. 22)

Power and its discontents

H. Schulze, Chs 7-8

6th Class (Oct. 29)

The elaboration of the power myth: Anti-Semitism (1850-1914)

* Richard Wagner, “Judaism in Music” (1850)

7th Class (Nov. 5)

World War I and aftermath (1914-1920)

H. Schulze, Ch. 9
* Ernst Junger, *The Storm of Steel: From the Diary of a German Storm Troop Officer on the Western Front* (1920)
* Treaty of Versailles (1919)

8th Class (Nov. 12)

Politicizing culture: The Weimar Republic (1918-1933)

H. Schulze, Ch. 10
# Thomas Mann, "Mario and the Magician" (1929)

* Second Take-Home Exam on Part II-due by December 1(Wednesday) in Dr. Klein’s office mailbox, Willis 205

| Part III: Dream, Nightmare, and Reawakening (1933-1989) |

9th Class (Dec. 3)

Lecture / "Weimar's Nazi Shadow" (1923-1933)

Utopia and dystopia

* # Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Volume I (1923), Chapters 5, 6, 11
  Volume II (1925), Chapters 1, 4, 6, 8
10th Class (Dec. 10)

The Racial State (1933-45)

H. Schulze, Ch. 11
* The Nuremberg Laws (1935)
* Himmler, “Speech before SS Group Leaders, Posen, Poland” (1943)
* Wannsee Protocol (1942)

The past that refuses to go away (1939-1989): Final Reflections

H. Schulze, Ch. 12
W.G. Sebald, On the Natural History of Destruction (2003), 3-104

11th Class (Dec. 17) if necessary—notification in class on December 10)

Third Take-Home Exam on Part III -due by 12:30 pm on December 22nd (Wednesday) in Dr. Klein's office mailbox, Willis 205. Absolutely no extensions.

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