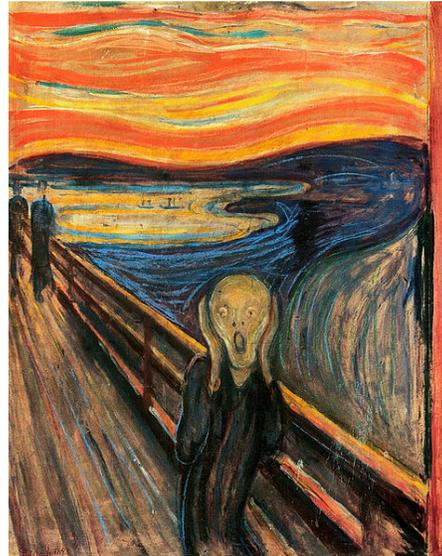


HST 203: Europe's Crisis of Modernity, 1871-1914

Oberlin College, Spring 2014
M/W, 2:30-3:45pm
Science Center A154

Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Mitchell
Office Hours: M/W 10-12, or by appointment
Office: Rice 313
E-mail: Rebecca.Mitchell@Oberlin.edu



The late nineteenth century in Europe witnessed a fundamental transformation of human experience. Confronted by new political, social and cultural realities wrought by the forces of rapid industrialization and urbanization, as well as raging ideological debates across the political landscape, European culture entered an age of crisis. Traditional beliefs and forms of authority came under scrutiny, while new forms of literary, musical and artistic expression emerged. Basic concepts underpinning both internal and external worlds were transformed by investigation into the individual unconscious mind and broader social phenomena. This class examines this “Age of Unreason” from an interdisciplinary perspective, combining the study of European political and social transformation with discussion of literary, musical, artistic and philosophical works. Themes to be addressed include urban experience, nationalism and anti-Semitism, the embrace of irrationality in cultural and political realms, and the impact of technological innovations on lived experience.

Required Texts:

In addition to readings posted on Blackboard, there are five required texts for this class. These are available for purchase in the bookstore and are also on reserve at Mudd Library

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* (Oxford UP, 2009)

[NOTE: This work is also available as an electronic resource via Oberlin Library]

Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (Vintage Press, 1989)

Carl Schorske, *Fin-de-Siecle Vienna* (Vintage Press, 1980)

Andrei Belyi, *Petersburg* (Indiana UP, 1979)

Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* (Classix, 2009)

Grading Schema:

Book Responses (2): 30% (15% each, due March 19 and May 7, 2014)

Over the course of the semester, we will read three complete primary texts:

Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Belyi, *Petersburg*, and Kafka, *Metamorphosis*.

You will select TWO of these texts and write a 2-3 page analytical response for each book, based upon questions presented in class.

Participation: 20%

Most of this class will be devoted to discussion of assigned readings rather than lecture; therefore, it is *essential* that you come prepared to discuss. This grade will be based on in-class discussion, small group work and individual written responses to assigned readings.

Research Project: 50%

Over the course of the semester, we will explore a range of topics in the cultural history of Europe from 1871-1914. In addition to weekly assigned readings, you will be responsible for developing a research project that delves more deeply into some aspect of the course. You will select a topic in consultation with the professor. Assignments for this project consist of the following, to be completed over the course of the semester:

i) **Selection of Research Topic** (February 26):

Hand in a three-four line description of the topic you are interested in exploring. If you are having difficulty selecting a topic, please arrange a meeting with the professor BEFORE February 26.

ii) **Source Analysis** 15% (March 3):

You will identify two primary sources relevant to your area of study and provide a 2-3 page written analysis of them. These sources may be textual, aural or visual, but should relate to your broader area of research.

iii) **Annotated Bibliography** 15% (April 23):

You will compile a bibliography of ten *secondary* sources, and provide a brief assessment of the main argument of each source, as well as how the source might be potentially useful for your research project. A mixture of articles and books is strongly recommended.

iv) **Final Research Proposal** 20% (May 17)

For your final project, you will write a research *proposal*. This will be a 4-5 page description of an important question related to your research topic, a brief assessment of earlier scholarly literature on the topic, and a proposed method of research through which you

plan to address your question. Appended to the proposal, you will include an annotated bibliography of FIFTEEN primary and secondary sources, based on your previous assignments. Details will be provided in class.

Late work will be penalized by a reduction of 1/3 of a letter grade per day late. Thus, an “A” paper received two days late will be downgraded to a “B+”. Be sure to look over the schedule and plan accordingly!

All course work must be received by Saturday, May 17 at 9:00pm!

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to attend and actively participate in all class sessions. As 20% of your final grade is based on participation and discussion, absence from class will negatively impact your performance.

Class Etiquette:

- 1) Be sure to turn off ALL cell phones prior to class – this is a sign of respect for myself, your colleagues, and the atmosphere of learning in the classroom.
- 2) Please do NOT surf the internet during class time. Laptop computers are useful tools for learning and note-taking, but must be used responsibly. Internet surfing distracts both yourself and your colleagues and hinders classroom discussion. Offenders will be requested not to bring their computers to future classes.
- 3) When you send me an email, be sure to use proper written etiquette (formal address, correct grammar, clearly stated question or comment). Remember that this is a formal written exchange and part of your scholarly persona!
- 4) This classroom is a space for respectful discussion of concepts, ideas and events. Everyone has the right to express their ideas, pose questions, and engage in productive conversation. While differences of opinion will certainly arise, it is our collective responsibility to create an open, respectful and cordial atmosphere.

Plagiarism and the Honor Code:

“The word plagiarism derives from Latin roots: *plagiarius*, an abductor, and *plagiare*, to steal. The expropriation of another author’s work and the presentation of it as one’s own, constitutes plagiarism and is a serious violation of the ethics of scholarship.” [American Historical Association, Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct]. Presenting the work of others as one’s own goes against everything that a liberal education is about. It is a serious affront to the other students in the course, to me as a member of the course, and to the plagiariser him/herself. The College requires that students sign an “Honor Code” for all assignments. This pledge states: “*I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment.*” For further information, see the student Honor Code which you can access via Blackboard>Lookup/Directories>Honor Code. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism please see me or raise it in class.

Students with Disabilities:

If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Office of Disability Services in Peters G-27/G-28.

Please Note: I reserve the right to change the syllabus over the course of the semester. Any changes that are introduced will be discussed in class at least one week prior to their implementation.

Course Schedule:

Week One: Conceptual Beginnings

Session One (February 3, 2014): Syllabus and Introductions

[Music: Johann Strauss, Jr., *Blue Danube Waltz*]

Session Two (February 5, 2014): Defining “modernity”: The Painter of Modern Life

[Music: Maurice Ravel, *Jeux d'eau*]

Reading assignment: Baudelaire, “The Painter of Modern Life”; “What is Fin de siècle?” (1893); Schorske, “Introduction”

Week Two: Philosophical Underpinnings

Session Three (February 10, 2014): Lecture: Nietzsche

[Music: Friedrich Nietzsche, selections]

Reading Assignment: Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, (begin)

Session Four (February 12, 2014): No Class, focus on reading for Monday’s discussion.

Reading Assignment: Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

Week Three: Europe in the 1880s

Session Five (February 17, 2014): Discussion – Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

[Music: Richard Wagner, *Parsifal*]

Session Six (February 19, 2014): Europe in the 1880s

[Music: Johannes Brahms, Symphony no.3]

Reading Assignment: Hobsbawm, *Age of Empire*, 1-55 (“Overture,” “The Centenarian Revolution,” “An Economy Changes Gear”)

Week Four: Mass Politics

Session Seven (February 24, 2014): Social Classes at the Turn of the Century

[Music: Eric Satie, *3 Gymnopédies*]

Reading Assignment: Hobsbawm, 112-141; 165-191 (“Workers Unite,” “Who’s Who, or the Uncertainties of the Bourgeoisie”)

Visual Assignment: [Blackboard, Week Four]

Session Eight (February 26, 2014): Library Visit

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH TOPIC DUE

Week Five: Social Relations

Session Nine (March 3, 2014): Allen Art Museum Visit

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS DUE

Session Ten (March 5, 2014): European Political Life

[Music: Widor, Symphony no. 5: Toccata (1879)]

Reading Assignment: Schorske, “Politics in a New Key”; Hobsbawm, “The Politics of Democracy,” 84-111

Week Six: Political and Gender Relations

Session Eleven (March 10, 2014): France in the 1890s

[Music: Cesar Franck, 3rd Organ Chorale (1890)]

Reading Assignment: Gregory Shaya, “How to make an Anarchist-Terrorist: An Essay on the Political Imaginary in Fin-de-siecle France,” *Journal of Social History* 44:2 (Winter 2010): 521-543; “La Ravachole”; Emile Henry, “Defense Speech”; Ravachole, “Forbidden Defense Speech”

Session Twelve (March 12, 2014): Discussion - Women in Fin-de-siècle Europe

[Music: Richard Strauss, *Elektra*]

Reading Assignment: Alison Moore and Peter Cryle, “Frigidity at the *Fin de Siecle* in France: A Slippery and Capacious Concept,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 19:2 (May 2010): 243-261; Hobsbawm, “The New Woman,” 192-218; Sigmund Freud, *Doris* (excerpt); Otto Weininger, *Sex and Character* (excerpt)

Visual Assignment: Paintings on Blackboard [Week Six]

Week Seven: Revolutionary Trends in Russia

Session Thirteen (March 17, 2014): Russia at the Turn of the Century

[Music: Sergei Rachmaninoff, Prelude in g minor, op.23, no.5]

Reading Assignment: Susan Morrissey, “The ‘Apparel of Innocence’: Toward a Moral Economy of Terrorism in Late Imperial Russia,” *Journal of Modern History*, 84:3 (September 2012): 607-642

Session Fourteen (March 19, 2014): Discussion – Andrei Belyi, *Petersburg*

[Music: Piotr Tchaikovsky, *Queen of Spades*]

FIRST BOOK RESPONSE DUE

SPRING BREAK: March 24-28, 2014

Week Eight: Nationalism and Imperialism

Session Fifteen (March 31, 2014): Nationalism and Imperialism – New Ideologies

[Music: Bedrich Smetana, *Ma vlast*]

Reading Assignment: Hobsbawm, 56-83; 142-164 (“Imperialism,” “Waving Flags: Nations and Nationalism”)

Visual Assignment: [Blackboard Week Eight]

Session Sixteen (April 2, 2014): No Class; individual meetings with professor to discuss research project

Week Nine: The Crisis of Belief

Session Seventeen (April 7, 2014): Rationality and Irrationality

[Music: Claude Debussy, *Pelléas et Mélisande*]

Reading Assignment: Schorske, “Politics and the Psyche: Schnitzler and Hofmannsthal”; Hobsbawm, “Reason and Society”, 262-275; Nordau, *Degeneration* (excerpt)

Session Eighteen (April 9, 2014): Mysticism, Symbolism and Satanism

[Music: Aleksandr Scriabin, Sonata no. 9 (Black Mass)]

Reading Assignment: Tom H. Gibbons, "Cubism and the 'Fourth Dimension' in the Context of the Late Nineteenth-Century and early Twentieth-Century Revival of Occult Idealism," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 44 (1981): 130-147

Visual Assignment: [Blackboard Week Nine]

Week Ten: Internal Crisis

Session Nineteen (April 14, 2014): Psychoanalysis and Painting

[Music: Bela Bartok, *Bluebird's Castle* (1912)]

Reading Assignment: Schorske, "Politics and Patricide in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*"; Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams* (excerpt)

Session Twenty (April 16, 2014): Psychoanalysis, Painting and Politics

[Music: Mahler, Symphony no.5: Adagietto (1901-02)]

Reading Assignment: Schorske, "Gustav Klimt: Painting and the Crisis of the Liberal Ego" (181-279)

Week Eleven: Re-imagining Space

Session Twenty-One (April 21, 2014): Transformation of Space

[Music: Igor Stravinsky, *Rite of Spring* (1913)]

Reading Assignment: Schorske, "The *Ringstrasse*"; Vanessa Schwartz, "Public Visits to the Morgue: *Flanerie* in the Service of the State" [Blackboard]

Session Twenty-Two (April 23, 2014): Research Proposal Workshop

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Week Twelve: Uncertainty, Anxiety, and Flux

Session Twenty-Three (April 28, 2014): Transformation of Time; Phenomenology

[Music: Aleksandr Scriabin, *Vers la flamme*]

Reading Assignment: Husserl (excerpt), Bergson (excerpt)

Session Twenty-Four (April 30, 2014): Lost Utopias

[Music: Arnold Schoenberg, *Erwartung* (1909)]

Reading Assignment: Hobsbawm, "Certainties Undermined: The Sciences", 243-261; Schorske, "Explosion in the Garden"

Week Thirteen: On the Eve of War

Session Twenty-Five (May 5, 2014): Discussion

[Music: Schoenberg, *Die glückliche Hand* (1913)]

Reading Assignment: Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*

Session Twenty-Six (May 7, 2014): Towards War and Revolution

[Music: Maurice Ravel, *La Valse*]

Reading Assignment: Hobsbawm, 328-340 ("Epilogue")

SECOND BOOK RESPONSE DUE

FINAL PROJECT (RESEARCH PROPOSAL) DUE SATURDAY, MAY 17th at
9:00pm!

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Historians use a wide variety of materials to construct our understanding of the past. Archaeological artifacts, oral tradition, visual images (paintings, photographs, film), and of course written texts can and should be used to gain a clear picture of the period in question.

General Questions of Origin (who, what, where, why and when):

<u>A</u>uthor(s)	Not only the name of the author(s), but also the biographical information about him or her that will allow an understanding of biases (gender, age, religion, profession, political affiliation, etc).
<u>C</u>ontext	What are the historical circumstances in which the author is writing or creating the source? What has s/he been experiencing and seeing during or preceding the time of writing? Note the year of publication, location, etc.
<u>L</u>anguage	How would you characterize the author(s) use of words (or images)? Is it: angry, vindictive, loving, inspiring, boring/academic, colloquial, accessible, etc.? This should help gauge intent, but also figure out to whom the source is written for or directed toward.
<u>A</u>udience	To whom is the document directed? This will tell you a great deal about the author's intentions and possible biases.
<u>I</u>ntent	What was the author trying to do? Was s/he attempting to change minds, overthrow a government, vent to a friend in a letter...? Knowing this will also help the reader to understand the full meaning of the source better.
<u>M</u>essage	Finally, what is actually written or produced in the source? This is what is commonly known as "the facts." What does it tell us about the time and place under consideration? You must be able to place the primary document in historical context .

Some questions are less obvious and demand much more thought. For example, what can we gain by careful reading (i.e. reading between the lines)? What does the author share with his/her audience? Are there certain values stated either implicitly or explicitly? Look for superlatives, emotion, and emphasis.

How does the source compare to others you have encountered or evaluated this semester?

How does it help you understand the other material we have been reading? Answer or reject some of the major historiographical questions we have been asking?

Evaluation

- Is the document believable and trustworthy? Can we consider it and the statements in it genuine?
- Is the author consistent in his/her stated purpose and message?
- How does the document inform the time and topic under consideration?