



Terrorism and Political Violence in Post-War Europe, 1945-2000

EUH 4665/Course Syllabus

Fall, 2021

T/R, 5-6, 6

Flint 105

University of Florida:

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Course Description:

Terrorism is one of the most highly publicized forms of political violence. But while it is generally viewed today as an expression of religious fanaticism, the fact is that the history of terrorism in Europe goes back a long time. Partly because it has been ill-served by historians, terrorism is also one of the least understood political problems of the modern era. This course aims to shed light on this complex and controversial subject by providing a multi-country historical survey of the role terrorism and violence has played in European affairs in the post-Second World War era. The focus throughout will be on Europe, though, whenever an understanding of European-centered events demands a wider perspective, the global dimensions of this phenomenon will be discussed.

We will begin by attempting to answer several questions about the nature and purpose of terrorism and political violence. What is terrorism and who are the perpetrators of this form of political violence? What factors give rise to terrorism and helped to sustain it over time? To answer these questions we will first determine the place terrorism and political violence has held in the general context of European affairs in the modern period. An overview of how the concepts, techniques, and the organizational forms of terrorist movements have evolved since the late 19th century will also be provided in this section. Next we will turn to an examination of the culture of terrorist groups as well as the reciprocal relationship terrorists and terrorism held with their targets/victims (civilians, political figures) and adversaries (state police and military).

In the second part of the course we shall focus on case-specific examples of ethno-nationalist and nationalist movements which have used terrorism as a major vehicle for promoting their respective causes. We begin this section by surveying the political, economic, and political landscape of Europe in the immediate aftermath of the Second World war, paying close attention to the ways in which the emerging Cold War and the post-war decolonization issues preoccupying the countries in Western Europe contributed to the rise of nationalist-inspired political terrorism. The historical and ideological connections between contemporaneous national liberation movements – the fraternal ties linking the Basque ETA and the Irish IRA, for example – will also be discussed.

In Part III, we will see how a new wave of political violence and terrorism in the form of grass-roots and urban guerrilla movements was related to the counter-cultural movement of the mid- and late-1960s. This will be achieved by assessing the various left-wing (neo-Marxism and anarchism) and alternative life-style perspectives (feminism) which were associated with the politics of protest in this period. We shall also review the ideological programs and public outrages committed by extremist groups which were active in Germany, Italy, and other European countries. Various other topics, including an exploration of the contrasting cultural worlds of the terrorists and mainstream society will be featured in this part of the course.

Theoretical dimension:

The theoretical component of the course, which will be incorporated into assigned readings and class discussions throughout the semester, will be concerned with the following doctrines and analytical categories: Marxism and Neo-Marxism (Leninism, Trotskyism, Maoism); Anarchism and neo-anarchism (e.g., Situationism); Ethno-nationalism and national identity (ETA, IRA); neocolonialism and anti-imperialism, race and racial identity (e.g., Fritz Fanon); Fascism and Neo-Fascism, and gender relations (feminism/radical feminism).

Course Objectives:

- Introducing the student to the various types of political violence and terrorism which have shaped European history since 1945.
- Promoting critical thinking about how scholars define and assess controversial

- topics.
- Developing the students' research and writing skills at an advanced level of historical training.

Note on prerequisites: As this is an advanced course on Europe, it is assumed that the student has a background in history/politics and particularly in European history.

Required Texts: Available at UF Bookstore and Orange and Blue Textbooks.

- [Eric Hobsbawm, Age of Extremes](#)
- [Terrorism in Context, Martha Crenshaw](#)
- [The Terrorism Reader, David Whittaker](#)
- [Franz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth](#)
- [Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Obsolete Communism: The Left-Wing Alternative](#)

COURSE STRUCTURE/FORMAT:

This lecture course is designed to allow the student to play an “interactive” role in teaching the class. Each week throughout the term there will be individual panel presentations which address the main themes to be discussed during that week’s seminar. The presentation itself can be in the form of a brief lecture, visual presentation (between 15-25 minutes) and/or an outline of questions that can be used as the basis of focused class discussion. In the latter case you will be expected to lead the discussion and ask follow-up questions etc. for the second half of the seminar.

.EXAMS AND GRADING:

Your grade will be computed using the following formula:

Mid-term and Final Exam = 50%

Panel Presentation = 20%

Reaction papers = 30%

1. The midterm and final exams will be taken in class.
2. Two reaction papers: Reaction papers are not research papers. Rather they are short essays – approximately 1,200 words -- that are meant to demonstrate your own critical assessment of the themes being covered in the weekly course calendar. The analysis you present in the paper should be exclusively focused on and derived from lectures and all assigned reading materials. All references to works used in your analysis should follow the standard conventions -- MLA, Chicago MS, APA -- for citing works in a footnote/endnote/in text.
3. **Attendance is mandatory. Three unexcused absences will automatically lower your final grade by one letter. You can take up to two absences during the term without penalty.**
4. Student Code of Conduct: See Addendum at end of syllabus.

Course Calendar:

Part I. Terrorism and Political Violence in Context

Readings for Part I: Eric Hobsbawm, [The Age of Extremes, Part I.](#); [Terrorism in Context, Introduction, Chapters 2-3](#); [The Terrorism Reader, Part I.](#)
Films: [Sabotage \(UK, 1936\)](#)

Week 1 (23 August)– Introduction to the course: What is terrorism and who are terrorists? Apostles of violence and the psychology of terrorism (criminals or fanatical revolutionaries).

Week 2 (30 August)– The era of public outrages in Europe: Montjuich (Spain, 1896), Bombing of the Café Terminus (France, 1894); Regicide in Italy, France, and Spain. Sustaining terrorism: revolutionary responses to state-sponsored repression.

Week 3 (6 September/Labor Day on Monday)– Terrorism and violence in the 20th century; Georges Sorel and the “myth” of revolutionary violence; Right-wing extremism: glorifying violence as a form of social and political protest (Futurism).

Week 4 (13 September) – Political violence and modernity: the impact of the First World War and the Russian Revolution.

Week 5 (20 September) – From revolutionary to state-sponsored terror: official acts of terrorism in Germany, Italy, and the USSR in the inter-war period. The aftermath of the Second World War.

Part II: Political Violence and Nationalism

Readings for Part II: [Fritz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth](#); [E. Hobsbawm, Age of Extremes, Part II; Terrorism in Context, Chapters 4-5, 8,10, 11](#) [The Terrorism Reader, Part II, Chapters 9-11.](#)
Films: [The Battle for Algiers](#) ; [Bloody Sunday \(UK / Ireland, 2002\)](#); [Yoyes \(Spain, 2000\).](#)

Week 6 (27 September)– Theories and practical realities of Imperialism and Colonial rule in Europe: nationalism and ethno-nationalism in France (Algeria/Basque provinces), Northern Ireland, and Spain (Basque country and Catalonia).

28 September: Panel Presentations/First Reaction Paper Due.

Week 7 (4 October)– Race and national liberation: Algerian independence movement, 1956-1962; FLN.

Week 8 (11 October)– The Irish “troubles”: Northern Ireland and the campaign for Irish unity, 1969-1972

12 October/Panel Presentations

Week 9 (18 October)– Spanish colonialism: The case of the Basque independence movement, 1959-2011

21 October: Mid-term Exam

Part III. Urban guerrillas and grass-roots terrorism

Readings for Part III: [E. Hobsbawm, Age of Extremes, Part II](#) ; [Cohn-Bendit, D., Obsolete Communism: The Left-Wing Alternative](#); [The Terrorism Reader, Part II., Chapters 14-15](#); [The Brigade Rosse: Politics Of Protracted War In The Imperialist Metropolis](#) (Internet source).
Films: “Der Baader Meinhof Komplex” and/or Baader (Germany / UK, 2002); Nada (France / Italy, 1974).

Week 10 (25 October)– A Year of Protests: 1968: A generation of dissidents in Western Europe (CND, Feminism, the New Left); May Days and mass demonstrations in Paris, West Berlin, and London.

Week 11 (1 November)– New Left revolutionaries: Che Guevara, Antonio Gramsci, From Bakunin to Debord; Pacifism vs. militancy.

Week 12 (8 November)– Revolutionary activism in Germany and Italy (Part I.): the Red Army Faction, RAF and the Red Brigade.

Week 13 (15 November)– Revolutionary activism in Germany and Italy (Part II.): the Red Army Faction, RAF and the Red Brigade.

18 November/Panel Presentations

Week 14 (22 November) – Minority activism elsewhere in Europe and US: Direct Action (France), The Angry Brigade (UK); Weather Underground and Symbionese Liberation Army (USA). The legacy of political terrorism in Europe; the rise of religious fanaticism and political violence on the right.

30 November 2nd Reaction paper due/Panel Presentations

Week 15 (6 December) – **7 December/Final Exam.**

ADDENDUM TO SYLLABUS

UF faculty are now being asked to provide written guidelines relating to (1) student conduct in the classroom and (2) make-up examinations. Most of these can be deduced by exercising common sense. But to avoid any misunderstandings, students enrolled in the courses listed above should take note of the following:

Code of Conduct:

- (1) Cell phones must be turned off throughout the class period.
- (2) Students are asked not to talk, read papers, surf the internet, and otherwise distract the class from the lectures/class discussion.
- (3) Students coming in after the lecture has begun should not interrupt the professor and/or students by walking in front of classroom, re-arranging desks to gain access to seating, etc. Latecomers should therefore take a seat at the back or wherever it is possible without disturbing others.
- (4) Anyone who arrives more than ten minutes after class has begun will be counted absent unless he/she has the prior approval of the instructor.
- (5) Intellectual honesty: any student caught plagiarizing the written work of others and/or cheating on an exam will automatically fail the course.

Make-up exams/Late Papers:

- (1) Apart from documented illness, family emergencies (immediate family only), and exceptional circumstances (to be determined by the instructor), exams will have to be taken on the assigned day. The scheduling of permitted make-up exams will be at the discretion of the instructor.
- (2) All written assignments – term papers and the like – are due on the day assigned in the syllabus and/or as announced by the instructor during class. Papers must be handed into the instructor on the due date in a hard-copy format. (That is, do not send your paper as an e-mail attachment etc.) No late papers will be accepted for any reason(s).

Academic honesty:

In this course, it is especially important that you do not commit plagiarism, which is the failure to properly cite and give credit when you use the ideas, words, phrases, or arguments of other people in your writing assignments. This includes material from the internet or other forms media (films, pictures, etc.). Information obtained on-line cannot be copied or used in a presentation or paper without proper attribution of authorship.

Plagiarism is a serious breach of the academic code of behavior expected at UF and other institutions of higher learning. The University of Florida's policies regarding cheating and plagiarism and the consequences for violating those policies may be viewed at:-

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/12/Orange-Book-Web-Version-2020.pdf>. Some of the consequences which might result from violating this code include a zero grade for the assignment, a failing grade for the course, and (in more egregious cases) expulsion from school.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office:- <http://dso.ufl.edu>. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide that documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Covid-19:-

- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms click here for guidance from the CDC on symptoms of coronavirus:--
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.
- Please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. Click here for UF Health guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms:-
<https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test-protect-2/frequently-asked-questions/covid-19-exposure-and-symptoms-who-do-i-call-if/>
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. Find more information in the university attendance policies:-
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

