The 20th century was the bloodiest in European history, punctuated by two world wars and marked by several of the most brutal states the world has ever known. It was only at the very end of the century that the triumph of capitalist democracies in Europe was apparently assured. And yet it began as a century of promise and hope, with technological revolutions and a belief in the possibility of human emancipation. In this course, we will look at the “crisis of modernity,” the ways in which people came to terms with the cataclysms of violence and fundamental changes to daily life. In particular, we will look at how intellectuals contributed to these events and understood their own place in the modern world.

We will look at such diverse topics as: the formation of the modern nation; the reaction of French thinkers to anti-Semitism in the infamous Dreyfus affair; revolutionary utopianism, efforts to create a “new world,” and especially the fateful role of radical thinkers in the Russian Revolution; the fatal attraction of anti-Democratic fascist, Communist, and national-chauvinist ideologies; and the impassioned debates over the role of the “public intellectual” today.

This is an honors seminar course aimed at students with some background in European and world history. You will be graded on the basis of class participation (20%); the writing of three brief response papers over the course of the semester (5% each); an in-class mid-term (25%); and a final group presentation and summary paper (40%).

Students will be expected to have done all of the reading and participate fully in the class discussions. Attendance is mandatory, and you must be on time, prepared, and courteous to everyone in the room. The participation portion of the grade will be adversely affected after two absences, except in extraordinary circumstances.

All required texts are available at Orange & Blue Textbooks (309 NW 13th St.), as is the Course Pack, which contains substantial required readings. Those students who do not have a background in modern European history may wish to purchase one of the recommended survey texts to supplement the required course readings.

Required Texts
Mark Mazower, Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century
Nicholas Berdyaev, The Origins of Russian Communism
George L. Mosse, The Fascist Revolution
Evgenyi Zamyatin, We
Julien Benda, The Treason of the Intellectuals
Czeslaw Milosz, The Captive Mind

Course Pack
Recommended optional survey texts

General Policies
UF Students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty – most of all, to avoid plagiarism and cheating. The Statement on Academic Honesty is available online at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students office. The Dean of Students will provide documentation to the student who will then provide this to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Information online at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc

Minus grades are now in effect at UF. For information on the new grading scale see http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html

Readings and Assignment Schedule
[There may be minor changes in the readings and assignments, which will be announced in advance.]

Week 1 (January 5th): The Crisis of Modernity. Knowledge and Society.
Readings: Condorcet, excerpts of Progress of the Human Mind (ER); Karl Marx, excerpts of The Communist Manifesto (ER); Fëdor Dostoyevsky, excerpts of Notes from Underground (ER).

Week 2 (January 12th): What is the Intelligentsia? and What Should it Be?
Readings: Jeremy Jennings and Tony Kemp-Welch, “The Century of the Intellectuals: from the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie,” (CP); Friedrich Nietzsche, excerpts of “We Scholars,” from Beyond Good and Evil (CP); Antonio Gramsci, excerpts of The Prison Notebooks (CP); Carl Boggs, Intellectuals and the Crisis of Modernity, p. 11-36 (CP).

Week 3 (January 19th): The Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia
Readings: Isaiah Berlin, “The Role of the Intelligentsia” (CP); Alexander Herzen, “Young Moscow,” excerpts from My Past and Thoughts (CP); Berdyaev, Origins of Russian Communism, p. 7-93.

1st Response Paper – January 19th

Week 4 (January 26th): Engagement, Commitment, and Individuals: French Intellectuals during and after the Dreyfus Affair
Readings: David Drake, French Intellectuals and Politics from the Dreyfus Affair to the Occupation, chapter one (CP); Emile Zola, “Letter to France” and “J’accuse!” (CP).
Film: The Life of Emile Zola (1937).
Week 5 (February 2nd): Intellectuals and Nationalism. The Origins of Fascism.
Readings: Ernest Gellner, excerpts from Nations and Nationalism (CP); Houston Stewart Chamberlain, excerpts from Foundations of the Nineteenth Century; and Mosse, Fascist Revolution, p.55-93, 117-35.

Week 6 (February 9th): The Radical Intelligentsia and its Critics in Revolutionary Russia
Readings: Berdyaev, Origins of Russian Communism, p.94-188; V. I. Lenin, excerpts from What is to be Done? (CP); Semen Frank, “The Crisis of the Old Intelligentsia,” from Vekhi/Landmarks (CP).
[Optional: S. Finkel, “Purging the Public Intellectual: The 1922 Expulsions from Soviet Russia” (CP)]

2nd Response Paper – February 9th

Week 7 (February 16th): Crisis of Faith: The First World War
Readings: Mazower, Dark Continent, p. ix-xv, 3-40; R. W. Inge, excerpts of The Idea of Progress (CP); Sigmund Freud, excerpts of Civilization and its Discontents (CP); Mosse, Fascist Revolution, p.95-116.

Week 8 (February 23rd): Crisis of Faith: Utopia or Dystopia?
Readings: Fëdor Dostoyevsky, “Legend of the Grand Inquisitor,” from Brothers Karamazov (CP); Zamyatin, We; Carl Boggs, Intellectuals and the Crisis of Modernity, pp.79-89, 97-109 (CP).

Week 9 (March 2nd): Crisis of Faith: The Treason of the Clerks?
Readings: Benda, Treason of the Intellectuals.
Mid-Term Exam on March 2nd

[Spring Break]

Week 10 (March 16th): The Rise of Totalitarianism in Interwar Europe.
Readings: Mazower, Dark Continent p.41-103, 138-81; Mosse, Fascist Revolution p.1-44; Benito Mussolini and Giovanni Gentile, “Foundations and Doctrines of Fascism” (CP); brief excerpts from Hitler and Alfred Rosenberg (CP).

Selection of Final Presentation Groups

Week 11 (March 23rd): The Pill of Murti-Bing – the Communist Seduction
3rd Response Paper – March 23rd
Week 12 (March 30th): The Dissident Intellectual. Intellectuals and Democracy.

Week 13 (April 6th): Presentation Workshops
Readings: Mazower, Dark Continent, p. 395-403.
Presentation Prospectus Due April 6th

Week 14 (April 13th): Presentations
Group Presentations (20-25 min. each)


Presentation Summary Papers Due Tue., April 27th