

✓ General

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The hybrid course "German Social History" provides an introduction into the society and culture of Germany in the 20th century. The focus of the mostly online sessions is on post-war German history that is reviewed from a comparative perspective as asymmetrical development between East and West Germany. Methodologically and thematically the course is adopting the concepts of 'modernity' and 'crisis'. Topics that should be discussed are, among other things, political and social protest movements, everyday culture, identity and dealing with the past. The course gives an overview of the history of the Weimar Republic until unification in the 1990s and will deal intensively with the two post-war societies in East and West. In addition to political and social issues also cultural phenomena and particularly the visual reflection of the socio-historical development will be examined.

The course gives an insight into different aspects of German social history. Furthermore it provides methodological approaches in order to perceive the post-war development in Germany both in comparative perspective (comparative, asymmetric historiography) as well as with regard to various phenomena (society, culture, politics). Mostly taught online, the course intends to present a complex and wide-ranging picture of Germany. The students will thus be offered a basis for subsequent detailed studies in various subject areas. At the same time they will become familiar with different historiographical concepts of social and cultural history.

The teaching is mostly conducted online via Zoom and organized as a thematically arranged chronological overview of the German social history of the 20th century. Main sessions are concerned with the conceptual and methodological question of how this history can be explored and narrated. All sessions are based on corresponding texts for the preparation of each session. The lessons are based on both the input of the lecturer and the joint discussion of texts as well as on group work and students' presentations.

Join Zoom Meeting



[Announcements](#)

✓ Assignments

1. Active participation
2. Oral presentation (15 Minutes), on 14 January 2026 - 40% ?
3. Final paper (10 Pages, 12 pt., Double space), submission deadline: 15 March 2026 – 60%

Final Paper Guidelines

The final paper should be approximately 10 pages in length (12-point font, double-spaced). Ideally, the paper builds on the topic of the student's oral presentation. However, students may also choose a different topic, provided it is clearly related to *German Social History of the 20th Century*.

The paper must adhere to academic standards. It should include:

- A **title page** (including student's name, ID number, paper title, course name and number)
- A **table of contents**
- A **bibliography** with at least **10 academic references** (books, scholarly articles, and/or reputable online resources)
- A **consistent citation style**, following a recognized academic referencing system (e.g., Chicago, APA, MLA)

In terms of structure, the paper must contain:

1. **Introduction:** Presentation of the topic, explanation of its historical relevance, and a clearly formulated research question.
2. **Main Body:** Historical contextualization of the topic, analysis of relevant primary and/or secondary sources, and a structured discussion of the central phenomenon under investigation.
3. **Conclusion:** Summary of the main findings, reflection on the limitations of the study, and an outlook on possible directions for future research.

The paper should demonstrate critical engagement with the sources, coherent argumentation, and clear academic writing throughout.

Seminar Paper

In addition, it is possible to write a seminar paper:

- a) choose topic related to the course; the seminar paper can also build on the final paper.
- b) submit written seminar paper (25 pages) until 30 March 2026

✓ Background

- Reinhart Koselleck, Some Questions Regarding the Conceptual History of "Crisis". In: The practice of conceptual history. Timing history, spacing concepts. Stanford: Stanford University Press 2002, pp. 236-247.

- Axel Schildt and Arnold Sywottek, "Reconstruction" and "Modernization": West German Social History during the 1950s. In: Robert G. Moeller (ed), *West Germany under Construction. Politics, Society and Culture in the Adenauer Era*, Ann Arbor 1997, pp. 413-443.
 - Jürgen Kocka, *Toward a Social History of the German Democratic Republic*. In: *Civil Society and Dictatorship in Modern Germany*, Hanover, NH 2010, pp. 33-66.
 - Hans-Jürgen Schröder. "From division to Unity: The History of the Federal Republic of Germany." *The New Germany: History, Economy, Policies*. Ed. Reimund Seidelmann. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2011. 13-64.
 - Lindenberger, Thomas. "Everyday History: New Approaches to the History of the Post-War Germanys." *The Divided Past: Rewriting Post-War German History*. Ed. Christoph Klessmann. Oxford: Berg, 2001. 43-67.
- A full reading list will be provided at the beginning of the seminar.

✓ 22.10.2025 - Introduction: German Social History – Society, History & Crisis (in class)

Reading:

- Thomas Lindenberger, "Everyday History: New Approaches to the History of the Post-War Germanys." *The Divided Past: Rewriting Post-War German History*. Ed. Christoph Klessmann. Oxford: Berg, 2001. 43-67.
- Gerhard Paul, "Visual History (english version): Version 1.0," *Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte*, 7.11.2011. doi:[10.14765/zzf.dok.2.792.v1](https://doi.org/10.14765/zzf.dok.2.792.v1).



Lindeberger Everyday History



GSH 2025 Session 01

✓ 29.10.2025 - Crisis of Modernity – The Ambivalences of Weimar (online)

Reading:

- Peter Gay, *The Trauma of Birth. From Weimar to Weimar*. In: *Weimar Culture. The Outsider as Insider*, New York 2001, pp. 1-22.



Gay From Weimar to Weimar

Group Work in Breakoutrooms

Please discuss the image and source assigned to your group and present your findings in class.

Meet in breakout rooms. Read the written source and relate it to the picture (photograph or painting).

- What particular historic incidents / events / debates / conflicts from the period of the Weimar Republic are addressed? (Relate the sources to your previous knowledge)
- How is the social / economic / cultural situation of living in the Weimar Republic described?
 - What particular moments of crisis and conflict become visible in the sources or through the sources?

Describe briefly the sources and present the results of your discussion to the class.

 Peter Gay excerpt

 GSH 2025 Session 02

✓ 5.11.2025 - Total Integration – The Principle of German Volksgemeinschaft (online)

Reading:

- Michael Wildt, Volksgemeinschaft as a Political Concept. In: Hitler's *Volksgemeinschaft* and the Dynamics of Racial Exclusion, New York/Oxford 2012, pp. 15-50.

 Wildt Volksgemeinschaft as a Political Concept

 Group-01 Nazi-Propaganda Poster

 Group-02 Nazi-Propaganda Rallies

 Group-03 Nazi-Propaganda Nazi-Ideals



Group-04 Nazi-Propaganda Culture



GSH 2025 Session 03

✓ 12.11.2025 - A Society in Ruins – “Zero Hour” and the Question of Guilt (online)

Group Work 1:

Read and discuss the OMGUS surveys conducted in the American zone in Germany during 1945/46.

Present the topic and the results briefly to the class.

Group Work 2:

Look at Seidenstücker’s photograph and analyse it. What does it say about the “Zero Hour” and the post-war condition?

Watch: Opening sequence [The Murderers are Among Us](#)

Reading:

- Hannah Arendt, The Aftermath of Nazi Rule, Report from Germany. In: Commentary 10 (October 1950), pp. 342-352.



Arendt Aftermath of Nazi Rule



OMGUS Survey - Group 1 - Expellees



OMGUS Survey - Group 3 - Politics



OMGUS Survey - Group 2 - Nuremberg



Zero-Hour 01



Zero-Hour 02



Zero-Hour 03



Zero-Hour 04



GSH 2025 Session 04

✓ 19.11.2025 - Restart, Continuity and Crisis – Developing Society, Culture and Identity in East and West Germany (online)

Group Work 1: FRG GDR

Please compare the symbols / extracts from the Federal Basic Law and the GDR Constitution.

Identify similarities and differences.

Present your findings in class.

Group Work 2: Post War Rebellion and Female Subjectivity

Please read the extract and discuss it in relation to the picture. What can you say about the given roles and possibilities of (young) women in post-war West-Germany based on these sources?

Present your findings in class.

Reading:

- Andrew I. Port, Democracy and Dictatorship in the Cold War. The Two Germanies, 1949-1961. In: Helmut Walser Smith (ed.), The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History, Oxford 2011, pp. 613-639.



Port Democracy and Dictatorship



GSH Groupwork FRGGDR 01



GSH Groupwork FRGGDR 02



GSH Groupwork FRGGDR 03



GSH 2025 Session 05

✓ 26.11.2025 - no class

✓ 3.12.2025 - Conflicting Past(s) - The two Germanys and the Holocaust (online)

Group 1:

“The Federal Government and with it the great majority of the German people are aware of the immeasurable suffering that was brought upon the Jews in Germany and the occupied territories during the time of National Socialism. The overwhelming majority of the German people abominated the crimes committed against the Jews, and did not participate in them. During the national Socialist period there were many among the German people who at their own peril showed their readiness to help their Jewish fellow citizens for religious reasons, from distress of conscience, out of shame at the disgrace of the German name.

KONRAD ADENAUER, GERMAN CHANCELLOR, 1951

Group 2:

“When the Federal Government is determined to let the past be past when it seems defensible, in the conviction that many have already paid for subjectively minor guilt, it is on the other hand also absolutely decided to draw out of the past all the necessary lessons, in regard to all those who clamor against the state, may they be attributable to right-radicalism or to left-radicalism.”

Konrad Adenauer, German Chancellor, 1949

Group 3:

“But something like a collective shame has grown out of this time and has remained. The worst that Hitler did to us – and he did a lot to us – is nonetheless this, that he forced us into the shame of carrying together with him and his associates the name ‘German.’”

Theodor Heuss, German President, 1949

Reading:

- Herf, Jeffrey. *Divided Memory. The Nazi Past in the two Germanys*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Pr., 1997, pp. 162-200.



Herf Politics and Memory since the 60s



GSH 2025 Session 06

✓ 10.12.2025 - From Protest to Terror (in class)

Reading:

- Claus Leggewie, "A Laboratory of Postindustrial Society: Reassessing the 1960s in Germany." *1968 – The World Transformed*. Ed. Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, Detlef Junker. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998, pp. 277-294.



Leggewie A laboratory of postindustrial society



GSH 2025 Session 07

✓ 17.12.2025 - German 'Alltag': Youth, Culture and Everyday Life in the two Germanys (online)

Reading:

- Jarausch, Konrad J. "Care and Coercion: The GDR as Welfare Dictatorship." *Dictatorship as Experience. Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR*. Ed. Konrad H. Jarausch. New York: Berghahn, 1999, 48-69.

Watch: [Radfahrer](#) (film about Harald Hauswald and the Stasi)



Jarausch GDR as welfare dictatorship



GSH 2025 Session 08

✓ 24.12.2025 - No class

✓ 31.12.2025 - New Germans: Foreign Workers, Migration, Multiculturalism (online)

Reading:

- Mandel, Ruth. "We called for Labor, but People Came Instead." *Cosmopolitan Anxieties. Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany*. Durham/London: Duke Univ. Pr., 2008. 50-79.



Mandel We called for Labour



Group-01 Guest-Workers



Group-02 Turkish-Women



Group-03 Second-Generation



GSH 2025 Session 09

✓ 7.1.2026 - Flip sides of Germany - Reviewing German history from its margins - Spotlights and short presentations (in class)

Nadya Ures	Magnus Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexology and Early LGBTQ Advocacy
Netanel Spiegelman	Holiday Culture in German Colonies
Mandy Gerstner	Women in the Third Reich
Noa Shmueli	W.E.B. Du Bois Reflections on Nazi Germany
Rasen Saifi	Displaced Persons in Post-War Germany
Benny Hochster	Afro-German Children in Post-War Germany
Mike Greenbaum	Jews and Jewish Life in the GDR
Tomer Atir	"Contract Workers" in the GDR
Arik Ziv	Culinary Experiences as Part of German Culture



Magnus Hirschfeld, the Institute for Sexual Science, and Early LGBTQ+ Advocacy



Holiday Culture in the Colonies



Women in the Third Reich



W.E.B Du Bois reflections on Nazi Germany



Displaced Persons



Afro-German Children



Jews in the GDR



Contract workers in GDR



Culinary Experiences



Netanel-Spiegelman Holiday Culture in the Colonies



Mandy-Gerstner Women-in-the-Third-Reich



Noa-Shmueli W.E.B Du Bois Reflections on Nazi Germany



Rasen-Saifi Displaced Persons in Post WWII Germany



Benny-Hochster Afro-American-Children-in-Post-War-Germany



Mike-Greenbaum Jews and Jewish Life in the GDR



Tomer-Atir Contract Workers in the GDR



Arik-Ziv Culinary-Culture

✓ 14.1.2026 - No class (IASEI Annual Conference)

The Israeli Association for the Study of European Integration (IASEI) in cooperation with The European Forum at the Hebrew University cordially invite you to the Annual Conference on

Break It or Make It? The EU at Multiple Domestic, Regional and Global Crossroads

January 14, 2026 | The Menachem Begin Heritage Center, Sh. A. Nakhon St 6, Jerusalem, 9411014

09:00-10:45 – Welcome and Breakout to Parallel Panels

Panel 1: The New Geo-economics of the European Union: Defense, Industry, Investments
Chair and discussant: Tal Sadeh, Tel Aviv University

Foreign Investment Screening in the European Union and Israel: The EU's Proposed Reform as a Roadmap for Israel, Igor Klotsman and Arie Reich (Bar-Ilan University)

The European Union's Industrial Transformation and Israel's Strategic Opportunity, Mark Luban (Ministry of Finance)

Europe's New Defense Procurement Policy: Implications for Israeli Industry, Arie Reich (Bar-Ilan University)

Panel 2: EU and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Past and Present

Chair and discussant: Alfred Tovias, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Giving Europe a Chance: The European Community's Policymaking on the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1971-1980, Naama Barak (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Glorious, Accurses and Rational: The Implication of the Gaza War on Israel-Europe Relations, Maya Sion-Tzidkiyahu (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Interlaced Spaces of Power: Organized Crime, Corruption, and Informal Protection at the EU-Israel Governance Frontier, Ina Kubbe (Tel Aviv University)

11:15-12:45 – Round Table 1: EU-Israel Relations

Moderator: Maya Sion-Tzidkiyahu (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Participants:

Lena Zaiger, Deputy Head of Division for Trade Policy and International Agreements, Foreign Trade Administration

Ohad Kaynar Nakash, Director of EU Organizations and Ambassador-Designate of the State of Israel to Albania, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Shlomy Kofman, Vice President, Head of International Division, ISERD Managing Director, International Division, Israel Innovation Authority

Shahar Horev, Principal Deputy Director of SIBAT, Ministry of Defense

12:45-13:45 – Lunch

13:45-14:30 – IASEI General Assembly Meeting

14:30-16:00 – Parallel Panels

Panel 3: The EU in a Changing International Order
Chair and discussant: Daniel Wajner, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The End of the International Liberal Order: Is Europe Ready for the 'New World'?, Angelos Giannakopoulos (National University of Kyiv, Tel Aviv University)

The EU's Memory-Driven Emotional Diplomacy in a Fragmented Multilateral Order, Emmanuelle Blanc (University of Haifa) and Benedetta Voltolini (King's College London)

From Normative Power to Strategic Foresight: Tracing EU Identity through Transatlantic Recalibration, Chetna Atkhan (University of Haifa)

Panel 4: Society and Public Opinion in the EU

Chair and discussant: Rachel Frid, Ono Academic College

Blame Attribution and Blame Shifting to International Organizations, Tal Sadeh (Tel Aviv University), Gal Bitton (Harvard University), Benjamin Dassler (Ludwig Maximilian University), Yuval Hirshorn (Tel Aviv University)

Humanitarian Communities of Practice under Fire: Sea-Watch in the Mediterranean Refugee Crisis and the ICRC during the 2023 Gaza Escalation, Tal Dingott Alkopher (The Jerusalem Multidisciplinary College)

From Barracks to Brussels: Does NATO Membership Enhance Public Support for EU Integration?, Eyal Rubinson (Ariel University) and Jonathan Roll (Stanford University)

16:30-18:00 – Round Table 2: The EU and the New Geo-economics and Politics

Moderator: Gisela Dachs (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Participants:

Amb. Michael Mann, Delegation of the European Union

Amb. Maciej Hunia, Embassy of the Republic of Poland

Amb. Steffen Seibert, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany (tbc)

Amb. J.P. Singh, Embassy of India (tbc)

18:30-19:30 – Keynote Lecture

The Wave of Authoritarian Governments and the Pressure on Liberal Democracy

Robert Habeck, Former Vice-Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

19:30 – Dinner (by invitation only)

Please register [here](#); to add to your calendar and for directions to the Menachem Begin Heritage Center click [here](#).



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EUROPEAN FORUM AT THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY



✓ 21.1.2026 - The Road to Unification: A German Revolution? (No class - online lecture)

Reading:

- Port, Andrew I. "There Will Be Blood": The Violent Underside of the 'Peaceful' East German Revolution of 1989." *Politische Gewalt in Deutschland: Ursprünge – Ausprägungen – Konsequenzen*. Ed. José Brunner, Doron Avraham and Marianne Zepp. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2014. 216-235.



Port Violent Underside of the German Revolution



GSH 2025 Session 10