

History 348

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Spring 2021

POLAND AND ITS NEIGHBORS, 1945 TO THE PRESENT**Meetings:** online, asynchronous**Instructor:** Professor Neal Pease**Office Hours:** Virtual: contact by email, as and when needed**E-mail:** pease@uwm.edu**Final Exam:** F May 21, deadline for turn in 5:30 pm**E-mail Classlist:** hist348-poland@uwm.edu**Theme of Course**

To survey the history of east central Europe from the Second World War to present. The course will focus on Poland, the key country in the area, and a crucial factor in 20th century history, but will also give attention to Hungary, the former Czechoslovakia, and the former German Democratic Republic (East Germany), as well as the former Soviet Union. Students will gain familiarity with a region of the world, traditionally regarded as obscure, but that in fact has exerted an immense impact on modern times. Students will consider such important matters as the origin, course, and consequences of World War II, the Cold War, and the rise, evolution, and collapse of Communism in Europe. Prereq: jr st; satisfaction of GER English Composition competency req.

Requirements

1. Attentive study of weekly annotated PowerPoint lecture presentations posted on course Canvas site and completion of reading/viewing assignments.
2. Two essays, each 7 -10 pages long, on one of the suggested essay topics handed out two weeks before the due date, or a review of any book listed as "recommended reading" in the syllabus (not required course readings, or reference works). Papers are due **F Feb 26** and **F Apr 9**. Papers turned in late will be penalized in grading unless the student asks for, and expressly receives, an extension in advance of the due date. Extensions will be granted only for good reason, such as medical or other emergency.
3. A cumulative, take-home, open book final examination composed of essay questions, to be turned in no later than **F May 21, 5:30 pm**.

For purposes of grading, the final examination will count roughly 1/3 of the total, with the two papers counting for 1/3 apiece.

All coursework must be turned in to receive a passing grade for the course.

If they wish, students may submit one extra credit paper, at least 5 pages in length, written on a topic approved by the instructor. Papers deemed worthy of extra credit will raise a student's course grade one half step, for instance, from B to B+. Extra credit papers must be turned in no later than the last day of class, **F May 13**. No more than one extra credit paper per student. Extra credit papers will not be accepted as substitutes for paper assignments not completed or the final exam.

Graduate Credit Requirements

Graduate students wishing to receive graduate credit for the course must complete one longer paper (25-30 pp., roughly), on a topic approved by the instructor. The longer paper takes the place of the two shorter papers required of undergraduates. Each student shall confer individually with the instructor in a meeting in which expectations for the paper appropriate to the topic will be defined. Graduate papers should employ as many secondary sources as needed to serve the requirements of the project, and primary sources when available. The use of non-English language materials, where appropriate, is encouraged but not required. All papers should be prepared in conformity with the University of Chicago guidelines, the official style of the Department of History. It is expected that graduate students will consult regularly with the instructor on the progress of their paper. For purposes of grading graduate students, the paper will count roughly 75% of the total with the final exam counting for 25%.

E-mail Classlist

The classlist allows you to send an e-mail message to all members of the class at once, or to receive one from any member of the class, including the instructor. The instructor will use the classlist to post announcements and messages concerning the course. Students should pay close attention to such posts, and it will be their responsibility to monitor these posts and carry out any instructions they might include. Failure to notice such messages will not be accepted as an excuse. The address is: h1st348-poland@uwm.edu. Any message intended only for the instructor should be sent to his e-mail: pease@uwm.edu.

Disabled Students

Should you have a disability, please do not hesitate to consult with me so that any necessary accommodations can be arranged.

Academic Advising in History

All L&S students have to declare and complete an academic major to graduate. If you have not yet declared a major, you are encouraged to do so, even if you are at an early stage in your college education. If you are interested in declaring a major (or minor) in History, or if you need academic advising in History, please visit the Department of History undergraduate program web page at <https://uwm.edu/history/undergraduate/> for information on how to proceed.

Academic integrity at UWM

UWM and I expect each student to be honest in academic performance. Failure to do so may result in discipline under rules published by the Board of Regents (UWS 14). The penalties for academic misconduct such as cheating or plagiarism can include a grade of "F" for the course and expulsion from the University.

UWM policies on course-related matters: See the website of the Secretary of the University, at: <http://uwm.edu/secu/wp-content/uploads/sites/122/2016/12/Syllabus-Links.pdf>

UWM and Covid-19

UWM has issued the following statement about its policies for attempting to maintain health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and the wider university community. Since this course is conducted online, it is not directly relevant to course procedures, but you are encouraged to read and familiarize yourself with it:

<https://uwm.edu/cetl/covid-19-syllabus-statements/>

Readings

There are no textbooks assigned for this course that you are expected to purchase or acquire. You will be assigned to read selected chapters from the two books below as we progress through the semester. The assignments are accessible through the UWM Library site, via the links in the syllabus below:

Lonnie R. Johnson, *Central Europe: enemies, neighbors, friends* (Oxford, 1996)

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uwm/reader.action?docID=271143>

Brian Porter-Szűcs, *Poland in the modern world: beyond martyrdom* (Wiley Blackwell, 2014)

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uwm/reader.action?docID=1595185>

In addition, students will find at various points within the syllabus several video documentaries and short readings, which are also required.

Course Outline

What follows is an outline of lectures, exams, due dates, and reading assignments. In most cases, reading assignments are only approximately coordinated with lecture topics.

- Jan 25-29 **Introduction**
 Reading: Porter-Szűcs, Introduction
- Feb 1-5 **Second World War**
 Reading: Porter-Szűcs, ch. 7, “World War II, 1939-1945”
 Topics for first paper sent out
- Feb 8-12 **WW2: Poland between Hitler and Stalin**
- Feb 15-19 **The Communist Takeover in Poland and East central Europe**
 Reading: Anne Applebaum, Introduction to *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe 1944-1956* https://www.anneapplebaum.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/IronCurain_Introduction.pdf; Johnson, ch. 11, “Spheres of Influence II: East and West, or ‘Yalta Europe’”; Porter-Szűcs, ch. 8, “Conquest or Revolution? 1945-1956”
- Feb 22-26 **The Cold War and the Stalin Era/First paper due F Feb 26**
- Mar 1-5 **1956: First Cracks in the Soviet Bloc**
 Reading: Johnson, ch. 12, “The Failure of Eastern Europe, 1956-1989”; Porter-Szűcs, ch. 9, “The Year 1956 and the Rise of National Communism”
 Video: “The 1956 Hungarian Revolution (BBC)”
 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihS_D0Btaz8
- Mar 8-12 **“Normal” Communism in Central Europe**
 Reading: Porter-Szűcs, ch. 10, “Communism and Consumerism”
 Topics for second paper sent out
- Mar 15-19 **1968-1970: Turbulence in Czechoslovakia and Poland**
 Video: “The Cold War: The Prague Spring 1968 and the Crisis in Czechoslovakia”
 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNyVJjyoqWQ>
- Mar 21-28 **SPRING BREAK!**

- Mar 29-Apr 2 **Communist Central Europe in the 1970s**
 Reading: Vaclav Havel, “The Power of the Powerless” (1978)
<https://hac.bard.edu/amor-mundi/the-power-of-the-powerless-vaclav-havel-2011-12-23>
 Porter-Szűcs, ch. 11, “The End of the PRL, 1976-1989”
- Apr 5-9 **The Polish Pope, John Paul II/Second paper due F Apr 9**
 Video: “Pope John Paul II, in memoriam—Communism”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJDKINa11rs>
- Apr 12-16 **Solidarity and Martial Law in Poland**
 Video: “Lech Wałęsa: The Shipyard”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_kVbLubBxM
- Apr 19-23 **Gorbachev and the Breakdown of Communism**
Questions for final exam sent out
- Apr 26-30 **From Communism to Democracy**
- May 3-7 **Poland and Central Europe after Communism**
 Reading: Porter-Szűcs, ch. 12, “Shock Therapy”, and ch. 13, “Politics in the Third Republic”
- May 21 FINAL EXAM, FINAL EXAM, deadline for turning in, 5:30 pm**

Recommended Reading

A selected list of books on important aspects of Polish and east central European history, politics, and international affairs from World War II to the present. Any of these would be suitable as subjects of a book report, or for use as a resource for research papers. All titles are held in the Golda Meir Library collections.

B. F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (2004)

D. Ackerman, *The Zookeeper’s Wife—A War Story* (2007). Gripping, readable account of Warsaw zookeepers hiding Jews during WW2—much better than the later film version

A. Applebaum, *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe 1944-1956* (2013)

T. Garton Ash, *The File: A Personal History* (1998). A Western journalist tracks down and interviews the former East German subjects who informed on him to the Communist government after being granted access to his secret police files Less angry than a sensitive exploration of what motivated people to collaborate with their dictatorial government.

- T. Garton Ash, *Magic Lantern, the Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague* (1990). An eyewitness account of the fall of the Soviet bloc.
- T. Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution, Solidarity 1980-1982* (1983). An older work, but still one of the best and most readable accounts of the original rise of Solidarity.
- W. Bartoszewski, *Righteous Among Nations, How Poles Helped the Jews, 1939-1945* (1969)
- N. Bethell, *Gomulka, His Poland and His Communism* (1972). Biography of one of the more significant Polish Communist leaders.
- N. Bethell, *1939, The War Hitler Won* (1972)
- M. Białoszewski, *A Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising* (1977)
- J. Bielasiak, ed., *Poland Today, the State of the Republic* (1981). A translated “leaked” analysis of the crisis of pre-Solidarity Poland circulated among the Communist leadership.
- A. Bikont, *The Crime and the Silence: Confronting the Massacre of Jews in Wartime Jedwabne* (2015)
- C. R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1998)
- D. Childs, *Fall of the GDR, Germany's Road to Unity* (2001)
- A. Cienciala et al., ed., *Katyn, A Crime without Punishment* (2007)
- N. Davies, *Rising '44, the "Battle for Warsaw"* (2003). On the Warsaw Rising of World War II.
- A. Dubcek, *Hope Dies Last* (1993). Autobiography of the central figure of the Czechoslovak “Prague Spring”.
- B. Fowkes, *Eastern Europe, 1945-1969: From Stalinism to Stagnation* (2000)
- J. Garlinski, *Poland in the Second World War* (1985)
- M. Gorbachev and Z. Mlynar, *Conversations with Gorbachev* (2002)
- J. Gross, *Neighbors, the Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (2001). An important and controversial case study of the Holocaust in Poland.
- Y. Gutman, *Jews of Warsaw, 1939-1943* (1989)
- V. Havel, *The Art of the Impossible, Politics as Morality in Practice* (1997). Speeches by the leading Czech democratic activist in the Communist era, and later president of Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic.
- V. Havel, et al., *The Power of the Powerless* (1985). Essays by Havel and others.
- E. Hoffman, *Shtetl, the Life and Death of a Small Town and the World of Polish Jews* (1997)
- J. Huener, *Auschwitz, Poland, and the Politics of Commemoration, 1945-1979* (2003)
- J. Karski, *Story of a Secret State* (1944). Account of Polish Resistance in World War II by one of its heroic figures.
- F. Kempe, *Berlin 1961* (2011). On the Berlin crisis of that year.
- P. Kenney, *Rebuilding Poland, Workers and Communists, 1945-1950* (1997)
- K. Kersten, *Establishment of Communist Rule in Poland, 1943-1948* (1991)
- J. Korbel, *The Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia, 1938-1948* (1959)
- J. J. Lipski, *KOR* (1985). An insider's account of oppositionist activity in Communist Poland.
- C. S. Maier, *Dissolution, the Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany* (1997)
- M. Meng, *Shattered Spaces: Encountering Jewish Ruins in Postwar Germany and Poland* (2011)

- A. Michnik *et al.*, ed., *In Search of Lost Meaning, the New Eastern Europe* (2011). The first of three volumes of essays on Polish issues by a onetime leading opposition activist during the Communist era who remained a most influential figure in the era of democratic Poland.
- A. Michnik, *Letters from Freedom* (1998)
- A. Michnik, *Letters from Prison* (1985)
- C. Milosz, *The Captive Mind* (1953). The greatest modern Polish poet analyzes the appeal of Communism to intellectuals; a classic of its kind.
- N. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945-1949* (1995)
- J. Nowak, *Courier from Warsaw* (1982). On the Polish wartime Resistance.
- A. Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia -- v. 3. 1914-2005* (2010)
- A. Polonsky and B. Drukier, ed., *Beginnings of Communist Rule in Poland* (1980)
- E. Ringelbaum, *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto* (1958)
- T. Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land: Facing Europe's Ghosts after Communism* (1995)
- J. Rothschild and N. Wingfield, *Return to Diversity, A Political History of East Central Europe since World War II* (2000)
- S. Saxonberg, *The Fall: A Comparative Study of the End of Communism in Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland* (2001)
- V. Sebestyén, *Revolution 1989: The Fall of the Soviet Empire* (2010)
- R. Sikorski, *Full Circle: A Homecoming to Free Poland* (2008). Interesting memoir by onetime Polish dissident and exile in Communist era, later foreign minister of democratic Poland.
- H. G. Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution* (1976). On the "Prague Spring" of 1968 and the Soviet invasion that ended it.
- T. Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning* (2015)
- T. Snyder, *Bloodlands, Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (2010). An important reinterpretation of mass killing by the Soviet and Nazi dictatorships.
- M. C. Steinlauf, *Bondage to the Dead: Poland and the Memory of the Holocaust* (1997)
- G. Stokes, ed., *From Stalinism to Pluralism: A Documentary History of Eastern Europe since 1945* (1996)
- G. Stokes, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down* (1993). On the collapse of the Soviet Bloc.
- W. Szpilman, *The Pianist, the Extraordinary True Story of One Man's Survival in Warsaw, 1939-1945* (2003). The basis for the well known film of the same name.
- T. Toranska, "Them," *Stalin's Polish Puppets* (1987). The discredited surviving founders of the Polish Communist regime explain themselves to a hostile interviewer; fascinating and revealing.
- L. Walesa, *A Way of Hope* (1987). The earlier of two autobiographies by the founder of Solidarity.
- L. Walesa, *Struggle and the Triumph, An Autobiography* (1992)
- G. Weigel, *Final Revolution, the Resistance Church and the Collapse of Communism* (1992). Gives primary credit to Pope John Paul II and Catholic Church in Poland for end of Communism.
- G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope, the Biography of Pope John Paul II* (1999)
- K. Williams, *The Prague Spring and its Aftermath* (1997)
- J. K. Zawodny, *Death in the Forest, the Story of the Katyn Forest Massacre* (1988)
- P. E. Zinner, *Revolution in Hungary* (1962). The Hungarian revolution of 1956.

G. Zubrzycki, *Crosses of Auschwitz, Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland* (2006)

Useful Websites

<http://www.1944.pl/en/>. Site of Museum of Warsaw Uprising, Warsaw, in English.

<http://www.polin.pl/en/>. Site of Polin: the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw, in English.

<http://muzhp.pl/en/>. Site of Museum of Polish History, Warsaw, in English.

<http://auschwitz.org/en/>. Site of Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, in English.

<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/>. English-language site of Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), the Polish “Commission for Prosecution of Crimes Against the Polish Nation” in WW2 and the Communist era.

<http://www.ecs.gda.pl/title,Jezyk,pid,2,lang,2.html>. Site, in English, of European Solidarity Centre, a museum and library in Gdańsk, Poland, devoted to the history of Solidarity, the Polish trade union and civil resistance movement, and other opposition movements of Communist Eastern Europe.

<http://muzeum1939.pl/en/>. Site, in English, of Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, Poland, a new museum with a controversial back story.

<https://www.jhi.pl/>. Site of Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, in English.

Handbooks and Stylebooks

The University of Chicago Press, Chicago Manual of Style is the preferred guide to preparation of papers and theses of the UWM Department of History. Print versions are available in Golda Meir Library. The most recent edition can be accessed online at:

<https://www-chicagomanualofstyle-org.ezproxy.lib.uwm.edu/book/ed17/frontmatter/toc.html>