COURSE DETAIL

THE ROARING TWENTIES, NAZI TERRORS AND THE COLD WAR: EUROPEAN EXPERIENCES REFLECTED IN LITERATURE

Country
Netherlands

Host Institution
Maastricht University - Center for European Studies

Program(s)
Biological and Life Sciences, Maastricht,Psychology and Neuroscience, Maastricht

UCEAP Course Level
Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)
History Comparative Literature

UCEAP Course Number
133

UCEAP Course Suffix

UCEAP Official Title
THE ROARING TWENTIES, NAZI TERRORS AND THE COLD WAR: EUROPEAN EXPERIENCES REFLECTED IN LITERATURE

UCEAP Transcript Title
EUROPN EXPER IN LIT

UCEAP Quarter Units
6.00

UCEAP Semester Units
4.00

Course Description

The course invites students on an exciting literary and historical journey through the grand shifts of Europe in the twentieth century: from Great Britain’s crumbling class systems at the turn of the centuries to the French trenches of World War I and from there to the reactionary roaring twenties, the rise of fascism and Hitler’s claim to power in 1933, resulting in the horrors of the Holocaust. The course culminates at the shallows of the Cold War period, with its absurdities and the shadows of the past still lingering. The chosen texts for this class provide a trident of literary historical accounts: autobiographical, fictional, and historiographical. The course begins with a cultural, political, and physical view of fast-changing early-century Europe. It then moves to World War I and how that changed landscapes for civilians, soldiers, and the insider-outsider American expatriate community, most famously of Paris. During discussions of WWII and the Shoa, the focus is on the histories that have remained and the histories that have been lost since the war. This is discussed through the lens of those who documented (in the form of diaries), those who retold the stories as second-generation survivors, and those who didn’t have access to the stories of the horrors of the war, and therefore had to fill in the blanks themselves. The last chapter of the class discussion is devoted to the aftermath of Nazi terrors and the contradictions of living under Cold War conditions. During the seminars, students are encouraged to engage with the texts from a critical point of view: for example, what does a feminist reading of WWI literature look like? How do we de-colonialize our understanding of the Roaring Twenties? What histories have still gone untold in our existing Holocaust-literature canon? The class comes with a day-long academic field trip (specifics to be announced) that gives students the chance to experience some of the topics discussed in class.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
LIT2002

Host Institution Course Title
THE ROARING TWENTIES, NAZI TERRORS AND THE COLD WAR: EUROPEAN EXPERIENCES REFLECTED IN LITERATURE

Host Institution Course Details
https://courserepository.maastrichtuniversity.nl/p/module/EN/CES__OEPS/LIT2002

Host Institution Campus
Maastricht University

Host Institution Faculty
Center for European Studies

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department

Course Last Reviewed
2025-2026

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