

HUMS 4104

Dr. Geoffrey C. Kellow

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Office Hours: Wednesday 12-3pm

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## The Idea and the Abyss: Totalitarianism and Terror in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

This course will treat the emergence of totalitarian regimes in the twentieth century with a focus on both their intellectual provenance and concrete consequences. The course will consider in particular the Soviet Terror and the Holocaust. In each case, the seminar will begin with an examination of the theoretical underpinnings and intellectual advocacy of totalitarian politics and then address the historical and human consequences of the ideas and arguments in question. In the consideration of both the Holocaust and the Soviet Terror, the seminar will then examine literary and philosophic efforts to come to terms with the terrible legacies of Fascism and Communism in the Twentieth Century. Finally, the seminar will conclude with a discussion of current and emerging forms of totalitarian thought and politics.

### **Week 1** Introduction

### **Week 2** Liberalism & Modernity

*Identity & Violence* Amartya Sen

### **Week 3**

Martin Heidegger, 1933 Rector's Address & *Der Spiegel* Interview (Common Room)

Karl Lowith excerpt from *My Life Before and After 1933* (Common Room)

### **Week 4**

Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*

Leo Strauss, "German Nihilism" 1941/1999 (Common Room)

### **Week 5**

Schmitt & Strauss continued

Heinrich Himmler to SS Leaders on homosexuality, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1937

Josef Goebbels on Jews in *Das Reich* 16<sup>th</sup>, November 1941

Himmler Speech to SS at Posen, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 1943

### **Week 6**

Gitta Sereny, *Into that Darkness*

### **Week 7**

#### **Last day to hand in first reading report.**

Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

Arendt "The Aftermath of Nazi Rule" in *Essays in Understanding 1930-1954*

### **Week 8**

Leon Trotsky, *Communism & Terrorism*

### **Week 9**

Lenin & Stalin Selected Writings (Common Room)

### **Week 10**

Lydia Chukovskaya, *Sofia Petrovna*

N. Bukharin, *Letter to Stalin 1937* (Common Room)

Pravda Editorial "For the Fatherland" June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1934 (Common Room)

### **Week 11**

Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*

Raymond Aron, "Aleksander Solzhenitsyn and European Leftism"

### **Week 12 (March 30<sup>th</sup>)**

#### **Last day to hand in second reading report**

#### **Term Papers Due**

Eric Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* (selections)

Isaiah Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty*

**April 6, 2009**

**Take home exam handed out**

**April 9, 2009 Take home exam due**

#### Required Texts

1. Gitta Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, Vintage, 0394710355
2. Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, Simon & Schuster, 0684826801
3. Leon Trotsky, *Terrorism and Communism*, Verso Press, 184467178X
4. Lydia Chukovskaya, *Sofia Petrovna*, Northwestern U.P. 0810111500
5. Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, Bantam Classics, 0553247778
6. Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, University of Chicago Press, 0226738922
7. Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence*, Norton, 0393329291

The required texts may be purchased at All Books on Rideau Street (Next to the ByTown Cinema).

## Course Requirements

1. Two Reading Reports. 15% each
2. Class Participation 10%
3. Term Paper 30%
4. Take Home Exam 30%

## Reading Reports

Students must submit two reading reports, one for the National Socialism segment and one for the Soviet Communism segment. These reports must be no more than 750 words. Students may select which readings to report on. Reports are due at the beginning of the lecture that treats the readings in question.

## Class Participation

Students are expected to attend class having completed the readings and prepared to discuss the material.

## Term Paper

Term papers should address a topic covered in the course from the perspective of the history of ideas. To that end, the papers should cover the intellectual sources and influences on the historical development of the National Socialist or Stalinist system. Papers should be 2500 words, should honour scholarly conventions of a research paper in history or political thought and are due March 24<sup>th</sup>. **The late penalty for papers in HUMS 4104 is 5% per day, papers will not be accepted after April 6<sup>th</sup>.**

## Take Home Exam

The take home exam will cover all the material covered in the course. It will be handed out on April 6<sup>th</sup> in my office at 11:30 am and must be returned to my office (Patterson 2A59) by 1:00pm on Thursday April 9<sup>th</sup>. Take Home exams submitted after 1:00pm will receive a grade of zero. **Electronic submissions of take home exams will not be accepted.**

## Completion of Course Work

All components of the course, including class attendance, are mandatory. Failure to complete any component of the course will result in a failing grade in the course as a whole.

## Grading

A+ Extraordinary work that greatly exceeds the requirements of a third year paper. This grade is rarely awarded.

A Excellent work: very insightful analysis; clear and persuasive thesis that goes beyond the ideas presented in lecture; free of any typographical or grammatical errors;

A-/ B+ Very strong work: insightful and clear, but in need of a bit of clarification, revision, or proofreading.

B/B- Good work. Demonstrates a solid understanding of the text and lectures, but requires more significant revision, clarification, or proofreading  
C+ /C/C- Average to poor work. Lacks a clear or insightful thesis and requires extensive revision, clarification, or proofreading  
F Unacceptable or non-existent work.

### A Final Note

Completion of all elements of the course is mandatory. Failure to complete any component or components will result in a failing grade.

## REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

### COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

### PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*to use and pass off as one’s own idea or product the work of another without expressly giving credit to another.*” This can include:

- Copying from another person’s work without indicating this through appropriate use of quotation marks and footnote citations.
- Lengthy and close paraphrasing of another person’s work (i.e. extensive copying interspersed with a few phrases or sentences of your own).
- Submitting written work produced by someone else as if it were your own work (e.g. another student’s term paper, a paper purchased from a term paper “factory”, materials or term papers downloaded from the Internet, etc.).
- Handing in “*substantially the same piece of work to two or more courses without the prior written permission of the instructors...involved.*” (University Senate)

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They range from a mark of zero for the plagiarized work to a final grade of “F” for the course, and even suspension from all studies or expulsion from the University.

### GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B+ = 77-79 (9)	C+ = 67-69 (6)
A = 85-89 (11)	B = 73-76 (8)	C = 63-66 (5)
A - = 80-84 (10)	B - = 70-72 (7)	C - = 60-62 (4)
D+ = 57-59 (3)	D = 53-56 (2)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F	Failure. No academic credit
WDN	Withdrawn from the course
ABS	Absent from the final examination
DEF	Official deferral (see “Petitions to Defer”)
FND	“Failed, no Deferral” – assigned when the student is absent from the final exam and has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

### WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from Fall term courses is November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter (full year) and Winter term courses is March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

## **REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION**

### **For Students with Disabilities**

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Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities to complete the necessary *Letters of Accommodation*. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with me in order to make the necessary arrangements as early in the term as possible. Please note the deadline for submitting completed forms to the Paul Menton Centre is November 9th 2007 (for fall and fall/winter term courses) / March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008 (for winter term courses).

### **For Religious Obligations:**

Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious obligation should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

### **For Pregnancy:**

Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

### **PETITIONS TO DEFER**

Students unable to complete a **final** term paper or write a **final** examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control or whose performance on an examination has been impaired by such circumstances may apply in writing within five working days to the Registrar's Office for permission to extend a term paper deadline or to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully and specifically supported by a medical certificate or other relevant documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered.

### **ADDRESSES**

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Classics and Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608	500 Unicentre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-6632	229 Paterson