This course traces the emergence and transformation of the “Left” in Western Europe from the early 19th century to the present. Key themes include Marxism and its utopian antecedents; the development of trade unions and working-class political organizations in the last third of the 19th century; the growth of the German Socialist Party (SPD); the impact of World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution upon the Left; the Spanish Civil War, the Great Depression, and the “Popular Front” strategy of the Comintern in interwar Western Europe; the intellectual fascination with Communism after World War II; the emergence of the postwar welfare state; May 1968 and “red terrorism;” and the eventual collapse of the Cold War order and international Communism.

Course Requirements

1. Discussion (20%)

All students are expected to do all of the course readings at the time they are indicated on the syllabus, and to actively participate in class. Our class meetings are mandatory. While you may miss two meetings for any reason, any further failure to attend will have a negative impact on your participation grade unless this absence occurs due to a medical condition or a family emergency. In addition, I reserve the right to not issue a passing grade to any student who misses more than six class sessions (again barring medical or family emergencies).

As part of your participation grade, you will – in groups of two – be responsible for “anchoring” one discussion over the course of the semester. (The discussions are marked on the syllabus with an asterisk). You will not need to lead discussion for the entire length of the class, but you must meet beforehand (with each other and me) to prepare a list of discussion questions and key themes that you feel that the class should address. In short, your group will be the resident “experts” on that day of discussion.

2. Papers (60%: 15% for the two 5-page papers, and 30% for the 8-10 page paper)

You will submit three essays over the course of the semester. The first two will be 5-page papers, in response to particular readings, in the first half of the semester. The final paper, 8 to 10 pages in length and due near the end of the semester, intended to give you the opportunity to write
about a particular topic or question encountered during the course that you found most particularly engaging. This is not necessarily a primary-source paper (although you have plenty of possibilities in the context of this course); you must, however, go beyond the readings on the syllabus to supplement our class readings. Your paper should give careful attention to previous historiographical approaches to the topic and offer your own analysis and argument about your chosen sources.

You will also note that you must submit an (ungraded yet mandatory) paper proposal and preliminary biography four weeks ahead of the final paper due date; this consists of a two-paragraph statement of what you intend to write about and the sources you plan on using for the project. You also must submit a two-page paper two weeks later detailing your argument, a sense of the historical “problem” you are approaching, and an outline for the rest of the paper.

3. Final Exam (20%)

You will have a take-home final examination dealing synthetically with the overall themes from the course.

Texts and Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the Grinnell College Bookstore. While I will attempt to place a copy of each on reserve at Burling Library, I would strongly recommend that you purchase them for your own convenience and to scare the CIA in case it ever examines your bookshelf.

George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier (New York: Harvest Books: 1958)

The following readings are required and available as PDFs on PioneerWeb or at related internet links.

Karl Kautsky, “Erfurt Program” of the SPD (1891)
Jennifer Waelti-Walters and Steven C. Hause, eds., Feminisms of the Belle Epoque: A Historical and Literary Anthology (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 147-163
Ross McKibbin, “Why was there no Marxism in Great Britain?” The English Historical Review 99 (391) (April 1984): 297-331
Google books link: http://books.google.com/books?id=zaAMAAAAYAAJ&printsec=titlepage&dq=Rolland+Above+the+Battle
Henri Barbusse, Under Fire (New York: Penguin, 2003), 3-6, 296-319
Clement Attlee, Purpose and Policy: Selected Speeches (London: Hutchinson, 1947), 1-12

Week 1A
August 29 Introduction (Eley, 3-12)

Readings:
Geoff Eley, Forging Democracy

Week 1
September 1 Setting the Stage: Utopias and the French Revolution (Eley, 13-61)
September 3 Utopian Socialists and the Industrial Revolution (Owen and Fourier primary source selections)
September 5 Revolutionary Programs (Marx, 44-99 at the very least)

Readings:
Eley, Forging Democracy; Robert Owen, “A New View of Society;” Selections from Charles Fourier; Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The Communist Manifesto
Week 2
September 8 Marx the Philosopher (Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach/German Ideology* – 143-145, 146-163, 176-186, 193-200)
September 10 Marx the Economist (Extracts from *Capital* – 302-308, 336-343, 344-364, 439-442)
September 12 Marx, Politics and the 19th Century (Eley, 62-84; Marx, *The 18th Brumaire of Napoleon Bonaparte* – 594-617)

**Readings:**
Eley, *Forging Democracy*; Selections from Marx

Week 3
September 15 The Commune of Paris (Begin Zola)
September 17 Zola, Realism and *Germinal* (Zola, 5-134)
September 19 The Miners Go on Strike (Zola, 137-294)*

**Readings:**
Emile Zola, *Germinal*

Week 4
September 22 Miners, Mobs, and... Yuck (Zola, 297-373)*

**PAPER #1 DUE, SEPTEMBER 22, MEARS 212, 5 P.M.**

September 24 The Miners: Still on Strike (Zola, 377-439)
September 26 Fiction as History (Zola, 443-532)

**Readings:**
Zola, *Germinal*

Week 5
September 29 Socialism as a Mass Party: Enter the SPD (Eley, 85-118; Weitz, 18-61)
October 1 Revisionism and the SPD (Bernstein, 135-150, 189-199; Kautsky, “Erfurt Program”)*
October 3 Feminism and Socialism (*Feminisms of the Belle Epoque*, 147-163; Zetkin selections)*

**Readings:**
Eley, *Forging Democracy*; Weitz, *Creating German Communism*; Eduard Bernstein, *Evolutionary Socialism*; Karl Kautsky, “Erfurt Program;” Selections from *Feminisms of the Belle Epoque* and Clara Zetkin: Selected Writings

Week 6
October 6 The British exception? (McKibbin, 297-331)*
October 8 Outbreak of World War I (Eley, 119-138)
October 10  The Left and the War: Pacifism and Patriotism? (Rolland, 37-55, 76-92; Barbusse, 3-6, 296-319)*

Readings:
Ross McKibbin, “Why was there no Marxism in Great Britain?”; Eley, Forging Democracy; Romain Rolland, Above the Battle; Henri Barbusse, Under Fire

Week 7
October 13  War and the Bolshevik Revolution (Eley, 139-151; Furet, 34-61)
PAPER #2 DUE, OCTOBER 13, MEARS 212, 5 P.M.

October 15  Revolution and Schism (Eley, 152-184; Furet, 62-92)
October 17  Believers and Unbelievers (Furet, 93-124)

Readings:
Eley, Forging Democracy; François Furet, The Passing of an Illusion

MIDTERM BREAK!

Week 8
October 27  Radical Experiment: Weimar and the SPD (Eley, 185-200; 201-219)
October 29  Best of Enemies: Socialism, Communism and Fascism (Furet, 157-265)
October 31  The Depression (Orwell, ix-118)*

Readings:
Eley, Forging Democracy; Furet, The Passing of an Illusion; George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier

Week 9
November 3  The Depression and Socialism (Orwell, Road to Wigan Pier, 120-232)*
November 4  ELECTION DAY!
November 5  Popular Fronts: Mass Politics, Mass Culture (Eley, 220-277; “Programme of the Popular Front”)
November 7  War in Spain (Orwell, Homage to Catalonia, 1-37, 188-215 – read the latter part first!)

Readings:
Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier; Orwell, Homage to Catalonia; Eley, Forging Democracy; “Programme of the Popular Front”

Week 10
November 10  World War II (Eley, 278-298; Furet, 315-360)
November 12  Settling the Cold War Order
PROPOSAL FOR FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS
November 14  Communism after WWII (Furet, 361-437)*

Readings:
Eley, Forging Democracy; Furet, The Passing of an Illusion

Week 11
November 17  The Modern Welfare State (Eley, 299-336; Cooper, 33-54; Attlee, 1-12)
November 19  Communists in the West (Kertzer, 26-72, 98-130)*
November 21  1956, or the Beginning of the End? (Furet, 438-477)

Readings:
Eley, Forging Democracy; Susan Cooper, “Snoek piquante;” Clement Attlee, Purpose and Policy; David Kertzer, Comrades and Christians; Furet, The Passing of an Illusion

Week 12
November 24  Decolonization, Mao and New Currents on the Left (Eley, 337-365)
TWO-PAGE ARGUMENT/HISTORICAL “PROBLEM”/OUTLINE SECTION DUE IN CLASS

November 26  May 1968 (Debord, 11-34; Feenberg and Freeman, 73-91, 123-145)*
November 28  NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING

Readings:
Eley, Forging Democracy; Debord, The Society of the Spectacle; Feenberg and Freeman, When Poetry Ruled the Streets

Week 13
December 1  The Left after 1968 (Eley, 366-404)
December 3  The Hard Left: Red Brigades and Red Army Faction (Giorgio, 1-92)
December 5  Life as a Red Terrorist (Giorgio, 92-191)*

Readings:
Giorgio, Memoirs of an Italian Terrorist; Eley, Forging Democracy

Week 14
December 8  Collapse of the Old Order (Eley, 405-456)
FINAL PAPER DUE DECEMBER 8, MERS 212, 5 P.M.

December 10  End of Certainties (Eley, 457-504)
December 12  Whither the Left?

Readings:
Eley, Forging Democracy

FINAL EXAM TO BE COMPLETED BY 12 P.M., DECEMBER 19
Additional Ground Rules:

1. Deadlines are to be taken most seriously. I will automatically grant you one extension on any of the three papers. You must e-mail me 48 hours before the paper is due; you do not need to explain the circumstances necessitating the extension. The extension will be for 72 hours. Barring exceptional emergency circumstances, I will not grant you an extension on another paper. Normally, I take off 1/3 of a letter grade for every 24 hours a paper is overdue.

2. Papers must be double-spaced and have one-inch margins, and should not employ anything larger than 12-point font. E-mailed papers will not be accepted.

3. All written work at Grinnell College is subject to the Student Handbook. If you have questions as to how a particular assignment relates to the Student Handbook, please consult with me in advance of that assignment’s due date.

4. All written work submitted for a grade must be completed in order to pass the course. In addition, any student who misses more than six classes (again, barring exceptional emergency circumstances) will not receiving a passing grade.

5. If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Dean for Student Academic Support and Advising, Joyce Stern, located on the third floor of the Rosenfield Center (x3702).