

History 209—Europe, 1945 to the Present

Prof. Greg Shaya

STUDY GUIDE EXAM #I

Directions:

The exam will take place at the beginning of class on Wednesday, February 11, 2026. Bring your laptops (and power if you need it). I will provide a link to the exam and you will complete your answers on Moodle. Make sure that you can use the Safe Exam Browser by completing the Practice Quiz.

For the exam: Read all the directions! Watch the time carefully. You have thirty minutes for the exam (with a small grace period). Be sure that you address all the questions as well as you can. Your answers should be clear, precise, detailed, but concise.

To study for the exam: This first short exam will cover the material from the first day of class through Monday, February 9 (from our introduction to the class through our discussion of *Bicycle Thieves* and postwar ideas). I'll ask you a mix of questions. The exam will be one-part names and dates and details (do you know your facts) and one-part big ideas (how should we think about these films that we've studied and the large questions of postwar European history?). To review, you'll want to read through your notes, review Hitchcock and the outside readings, consolidate your notes, and make outlines. You'll want to be sure that you can identify—and say a few words about—the key terms, names, dates, and sources. You will also want to think about how to answer the questions laid out below.

Part 1. Very Short Answer (5 mins., 10 points)

Answer **all of the following questions** in a word or name or a phrase for each. (Choice of 12 questions; I'll grade out of ten; I'll only count correct answers).

For example:

1. Who was the chairman of the French Provisional Government in 1944-1946?
2. Why can't Dr. Hans Merten (in *Murderers Among Us*) love again?

Part 2. Short Answer (10 mins., 10 points)

Answer **two of the following questions** with a few sentences each. *Choice of four questions.*

For example:

1. What was the political message of *Open City*?
2. According to William Beveridge, what should be the outcome of the war?

Part 3. Longer Answer (15 mins., 20 points)

Answer **one of the following questions** in a few short paragraphs. Give concrete details from lecture, discussion, textbook, or films. *Choice of two questions.*

For example:

1. What was the impact of the Cold War on western Europe in the late 1940s?
2. How did Communists take control in Eastern Europe?

Key Terms, Ideas, Names, Dates, Sources

What are the elements of film?

Film representations as interpretations

How can we use film as a primary source to understand the past?

How can we use history to understand film?

The impact of the Second World War

physical, economic, human toll

Yalta Conference, Feb. 1945

Stalin, Roosevelt, Churchill

Post-war democracy for Europe

~~Plan for United Nations~~

~~Potsdam Conference, July-Aug. 1945~~

~~Stalin, Truman, Atlee~~

Question of Postwar Germany - German Occupation Zones - Reparations

SED – Socialist Unity Party – in Soviet Zone of Germany (unifying Communists & Socialists)

Open City (1945)

Roberto Rossellini

Don Pietro / Pina / Francesco / Manfredi / Marcello

Benito Mussolini and the legacy of fascism

Communists and Catholics need to work together!

A “usable memory” of the war – Italian Resistance

Charles de Gaulle

Vichy France and the experience of collaboration

“myth of resistance”

Denazification in Germany

Nuremberg Trials

Four Power Control Council or Allied Control Council of Germany

George Kennan (Long Telegram, February 1946)

Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” speech (March 1946)

Harsh Winter of 1946/7

Crisis over Turkey & Greece (spring 1947)

Truman Doctrine (February 1947). “I free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures”

George Marshall’s Plan (June 1947)

Berlin Blockade & Airlift (June 1948-May 1949)

Murderers Are Among Us (1946)

Writer and Dir. Wolfgang Staudte

Soviet Zone of Germany

~~“Süss the Jew” 1940 Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda film~~

Hans Mertens / Susanne Wallner / Brueckner

“rubble film” – ~~Trümmerfilm~~

film style – pre-war German cinema (Expressionist cinema)

War criminals into capitalists

A Romantic Comedy? A Christmas film

Changed ending

Another “usable memory” of the war

DP’s

Stephen Spender on scars of war, physical, economic, moral

Gerald Frank on Jewish refugees

~~Palestine~~

Bruno Foa on economic situation of 1945

The challenge of economic recovery

Winston Churchill

Clement Atlee (PM 1945-51)

The Labour Party

Sir William Beveridge

The Welfare State

National Health Service

Ernest Bevin (Labour) Foreign Minister

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO, 1949)

The Third Man (1949)

Graham Greene / Carol Reed

Harry Lime / Holly Martins / Anna / Calloway

Postwar Vienna – the faces – a scarred people
Context of Four Power Occupation of Austria
The Black Market

Film Noir – compromised heroes in a world of
moral ambiguity

Moral dilemmas in postwar Europe

A British view of the Cold War – and an
invitation to American action

The Beveridge Report (1942)

“New Britain”

Five Evils

~~Cf. J.M. Keynes in 1919~~

George Marshall

Ernest Bevin’s role in the Marshall Plan

European Recovery Program (Marshall Plan,
May 1948)

~~Marshall Plan Films~~

~~“Marshall and Me” (1948)~~

~~The Story of Koula (1950)~~

Charles De Gaulle – Chairman of French
Provisional Govt (resigned 1946)

French Fourth Republic (1946)

MRP (Mouvement Républicain Populaire) in
France

Jean Monnet – Technocrats

Christian Democratic Party (of Italy)

Alcide De Gasperi

PCI – Italian Communist Party

Federal Republic of Germany (FRG or BRD,
founded 1949)

Konrad Adenauer

Christian Democratic Union (CDU) of Western
Germany

Hugh Seton-Watson (stages of Communist
takeover)

Polish Workers Party

Poland – Wladyslaw Gomulka

“Prague Coup” (Feb. 1948)

Czechoslovakia – Edward Beneš (President til
‘48), Klement Gottwald (PM, organized Feb
‘48 Coup), Rudolf Slansky (party leader,
later arrested)

Cominform (Communist Information Bureau)

Yugoslavia – Marshal Tito

“People’s Democracies”

Socialist Unity Party of Eastern Germany (SED)

German Democratic Republic (GDR or DDR,
founded 1949)

The Bicycle Thieves (1948)

Dir. Vittorio De Sica

Antonio / Bruno / Maria / The Thief

Italian Neo-Realism

In backdrop - elections of April 1948 –
attempted murder of Palmiro Togliatti

Another scarred city

A crisis of fatherhood – and political authority

How to build a new Italy?

~~Existentialism and Jean-Paul Sartre~~

Simone de Beauvoir and *The Second Sex* (1949)

Some Possible Questions for Part 3

What was remembered, and what was
forgotten, in postwar films on the war
experience?

What was the economic situation of Europe
from 1945-1948?

When did the Cold War start? And why?

What was the impact of the Cold War on
Western Europe in the late 1940s?

What was the role of the US in Europe in 1945-
1950?

How did West European states reconstruct
their political systems (in France, or in
Germany, say)?

How did Communists take control in Eastern
Europe?

What new ideas were made possible by the
experience of war?