# History of Contemporary World

## Prof. Maria Bocci

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with the necessary knowledge for the reconstruction of a general framework of Italian and European history from the beginning of the twentieth century up to the Cold War. Recalling the most enigmatic parts of contemporary history will provide historical and cultural tools which are important for developing skills of assessment and personal responsibility. Specifically, the course aims to:

* develop a critical approach to the study of the subject, aware of causal connections and long-term relations between twentieth-century history and the present world;
* promote awareness of issues related to the interpretation of phenomena such as totalitarianism and the crisis of democracy.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

* identify and understand the fundamental stages of the twentieth-century history, from the beginning of the century up to the Cold War;
* consider some of the historical dynamics which shaped twentieth-century history and still pose crucial questions;
* develop critical understanding skills necessary to increase independent judgment skills, also in relation to educational and training interventions, with an awareness of the historical and cultural dynamics underlying the world in which we live.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course explores twentieth-century history, in particular the contrasted development of democracy and the advent of totalitarian regimes. Starting from the avant-gardes at the beginning of the century and from the turning point of the Great War, the course will focus on totalitarianism and Fascism, to reflect on the nature of politics and the role of the individual in the era of modernisation and mass society. During the first semester some aspects of European and Italian history that paved the way for totalitarianisms will be analysed. In the second semester the course will focus on on totalitarianism and fascism regimes that have highlighted the vulnerability of liberal democracy confronted with the challenge of movements that incite collective passions in the name of fundamentalist and intolerant ideologies. Furthermore, the course will analyse the «seductive» ability of totalitarianism and of the relationships that totalitarian regimes have established with civil society and citizens.

***READING LIST***

1. A. Ventrone, *Grande Guerra e Novecento. La storia che ha cambiato il mondo,* Donzelli, Rome, 2015 (pages 3-35 and 81-212).

2. *La seduzione totalitaria*. *Materiali per il corso di Storia del mondo contemporaneo*, edite by M. Bocci, Educatt, Milano, 2023.

In order to contextualise course topics, students may refer to a manual used in secondary school. We recommend referring to A.M. Banti, *L’età contemporanea. Dalla Grande Guerra a oggi*, Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2009 or later editions (chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 up to paragraph 10.5 included).

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures in class, supplemented with iconographic and audiovisual documentation. The support material used during the lessons will be made available to students through the Blackboard platform.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

There will be an oral examination (interview). It may be split into two parts with a mid-term test (again, in the form of an oral interview) which will take place during the January-February 2024 session. The mid-term test will be on topics from the first semester (which will refer to the A. Ventrone volume on the reading list) and on general history topics which will be indicated at the beginning of the course. The date of the mid-term test will be posted on the Blackboard platform, through which it will be possible to register.

The examination will be completed starting from the summer exam session. There will be a single final mark and will be based on the average of the mid-term test (50%) and the second interview (50%).

Assessment will be based on the following elements: understanding and critical development of course content; understanding of the contextual links of events; clarity and effectiveness of presentation.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending the course.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.