The demise of the Weimar Republic and the advent of Adolf Hitler are events that led on to another European and World War, this one much more destructive than the last. That is one reason to understand Weimar. Another is to understand better why democracies succeed and fail. With these goals in mind, we will read and discuss two books (below). Both are page-turners. The first is by an up and coming young historian in New York. The second is a classic by one of the brilliant diaspora sent round the world (especially the Western world) as exiles by fascist Europe and soviet Russia in the 1930’s.

There will be eight on-line meetings for this course, via ZOOM, on Mondays from 1.30 to 3 pm. However, some meetings may continue into “overtime” for 15-30 minutes. Midway in each meeting there will be a 2-3 minute break to stand up, move around, obtain water, etc.

Required reading: The two books you should obtain for the course are:


A list of further readings in English accompanies this syllabus for students who want to read more.

Schedule of Meetings


**September 28.** Two archetypes of politicians: Gustav Stresemann the parliamentarian. Other leaders. BREAK. Adolf Hitler the messianic. Other Nazis.


**October 12.** Antisemitism and Weimar: The economic and political situation of Jews in Europe between the two World Wars. The Jewish people of Weimar Germany. BREAK. Kinds and dynamics of antisemitism. From stereotype to Kristallnacht.


**October 26.** A. Weimar culture: A discussion of Gay, chs. IV-VI. BREAK. German drama and film during Weimar. “The Threepenny Opera” and “The Blue Angel.”