The 20th century was probably the bloodiest era in human history and many people consider the Holocaust to be the climax of mass murder and atrocity in a long history of tragedies. It is therefore hardly surprising that the Holocaust attracted the attention of both the general public and academics, who were especially interested in understanding the reasons for human participation (in point of behavior and motivations) in such a horrendous event. This course will explore the roots, the development, and the aftermath of the Holocaust, focusing particularly on Eastern Europe, which was the main site of Jewish life in Europe and the main target of Nazi onslaught. During this course we will discuss many of the events from Holocaust history by looking at specific individuals and the choices they willed or were compelled to make. While we will explore primarily the experience of the Jews, we will also consider other victim categories (such as the Roma and Sinti, Slavs, gay men and lesbians, disabled persons, and Jehovah's Witnesses) and the actions of perpetrators and their local collaborators, rescuers, resisters, and bystanders. In the last part of our course we will scrutinize the legacies of the Holocaust during the first postwar years, including the survivors’ struggles to rebuild their lives, criminal justice, and restitution and reparations. Our examination of the Holocaust will be based primarily on historical texts of Holocaust scholars as well as on wartime and postwar documents and autobiographical accounts of gentile and Jewish participants in the Holocaust. In addition to such texts, we will watch excerpts from documentary films, which depict the Nazis and the Holocaust from various perspectives.