



(‘Raising a Flag over the Reichstag’, 2 May 1945 © Yevgeny Khaldei)

# **HI4247: Empires, Nations and Union: Europe, 1848-1992**

**Autumn Semester 2023**

**Module Leader**

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## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this module is to examine significant political, social and cultural aspects of modern life in Europe. This course will, therefore, probe some of the key social and cultural transformations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as discuss the key political issues and events that have defined the period. Topics include continuous warfare in Europe, the Cold War and the concept of ‘mutually assured destruction’, and the key social, cultural and economic developments that impacted Europe and beyond in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand the key events that impacted the trajectory of European history, culture, and society in the period 1848-1992.
- Recognise the importance of conflicts such as the World Wars, the outbreak of proxy wars during the Cold War, and the influence of key actors and events to the trajectory of society in Europe and other impacted territories.
- Challenge historical narratives by tackling the multitude of factors that affected events in European society throughout the period.
- Utilise Primary Source Research to better comprehend the motivations and actions of key individuals and groups influencing European politics and society during the period.
- Improve the ability to read and write history through a combination of class-based discussion, oral and written assignments that centre on key elements within the study of history.

## READING LIST

The following are a list of secondary sources that all provide a useful overview of major trends in European history, culture and society. These texts are designed as a **starting point** for students to familiarise themselves with the themes of the module:

Allen, Ann Taylor, *Feminism and motherhood in Western Europe, 1890-1970* (New York, 2005) [online].

Cook, Chris and Stevenson, John, *The Longman handbook of twentieth-century Europe* (Oxfordshire, 2014) [online].

Doumanis, Nicholas, *The Oxford handbook of European history, 1914-45* (Oxford, 2016) [online].

Evans, Richard J., *The pursuit of power: Europe, 1815-1914* (London, 2017).

Hobsbawm, Eric, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (London, 1994).

Merriman, John, *A history of modern Europe: from the Renaissance to the present* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York, 2010) [there are two older editions which are in the library too].

Roberts, J.M., *The penguin history of Europe* (London, 1997).

Westad, Odd Arne, *The Cold War: a world history* (London, 2018).

## PRIMARY SOURCE DATABASES

Primary Sources will form a key component of the module. There are several databases which include sources relating to the period and themes. The list is not exhaustive but gives valuable documents on European history in the period:

Christopher Newport University Primary Sources: <https://cnu.libguides.com/primaryhome>

Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/>

The Avalon Project: <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/default.asp>

The National Archives (UK) : <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

The National WWI Museum and Memorial: <https://www.theworldwar.org/research/database>

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: <https://www.ushmm.org/>

## ASSESSMENT

### A. Podcast (25%)

### B. Primary Source Assignment (25%)

### C. Project (40%)

### D. Tutorial Attendance and Participation (10%)

#### **A. Podcast (25%) (Due Anytime during semester but by Friday 01 December)**

Students are asked to deliver a **10-minute individual podcast** or a **15-minute partnered podcast** relating to any of the themes of the module. Topics will be decided in consultation with the lecturer/tutor and should focus on one of the lecture themes below or a topic **agreed upon** in advance of research.

#### **B. Primary Source Assignment (25%) (Due Friday 27 October – Week 7)**

The purpose of this assignment is to expose students to as many Primary Sources as possible. Students are required to choose **3 or 4 different types of Primary Sources** relating to the course and analyse them in **1,500 words**, using the databases provided as a guide. In their analysis, students should examine the **author, content, provenance and relevance** of each Primary Source. Whilst not exhaustive, the following is a list of sample Primary Sources that students should consider for the assignment:

- Oral Testimony/Interviews/Eyewitness Accounts
- Official State Correspondence
- Letters/Diaries/Writings
- Paintings/Engravings/Artefacts/Architecture
- Photographs/Documentaries/Archival Videos

#### **C. Project (40%) (Due Thursday 07 December – Week 13)**

The second part of the assessment requires that you write and submit an essay of approximately **2,500 words**. Students will **choose their own topic within the remit of the module**. This will be discussed in class and students must produce a research question that is approved before beginning the research process.

# Lecture Schedule

## Lecture – Wednesday 13:00-15:00 (D1050)

### Week 1: Introduction

This class will introduce the key themes of the module, as well as provide some context of European history in the period from 1848 until the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1).

**Reading:** Familiarise yourself with the Module Outline and Brightspace Site.

**Tutorial Question:** N/A (Tutorials begin in Week 3)

### Week 2: Alliances and Assassinations: Approaching the Great War

This week's class will discuss the conditions in Europe that preceded the outbreak of international conflict in 1914. This will include issues such as European alliances, diplomacy and the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand.

**Lecture Reading** Williamson Jr., Samuel, 'The origins of World War I' in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 18, (no.4) (Spring 1988), pp 795-818.

**Tutorial Question:** N/A (Tutorials begin in Week 3)

### Week 3: The First World War and the Treaty of Versailles

The focus of the class will be on the tactics and main events of the First World War, culminating in the Treaty of Versailles and its long reaching consequences.

**Tutorial Reading:** Examine the database for the National WWI Museum and Memorial. Select one, research it and bring to class so we can discuss:

<https://www.theworldwar.org/research/database>

**Tutorial Question:** Why do you think it became known as the First World War?

## Week 4: The Interwar Period and the Rise of Fascism

Key concepts such as the impact of the Great Depression and the rise of Fascist ideology in countries such as Germany, Italy and Spain will all be examined.

**Lecture Reading:** Kershaw, Angela, and Kimyongur, Angela, *Women in Europe between the Wars: politics, culture, and society*, (London, 2017), Chapter 1.

**Tutorial Question:** What do you believe was the main cause(s) for the rise in Fascist ideology in the interwar period?

## Week 5: The Second World War

This week will investigate the key battles, turning points and tactics operated during the Second World War, as well as the policies pursued by Nazi Germany that resulted in the Holocaust.

**Reading:** Access the US Holocaust Memorial Museum website and consult with some of the survivor testimonies. Choose one that resonated with you and bring to class:

<https://www.ushmm.org/remember>

**Tutorial Question:** What would you point to as the turning point of the Second World War?

## Week 6: Rebuilding Europe

This class will centre on efforts to rebuild and develop Western Europe in the aftermath of the devastation caused by the Second World War, as well as some of the key trends that defined modern Europe in the years following the war.

**Lecture Reading:** Kershaw, Ian, 'Out of the ashes: Europe's rebirth after the Second World War, 1945–1949', in *Journal of the British Academy*, vol.3 (2015), pp 167–83.

**Tutorial Question:** Were the 1950s a defining decade for European stability and growth?

## Week 7: The Cold War and the Cuban Missile Crisis [Assignment B Due]

The second half of the twentieth century was largely defined by the policies of the US and the Soviet Union during a series of proxy wars. This week's class will analyse the presidency of JFK and the defining foreign policy decisions of it.

**Tutorial Reading:** Browse the digitised records of the JFK Library to attain more detail on his Cold War policies. Choose a document, research it and bring to class to discuss:

<https://www.jfklibrary.org/archives/search-collections/browse-digitized-collections>

**Tutorial Question:** Do you agree with the concept of 'Mutually Assured Destruction'? How effective was it?

## Week 8: Reading Week [No Class]

## Week 9: Global Civil Strife

This week's class will focus on the burgeoning demands for greater civil rights across the world in the 1960s, utilising examples including the US, Northern Ireland and France.

**Lecture Reading:** Wegs, J. Robert, '1968: year of crisis' in Ladrech, R. and Wegs, R.J., *Europe since 1945: a concise history* (London, 1984), pp 220-36.

**Tutorial Question:** What do you believe was the catalyst for the civil rights movements across the world in the 1960s?

## Week 10: Women's Rights and the Suffragette Movement

In this class, we will examine the development of women's rights throughout the period, and how their roles changed through a variety of key factors, including campaigns by key members of the suffrage movement.

**Lecture Reading:** Ann Taylor Allen, 'From motherhood to sex roles: the post-war era, 1945-1970' in *Feminism and motherhood in Western Europe*, pp 209-33.

**Tutorial Question:** How much did the role of women in Western society change from the end of the nineteenth century until the 1990s?

### **Week 11: The Fall of the Soviet Union and the Rise of Nationalism**

The penultimate class will discuss the key developments in the end of formal Soviet rule and the policies of Mikhail Gorbachev, as well as the rise of Nationalism in former Soviet states.

**Lecture Reading:** Breslauer, George, 'Gorbachev on the political defensive' in *Gorbachev and Yeltsin as leaders* (Cambridge, 2002), pp 79-107.

**Tutorial Question:** Were Gorbachev's policies of *Glasnost* and *Perestroika* doomed to fail from the outset?

### **Week 12: Conclusion [Assignment A Due]**

Our final class will examine the state of Europe by the end of the period, and some of the key developments during the period that continue to shape European society in the present time.

**Tutorial Question:** We will discuss the final projects and research strategies so bring a prepared outline to class.

### **Week 13: No Class [Assignment C Due]**