Contemporary History

Lecture 2: At the Roots of Globalisation

European colonialism, 1450-1750

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Reasons behind Europe’s expansionistic drive
2. The conquer of the Americas and the making of an “Atlantic world”
3. Europeans in Asia: a half-successful mission
4. An early-modern world economy

Part 1:

Reasons behind Europe’s expansionistic drive

A NEW GLOBAL SYSTEM

From the 16th to the 19th century, a new geopolitical system came into power; it was a global, spacial hierarchy atop which sat Europe.

WHY EUROPE?

* One key point is the food production capacity in Europe’s moderate climate, where a fairly good immunity system came to be
* The competition between monarchies and the interconnectedness of the State system helped keep a certain equilibrium
* Europe’s seafaring technology (such as the caravel) improved its capacity to navigate in the oceans
* There was a limit in demographic and agricultural growth due to the exhaustion of land, and thus the continent’s countries saw the need to expand
* The birth of the merchant class actively sought out gold, which it found in the Americas and used to trade with Asia, bringing Europe to a position of economic power
* Christian religion and a sense of missionary commitment proved Europeans to be more devout and radical, so to speak; the concept of ‘civilisation’, for example, led to Europeans expanding towards other countries to ‘teach them’ to be civilised (one of the reasons for conquering the Americas)
* The Renaissance and the birth of the sciences furthered the ideological aspect of Europe’s expansionistic views

BUT EUROPE WASN’T ALONE IN THE SEAFARING ‘COMPETITION’…

* Traders from the Red Sea and along the eastern African coast, plus the Indian Ocean, China and many other countries, took part in this seafaring ‘competition’
* CHINA: the most economically/technologically advanced area of the world
* 1600-1500: Chinese seafaring to the Indian Ocean and the Arabic peninsula
* 1405-1433: Chinese admiral Zheng He led seven transoceanic expeditions to India, Arabic and Eastern Africa
* China economically limited itself to its immediate surroundings for political and cultural reasons from the 16th century onwards

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Part 2:

The conquer of the Americas and the making of an “Atlantic world”

A COMPLETELY NEW ENVIRONMENT ON BOTH RIMS

Europeans first conquered the East and Atlantic islands, where they introduced systems of exploitation, such as plantation economy, which was then also employed in the Caribbeans and in South America. The discovery of the Americas brought about huge demographic changes; on one hand, it caused the dwindling of local/native population, and on another, it triggered a huge influx of people from Europe and Africa (slavery). The Iberian conquerers in Central and South America catalysed the defeat of previous political and social institutions, such as the Aztecs, as well as efforts of forced Christianisation. But one of the main aims of European colonisers manifests itself on an economical level:

1. IMPORT from the Americas = tobacco, pumpkin, quinine, turkey, sweet potato, squash, avocado, pineapple, peppers, cassava, cacao bean, peanut, potato, tomato, corn, beans, vanilla
2. EXPORT form Europe = coffee bean, peach, pear, olive, citrus fruits, banana, honeybee, sugar cane, grains, onion, livestock, turnip, grape, disease (smallpox, malaria, influenza, diphtheria, typhus, whooping, measles, cough)

As we can see, this exchange was not equal at all. Regarding colonialism, three types were present in the Americas:

1. PLANTATION COLONIES in the Caribbean area, the Eastern lowlands and Brazil (already introduced in the Eastern Atlantic islands by Iberian powers and European merchant societies linked to the aforementioned, such as Tuscany and Southern Italy)
2. MIXED RACE COLONIES in Mexican and Peruvian highlands (minority of Spanish settlers, “mixed” marriage, mestizos)
3. SETTLER COLONIES in Northern French and British colonies (80% majority of European origin because the original population was widely exterminate, killed through slave work or by diseases imported by the Europeans)

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Part 3:

Europeans in Asia: a half-successful mission

PORTUGUESE EXPANSION AND COMPETITION

Through expansion, Europe wanted to find ‘shortcuts’/other routes to commodities imported from Asia so as to not have to pay more for Asian products redirected to Europe from the Americas; an example of these efforts is Columbus’ journey to find a naval route to India, only to stumble upon America. These precious goods came through other routes, such as through the Suez Cana, Aleppo or Tripoli.

The Portuguese, for these same reasons, explored the western coast of Africa. Vasco de Gama sailed around Africa for the first time in 1498, establishing a sea route to India and penetrating the horn of Africa and the Ethiopian highlands to compete with the sea powers of the Ottoman Empire, sparking various sea battles in the Indian Ocean. Slowly, the Portuguese, the Dutch, the British and the Spaniards penetrated further east, creating sea routes around Africa.

This mission was only ‘half-successful’ because the situation in Asia was very different from the Americas. There were major empires with bigger territorial control, thus impeding Europe’s expansion and conquest. Success was seen only after the Industrial Revolution (1760-1820), when Europe successfully penetrated (partially) Indonesia, the Philippines and South East China, but Europe could never really occupy China or Japan (at a certain point in the 19th century, it remained the only country not occupied by Europeans). Even India was conquered by the British.

The culture of Asian countries shaped the way they saw the world and could not be so easily affected by futile attempts of forced Christianisation. Although these Asian religions were accepting and willing to hear them out, when Christians began claiming monopoly of deity and accusing them of idolatry, these brought on conflict between Europeans conquerers and Asians.

From an economic point of view, Europe had very little to offer to Asia and desired to acquire this foreign land’s exquisite goods. This changed, however, with the conquest of the Americas and the commencement of gold/silver-mining activities, which were used to buy spices/tea/goods in Asia and export them to Europe.

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Part 4:

An early-modern World Economy

GLOBAL EXCHANGE OF GOODS AND PEOPLE

We can summarise the effects of Western colonial expansion as the creation of an early-modern world economy. The global exchange of goods and people (mainly under the control of Western European nations) provided Europeans with many commodities and improved the diets of Europeans and Asians thanks to the import of American crops (such as potato and corn). Worldwide financial and trade circuits were mostly under Western European control, and thanks to the printing press, a mass dissemination of information deluged the world.

ITS EFFECTS ON EUROPE

Spain and Portugal lived through a period of trade wealth, concentrating on sea trade and mercantile activity, but many areas, such as Catalonia and the Netherlands, became decisive centres of manufacture under Spanish rule. The gravitational points of European trade, wealth and manufacture gradually shifted from the Mediterranean to North-western Europe.

While Sicily had one been described as a sort of ‘paradise on Earth’ for its wealth and climate, it became classified as a ‘peripheral area’ along with Central-Eastern Europe, and these areas specified in wheat cultivation and exportation for the wealthier nations of Western Europe. This warranted the development of new economic systems, such as ‘latifondi’. These weren’t a heritage of Medieval history, but were rather an effect of industrialisation and modernisation.

Lecture 3: The Concept of ‘Europe’

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Is Europe a ‘continent’?
2. Ancient ‘Europe’ and Modern ‘Europe’
3. Christianitas and ‘Christian Europe’
4. Enlightenment and the philosophies of history

Part 1:

Is Europe a ‘continent’?

EUROPE IS NOT A CONTINENT, AND HERE’S WHY

Many scholars of geography believe that the geographical subdivision of the planet will always engage with political and geopolitical projects. Luiza Bialasiewicz writes:

“Region-building projects are fundamentally about the (powerful) making of spaces for political action. Every project of regional mapping or region building is nothing but a political project translated into space.”

There is no necessity in saying that Europe is a continent; it is merely an arbitrary subdivision of the Earth. The predecessors of the early 19th/18th century translated the ideology of their own present into spacial categories, such as continents. The continents of classical geography (the geography of the 19th century) were spaces derived from elements of a theological program (a playbook of world history that describes stages of human development from the past to the future) adapted to the Earth’s surface that catalysed a worldwide race of cultures; this means that the objective differences needed for distinguishing one continent from another were accompanied by different judgements of value.

This essentially means that claiming that Europe is a section of the Earth is arbitrary. The contradiction between the presumed objectivity of the scientific definition, the reference of ‘continent’ and the cutout of the landmass are striking; despite the lack of distance between continents, the lack of natural divisions and the presence of isthmuses, they are still divided. It is clear that Europe as a material concept is not a geographical concept.

Europe is NOT a continent. This means that the objective reality of Europe is something else: it’s a system of division, an abstract concept made up of myriads of references, an ideology that caused divisions based on philosophical speculations about history. It is history that makes geography, and not geography that makes history. Europe is a spacial metaphor of the meaning of history.

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Part 2:

Ancient ‘Europe’ and Modern ‘Europe’

EUROPE: MYTH AND REALITY

All history is contemporary history. The term ‘Europe’ comes from Ancient Greece, where it had great political and mythological significance and symbolised the opposition of the West (‘civilised’) to the East (‘barbaric’), referred to as ‘despotic’. The Greeks felt that they descended from the East, and this term contained an image of the self that was looked at through the eyes of an imaginary ‘other’; when we say we are the Westerners, we imagine that we are being looked at by someone east of us.

According to the myth, Europe was an ancient woman that never set foot on land that was considered European. Erodotus proclaimed that such a denomination would hardly make sense, but he overlooked the fact that what today many would call an identity needs to incorporate another to become effective.

After the end of Greek antiquity, for almost 1000 years, Europe’s mythological and political connotations were lost and the geographical one only partially drifted away from its original sites and became much larger. Geographically, Europe appears to have been referred to as a continental area that did not comprise its barbaric neighbours. It was later extended to the Peloponnese and its archipelagos, but never to Crete or Asia Minor (it remained the huge ‘other’).

With Asia, the Greeks meant Anatolia, the Middle East and Persia. Politically, the word ‘Europe’ referred to the world of the Pòlis, which was in opposition with the despotic systems of the Persian Empire; it was particularistic and an expression of Greek pride. The reason why the myth of Europe lost its political efficacy was attributed to the emergence of Alexander and the Roman Empire. Particularistic claims of Greek pride were hard to accept because of its disintegrative potential; empires must be inclusive because the opposite would destabilise the empire, and this was very true also when the Roman Empire became Christian.

This highlights one key difference between Ancient ‘Europe’ and Modern ‘Europe’: the Europe of pre-antiquity was particularistic, but from the Renaissance onwards, it was universalistic.

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Part 3:

Christianitas and Christian Europe

‘EUROPE’ AS A POLITICAL SPACE METAPHOR

To the dominant theology of the following centuries (Christianity), the imaginary geographical centre of the world remained Jerusalem, partly inhabited by ‘heathens’ at the time. Europe was a geographical category distinguished from the concept of Christianity.

In the late Middle Ages, it was a vague geographical reference and was replaced by the recurrent use of ‘Christianitas’. In later sources, Europe was described as Christianity’s ‘last refuge’. During the early Renaissance, the myth of Europe became more popular than it had been for a millennium, but at the time of the Crusades (1095-1286) the term ‘European armies’ were unheard of and substituted by ‘Christian armies’. The people who came in to invade the ‘Christian’ lands were referred to the Franks; nobody spoke of Europeans.

‘Europe’ as a concept was recovered by Humanists (powerful men in the Church, such as Nicholas of Kues and Pope Pius II) in the 15th century, when these individuals introduced the term ‘Christian Europe’ (not seen before) and applied it to the past, such as when speaking about the Middle Ages (although in the Middle Ages this term was not known). Antique concepts (the opposition between West and East/Civil and Barbaric/Free and Despotic) were recovered, and this further confirmed the Western historical affiliation to the East (like when Alighieri remarked that the origins of the West lie in the East) also regarding the origins of Christianity (in Asia) and its troubled coexistence with Islam, the youngest branch of the same Abrahamic family tree. This sense of familiarity was rendered visceral both positively and negatively compared to the neutrality of before. The extreme north that we now consider Europe was not considered Europe at the time, and these ideologies mentioned before were nothing new; the Humanists merely took the Antique’s concept of Europe and transposed it to modern times.

OLD MAPS OF THE WORLD

In early-modern geography, Europe extended to the Atlantic coast, while its borders to the North and to the East were not clear; it was radically different from the Greeks’ concept. It corresponded to the geographical macro-areas assigned in the early Middle Ages, when the mythological and political connotations of Europe had already faded. In cartography, the passage from Antiquity to Christianitas and from Medieval and Modern/Secularised Europe was radical and featured nonexistent Eastern borders due to political dispute until the 19th century, when a geographical consensus was reached and it coincided with the Ural mountains and rivers. Another consensus was reached in the 20th century regarding the decision of marking the border of Europe and Asia along the Caucasus Crest. Up until the 13th century, stylised mapping subordinated Europe geographically to Asia because this guarded the Garden of Eden and was regarded as the landmark of the beginning and the end of history.

The extension of seafaring caused a 90-degree rotation of the world map; modern geography set Europe at the top of the world and maps of these kind entrenched the new hierarchy of space into people’s minds thanks to the printing press. This was at odds with the spherical nature of the Earth, and thus also these modern maps did not reflect the best geographical knowledge of that age, but rather the peoples’ conception of the world in which they lived (Eurocentric and ‘superior’).

We can see how the Greeks’ exceptionalism was completely lost and was replaced by European superiority ensconced in Christian superiority, according to which only followers of that religion knew the whole truth of the world. However, this same Christianity was not Eurocentric, as not even the Pope had a problem with affiliating the religion with Jerusalem. The new, unprecedented aspect of modern Europe, as a consequence, was the translation of the typically Christian sense of history into a new space metaphor, a hallmark of Eurocentrism.

NEOLOGISM OF CIVILISATION

Therefore, the radical innovation that the Renaissance operated was the melting of Christianitas into ‘Europe’. This made of the term a geographical expression of the moral commitment to a universal mission; Christianity injected the belief that human history is a theological process of the salvation of humanity and assumed a universalistic stance (this is why 15th-century Europe had universalistic intentions) due to a new territorial disposition of power and sovereignty (the Ottoman expansion, etc.).

The same sense of mission was secularised through a diverse narrative of redemption which can be summarised as ‘neologism of civilisation’. Europeans were charged by history by planting in Africa and Asia the principles of civilisation, human rights, progress and illumination of Europe, as previously had been the dissemination of the ‘word of the Lord’. The very concept that history has a meaning is at the core of that philosophy, even in its most atheist versions. The scholars and philosophers and important figures of Europe competed to come up with the most authentic representation of Europe, the truest and interpretation of the purpose of history.

FROM THEOLOGY TO SECULAR THEOLOGY

There are many parallels between these two classes of theology; while the promise of the heavens (represented as an ascent to the kingdom of heaven to reunite with God) was present in Theology, it was replaced, in Secular Theology, by the promise of progress towards a society, placing humanity in God’s throne, so to speak, finally disclosing the true nature of mankind.

The meaning of history switched from transcendence to immanence, and humanity became based on hopes for the future and the belief that men and women can change the world for the better. The driving forces of history were humanised, and humanity was seen as an actor that could turn it all upside-down; for Karl Löwith, this is not the case, as the very postulated history might have a meaning is what distinguishes a Western philosophy of history: philosophers of this kind believe that history only has a meaning if there is some transcendent purpose beyond actual facts. But history is merely a movement of time, the purpose is its goal. It is not enough to replace God with humanity; the realisation of true humanity clearly echoes monotheistic eschatology. Humanity offers no conception of the immanence, but likewise points to the transcendence of historical purpose.

CONCLUSION: the theological conception of history summarises in itself the hallmark of European ideology; they simply assume that history DOES have a meaning and don’t ask themselves if it truly does. They believe that it’s the duty of Europeans to point out the wrongdoings of the past and lead the world in the right direction, and it is through this ideology that Europeans are able to divide the world in good and evil. This is the cause of the hierarchical organisation of the world, according to Europe, and of the classification of geographical areas into ‘backwards’ or ‘progressive’ through anthropological parameter; this concept legitimises European expansion and colonisation.

Lecture 4: European timeline, 1776-1914

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Factors of European worldwide dominance
2. Critics of Eurocentrism
3. Synthesis of European timeline events: the wave of revolutions in Europe
4. Synthesis of European timeline events: new nations States in Europe

Part 1:

Factors of European worldwide dominance

THE DECISIVE CHANGE WAS CAUSED BY THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The period between the late 18th century and the early 19th century was the climax of European power. The Industrial Revolution played a big part of the latter by assuring Europe unprecedented dominance all over the world; some of the explanations for this are:

1. Moderate climates favoured agriculture, cheap raw materials and energy availability
2. Europe learned the know-how of manufacture from India and China and came to rise high above every other area on Earth
3. Europe had a particular predisposition for scientific discovery and pragmatic ethics
4. The competition between the political entities in Europe brought about motivation for being better than their enemies, leading to benefits for everyone

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Part 2:

Critics of Eurocentrism

CRITICAL OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE EUROPEAN-UNIQUENESS ARGUMENT

There were many similarities between Europe and other areas on Earth; for example, around the 1750’s, China, India, Japan and the Middle East also had market-oriented agricultural production, wealthy merchants, savings for investment, free markets and skilled handicraft industries. Moreover, the level of living standards were not much behind Europe and there was demographic growth, as well as birth control. At the time, China and India produced 57% of the world manufacturing output, while Europe/America only produced 27%. Great Britain (and other European countries) only stole the know-how and then made protectionist policies.

But Europe had something that Asia didn’t: colonies. This served for the accumulation for capital to start industries, and this came mainly from precious metals that permitted trade with Asia. Also Africa’s raw materials were stolen through slave labour, allowing Europe to sore above all other continents. The plantation system that was at the core of European expansion in the Americas may have modelled and pioneered patterns of economic activity that became central to industrial production. Exposure to these new patterns of production and marketing arguably assisted European businessmen in developing an industrial factory-based system that operated in a similar manner.

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Part 3:

Synthesis of European Timeline Events:

The wave of revolutions in Europe

THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA AND THE NEW WORLD

After the French Revolution, Napoleon had tried to conquer continental Europe in order to reform and unite Europe under French guidance. He was defeated in 1814 and then definitely 1815 at Waterloo, and the settlement of the various peace treaties (such as the Congress of Vienna) lasted one whole year. The political map of Europe was redefined; this peace plan was overseen by England, Russia, Prussia and Austria with the purpose of maintaining peace in Europe and to fend off political revolutions, constitutional movements and republicanism, while the Ottoman Empire was completely excluded from the treaties. The political purpose of the treaty was successful until the unification of Germany and Italy, while peace was maintained for almost 40 years until the Crimean war in the 1850’s, in which for the first time France, England and the Ottoman Empire fought against the Czarist Empire.

CONSTITUTIONAL INSURRECTIONS (1820-1825)

After the settlement of a conservative system with the Congress of Vienna, many liberal movements and protests bubbled to the surface. The first occurred in 1820, when soldiers (which were to be sent to South America to fight the protests and the independence movement in the colonies) revolted and forced the government to reinstate the former liberal constitution of Càdiz. This sparked liberal constitutional movements in Portugal and Southern Italy (where the figure of Guglielmo Pepe was prominent) and strengthened International solidarity between liberal movements. Furthermore, it provoked the Decembrist revolt in 1825.

The next wave of revolutionary upheavals started in France (1830-1831), where the dissatisfaction of the bourgeoisie caused them to revolt against their particularly reactionary monarch, who had imposed restrictions on political participation. He stepped down and was substituted by another monarch who was more inclined to stick to some liberal traditions and granted wider political participation.

This signal was received in Poland and in Belgium. The area of Warsaw, which had been an independent state under Napoleon, was re-established as an autonomous entity under the ultimate sovereignty of the Czar, who once appeared to share liberal ideals but proved the opposite . The Polish became dissatisfied with his rule and revolted, and after months of successful protests, the Czarist troops crushed them.

The third major upheaval of the 1830’s took place in Belgium, which had been incorporated into the Dutch monarchy by the Congress of Vienna. The Netherlands had had a diverse selection of rulers and were a major centre of industrialisation. The population of Belgium didn’t feel that it was represented in the Dutch state and successfully revolted for independence. This sparked smaller (unsuccessful) revolutions in Italian and German areas.

THE REVOLUTIONS OF 1848/1849

The most significant wave of revolutions occurred in 1848/1849, and the only areas that were not involved were the Iberian peninsula, Northern Britain, the Scandinavian countries, the Tsarist Empire and the Ottoman Empire. The main claims regarded constitutions, national unification and independence, and involved unfulfilled promises exacerbated by the Congress of Vienna.

These were mostly successful, but there were also fault lines between revolutionaries; this was a sign that the social, political and economic landscape of Europe had changed a lot, and the main fault was between moderate liberals (who were for constitutional monarchy) and democrats/republicans/socialist forces, and between the bourgeoisie (more allied with socialists and democrats) and the political manifestations of the proletarian movement. A third fault line was the alternative between the two main goals: political participation and nationalism (violent and was considered more important than ever). Some examples are the division between Hungarians and Croats during the 1848 revolution or the one between Germans and Czechs. So it became increasingly clear that revolutionaries, at the notion of a fork in the road of decisions, preferred to ally with conservative/moderate forces because the nation was more important than political participation.

The creation of more nation States in the coming decades was a consequence of the realisation that, although some revolts were quieted, they could never be quashed completely in the long run.

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Part 4:

Synthesis of European Timeline Events:

New nation States in Europe (1832-1878)

THE BIRTH OF NEW NATION STATES

The Greek movement (1830’s) took place in a period of strong international solidarity and coincided with the upheavals in Spain and Russia. It was a strong cultural movement, and after it was ended successfully, there were two other movements that attracted intellectual attention: the Polish movement and the Italian movement (the ‘Risorgimento’).

National statehood was the main features of European development between the French Revolution and World War one, also known as the ‘long 19th century’. The most important developments were German and Italian national unification as these substituted a great number of small ‘buffer states’ developed by the Congress of Vienna to create a sort of geopolitic equilibrium, while another great development was the retreat of the Ottoman Empire from the Balkans.

Lecture 5: The Concept of ‘Industrial Revolution’

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Subdivisions of the economy
2. Historical definitions of ‘industry’
3. Industry ‘proper’ and handicraft
4. Structural change in a long-term perspective
5. Industrialisation: definition and geographical diffusion

Part 1:

Subdivisions of the economy

The Industrial Revolution that triggered a process of industrialisation, which brought about structural change within our economy, such as the transformation of the various economic sectors. These are, respectively, :

1. PRIMARY SECTOR

The processes of extraction of raw materials which regard mining, electricity, agriculture (the most important sector), fishing and hunting

1. SECONDARY SECTOR

The transformation of raw materials into tangible goods; includes heavy industry and manufacturing industry (includes handicraft and follows a factorial system)

1. TERTIARY SECTOR

This sector regards the distribution of these tangible goods and the production of intangible goods, that is:

° trade

° transportation

° information

° financial services

° social services

° personal services

These structures disgorged into production systems (such as, to name a few, feudalism, trading, and the specialisation of certain areas in different sectors of production) that would feed the political and social nucleus of civilisation (major corporations and political leaders, who benefit greatly from economic systems that favour capitalism).

The crux of political power remained agriculture (the Primary Sector) until the Industrial Revolution. It was then that the Secondary Sector gained the upper hand over the Primary Sector in terms of both production and work force; this triggered a major change in our essence as human beings. Worldwide consumption of energy accelerated in an incredible manner (entropy), consuming our planet’s energy reserves in a way that negatively impacted its ecosystems and would also affect us later on.

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Part 2:

Historical definitions of ‘Industry'

In order to understand the meaning of the word and render its meaning homogeneous so as to reach a unitary definition, it would be wise to take a look at its historic connotations first.

Historically, ‘industry’ was a rather generic word; in latin, it meant ‘being committed to/working on something’. Today, the word has differing denotations:

1. Indicates the aggregate of manufacturing/the selection of technically productive enterprises in a particular field (e.g.: ‘the automobile industry’)
2. Indicates any general business activity or commercial enterprise (e.g.: ‘the Italian tourist industry’)
3. Indicates trade or manufacture in general (e.g.: ‘the rise of industry in Africa’)

We are also confronted with different linguistic traditions as well:

1. In English tradition, with the term ‘industry’, people meant the mining industry and all activities pertaining to the Secondary Sector
2. In Italian tradition, on the other hand, ‘industria’ didn’t only regard mining and the Secondary Sector, but also many other services
3. Finally, in German tradition, ‘industrie’ referred to mining and the mechanised part of the Secondary Sector (handicraft was not considered an industry)

The generic word ‘industry’ (that comes from latin) is conditioned by the fact that the first industrial activities of the revolution developed in Sectors that were not regulated by trade/handicraft organisations. One example is the cotton industry, which became the most important sector in the textile industry and was not regulated by any corporation.

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Part 3:

Industry ‘proper’ and Handicraft

The reason it is crucial to dwell on the German distinction of industry is due to the fact that this distinction became particularly meaningful because of Karl Marx, as this was at the core of his analysis of economy in ‘The Capitol’.

At the centre of handicraft-based production, we can find the workshop-like activities and traditional manufacture, in which there is a mass production of tangible products via handicraft production. The tools used are manual tools and instruments handled by the workers themselves, and thus mass production is significantly limited.

At the centre of industries, however, is a sort of factory system characterised by the mechanisation of production that replaces muscle/mental work, which permits mass production on a much larger scale than in handicraft-based production.

With these facts at hand, it is possible to say that capitalism is based on wage labour and capital investment and was pre-existent to industrial production methods. The only differences introduced by the Industrial Revolution were:

1. A segmentation of the labour process that made labourers interchangeable and expanded the labour market
2. The allowance of scales of production that enumerated huge investment with regards to production

In this way, industrialisation did not create capitalism, but it helped it become one of the key elements of modern industrial production. In fact, capitalism, according to the Cambridge Dictionary, is the following:

An economic, political, and social system in which property, business, and industry are privately owned and directed towards making the greatest possible profits for successful organisations and people.

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Part 4:

Structural change in a long-term perspective

Over the course of a 150 years, what began as an Industrial Revolution that expanded from England to other parts of the world became a major catalyst that completely changed the economic structure of the world. The Secondary Sector prevailed in Europe and North America over the Primary Sector, but even after the completion of the Industrial process, structural change continued along lines that led to the pronunciation of the following sentence by French scholar Jean Fourastiè:

“Nothing will be less industrial than the civilisation borne of the Industrial Revolution.”

What does this mean? This quote refers to the fact that the Tertiary Sector had already overpowered the Secondary Sector in the 1950’s; this phenomenon was especially striking in the United States of America, a country which paved the path to explosive tertiary development in every other nation. The services sector became more compelling than the industrial sector in terms of production, and the same is then also true in terms of employment. This means that the generation born during the Industrial Revolution later veered towards an expansion of the services sector instead of the industrial sector, which is what Fourastiè had indicated with his aforementioned quote.

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Part 5:

Industrialisation: definition and geographic diffusion

The Industrial Revolution marks the kick-off of a gradual and unhindered course of Industrialisation; this term indicates a great structural change of our economy which leads to our production sectors to lean more towards Secondary and Tertiary production Sectors. The exact date of commencement of Industrialisation in a nation is hard to pinpoint and not quite meaningful on a larger scale, but a handy way of specifying the duration of this process is to observe when it has ended and when the country’s industry has matured. This is defined by two parameters: industrial production and employment. Industrialisation is completed only when industrial production prevails over agricultural production and is further confirmed when industrial employment prevails over agricultural employment. These parameters are used to compare Nation States in order to analyse what might catalyse such changes and how one country/geographical area influences another.

Lecture 6: The Industrial Revolution in Europe

1750-1914

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. The Characteristics of the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain
2. Belgium and Switzerland: a comparison
3. French industrialisation in comparison with the British case
4. Railroads and universal banking: features of German industrialisation
5. Industrial regions in Italy, Spain, the Hapsburg and the Czarist Monarchies
6. Industrialisation in the USA
7. Overview: Wealth, capitalism, urbanisation and demographic development

Part 1:

The Characteristics of the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain

The main factors of Britain’s economic process/Industrialisation are very diverse:

1. Colonialism (the colonies provided raw materials and changed the mentality of the British nobility), mercantile capitalism and overseas trade
2. Corporate enterprise and stock exchange
3. Agricultural improvement, enclosures and land circulation
4. Political systems (a ‘liberal climate’ was present in Great Britain at that time, which was great for investment and market-oriented economic sectors and granted political participation for the nobility and the upper class) and mercantilism (very important for building up a mercantile fleet)
5. The mentality of the nobility (they became increasingly enterprise-oriented and adopted a capitalistic mentality)
6. The adoption of free trade policies during the 18th century, which was convenient for them because they were the main trading power
7. State institutions were also very important (the monarchy controlled the currency, which was homogeneous throughout the kingdom and created optimal circumstances for a stable monetary system; protectionist measures were also taken sometimes to boost Britain’s own production, such as with the textile industry)
8. Monetary stability and the banking system that spread from the city to the countryside (agriculture became market-oriented and the agricultural industry dwindled into enterprises that served external markets, such as trade, and investments were made towards the agricultural sector through money obtained with primitive accumulation, which comes from other sectors; this distinguished Britain from continental Europe, where the nobility didn’t even think of investing their money is ‘bourgeois’ enterprises; the banking system delivered the capital for these investments)
9. Proto-industry and technological innovation
10. Transport systems and the development of infrastructure
11. Economic geography of Britain (very important because the layers of iron and minerals were close to the seaports, which made the cost of these raw materials quite low; this was a huge advantage compared to France, where coal was imported at a higher price due to a timber shortage; coal was originally a resource used only in emergency situations)

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Part 2:

Belgium and Switzerland: a comparison

The first two countries in Europe that completed the Industrialisation process were Belgium and Switzerland, and although they are small, both are proof of the dynamics of regional specialisation (certain areas in Belgium, for example, specialised in the cotton manufacturing industry, another is a coal district, while yet another is an expert in the wood and textile industry in the east).

An English immigrant and industrialist, John Cockerill, was the one who introduced mechanised textile production in Wallonia, close to a nearby wool district, which is an example of interregional dynamics within the Industrial process. Cockerill soon came to be a huge, vertically-integrated corporation that stressed the importance of the coal industry, the steel industry and the engineering industry, which, in the first half of the 19th century, emerged as the biggest producer of machine tools, locomotives and steam engines in Europe. European engineers aided the dispersion of this knowledge in other countries, and soon the entire continent was following in Belgium’s footsteps.

Furthermore, in the Boring region in Belgium, the coal mines in the plains needed huge investments. The first common pump was imported from Britain in the early 18th century, and due to a huge need of capital, the royal institutions and the banks in Belgium formed the Societè General in order to become stock owners of coal mines (and later on also of some iron industries). This was the first time banks were directly involved in industry, and this was one of the major differences between Belgium and Great Britain. For the first time, financing and banking in continental Europe adopted a critical role.

Belgium, however, was a place of imitation and where many British and French entrepreneurs immigrated, and was, quite literally, a ‘photo copy’ of the British industry.

Switzerland was divided into regions like Belgium and also included a watch-making industry and a pharmaceutical industry (traces of which we can still see until today). But regarding private entrepreneurship and liberalism, nothing here was similar to Great Britain; the Swiss industrialisation process occurred without smoke and big industrial towns, differently from Britain. The textile machines were the same as in every other nation, but they were driven by turbines and water wheels (thanks to the water rushing down from the mountains), which gave Switzerland an advantage in the production of electrotechnical industries. These industries were based in rural sites, and thus the workers were owners of small lands that were also part-time farmers. The landscape hardly resembled that of a typical industrialised country because Switzerland had been able to both preserve its delicate ecosystems and grant jobs to small labourers in the countryside.

This all together is proof that machine tools, and not the steam engine, are at the core of the Industrial Revolution.

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Part 3:

French industrialisation in comparison with the British case

France, along with Russia, was the most populated European country in the 18th century, and was also the culturally and technologically most developed country in the continent. It was a sort of ‘America’ of the 18th century, and so this begs the question: why did France ‘lose’ to Great Britain in the 19th century? Why was Great Britain the pioneer of Industrialisation, and not France?

Up to the French Revolution, the country seemed to have the best preconditions:

1. Corporate entrepreneurship (in the glass, gas, chemicals, and sugar industries)
2. More science-oriented innovations
3. Seemed fitter to lead the Second Industrial revolution thanks to its corporate entrepreneurship
4. Had the best infrastructure and lands in Europe, while Britain was quite poor because the State did not intervene in these sectors

It was due to the Napoleonic era that French industrial development came to a stand-still and came to lag behind Britain during the Industrial Revolution, and the European market was so protected that technological innovation was practically null. Some comparative disadvantages (although greatly exaggerated by French scholars) are:

1. Loss of colonies
2. Less export-oriented
3. The presence of familial capitalism in the textile and iron industry
4. The nobility’s conservative views
5. The emergence of a Peasantry middle-class ownership of land after the Slow Revolution (does not favour population growth, leading to slow demographic growth listed in point number 7)
6. Inability of French agricultural and industrial producers to meet the growing worldwide competition for markets after the fall of Napoleon (although inventions like the Jacquard loom defy this fact)
7. Slow demographic growth (people migrated to towns an industrial demand diminished)
8. Weaker banking system (Liòn was the only industrialised city and banks were only concentrated there; banks mostly invested in real estate and agriculture, which were main sources of instability that contributed to these banks’ crash)
9. The economic geography of French territory (the location of coal mines and iron mines diverged, and there were no rivers in between; especially before the creation of rail-roads, the integration between the two sectors could not occur)

The lack of heritage of innovation during the First Industrial Revolution consequently led to France’s backwardness during the Second.

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Part 4:

Railroads and universal banking: features of German industrialisation

As a Nation State, Germany did not exist before 1871, but in economic history, it is convenient to speak of it as a pre-existent region.

The German states differed greatly with regards to the banking sector and the various monetary systems and was actually quite backward compared to Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean (e.g.: the use of paper money was not widespread yet). However, Germany sped up its industrialisation in the 1840’s/50’s, but it was during the 1870’s/90’s (the Second Industrial revolution, where the chemical industry and the sugar industry were trademarks of German industrialisation) that incredible dynamics emerged. There was no single leading industry in Germany during the First Industrial Revolution, but railroad-building could be considered as such.

Railroads are what coal is mainly used for, and thus increased the demand for coal was greatly increased and the possibility of transporting it (as well as raw materials) from place to place at a reasonable cost emerged. Iron and steel were used to actually construct railroad tracks, and therefore those industries were exploited as well. The engineering industry was also boosted by the introduction of railroads and appeared in small towns in which engineers learned the know-how of industrialisation in French (thanks to the work of John Cockerill).

Given that Germany was not liberal, but conservative, and that traditional handicraft corporations were not completely dismantled, there was a prominent presence of high-quality work force in the engineering industry as well, which produced amazing German engines that they could then export at soaring prices.

Railroads integrated the regional and local markets into the national market, boosting many other branches of the industry and rendering the nation’s economy more or less homogeneous. A huge amount of capital, however, was needed in the creation of railroads, and the way Germany was able to accumulate enough capital to do so was by building off the joint stock banks (this became a feature of German industrialisation). These banks were not specialised and they were spread throughout the entire territory, not limiting themselves to nobility. Banks became a sort of public institution that had great influence on new industrial projects (like steel works) and integrated finance and industry.

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Part 5:

Industrial regions in Italy, Spain, the Hapsburg and the Czarist Monarchies

The aforementioned countries weren’t the only ones who hit their peak of Industrialisation before World War One:

1. In Spain (Catalonia), there was an old industrial region that participated in the first wave of Industrialisation and, thanks to its widespread textile manufacturing, was fully industrialised by 1900
2. In Italy, Piedmont and Lombardy had flourished as industrial regions during the first wave and were also fully industrialised by 1900; meanwhile, Liguria industrialised as a maritime terminal of the industrial heartland, while major industrial sites opened in Veneto (wool), Tuscany (metallurgy, engineering) and a few other regions
3. The Hapsburg Empire, on the other hand, featured old industrial textile regions in Bohemia and central Austria (where an important metallurgical and engineering industry also bloomed), as well as Vorarlberg; two other important areas are Budapest (home of the electrotechnical industry) and Trieste (featured shipyards)
4. Finally, the Russian Empire only showed a great effort in industrialisation after 1880 in an explosion of state railroads, the birth of a national coal, iron and steel industry, and the creation of important industries in major urban areas such as Moscow, St. Petersburg and Poland; this, along with the foundation of foreign banks and tax exemptions for foreign capital, assured that by 1905 the Empire would boast 2 million factory workers, thus making it a strong industrial country, but not an industrialised one

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Part 6:

Industrialisation in the USA

* USA AND THE REST OF THE WORLD

The preconditions of this industrial development were very diverse; the USA had a large population, and thus the domestic market size was bigger than that of European countries. What was even more important was that the USA was abundant in capital goods while Europe had to scramble to its colonies in order to obtain raw materials. This made a huge difference: the wage level in the USA was high (due to lack of competition), as well as the demand for consumer goods. In Europe, on the other hand, low wages favoured industrialisation but limited the demand of the working classes.

While Europe sought out technological innovation to save capital input, all the technological efforts were destined to save labour in the USA, and not capital. Building cheap cars at the assembly line in America was completely feasible due to the copiousness of raw materials, and so the rationalisation of consumer goods industry in Europe lagged until the 1950’s (where a process of ‘Americanisation’ accurate, during which the economic trajectory in Europe changed as well; an example of this shift is how the wage levels equalised during the great migrations from Europe to America). Marketing was a key element in the United States’ economy, while it was inconsequential in Europe (regarding the production and advertisement of consumer goods).

* ASIA AND EUROPE

GDP per capita is the most common measure of average productivity of a country. In the 1500’s, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Japan, India and China were pretty much at the same level until the mid 17th century. After 1650, northern Europe took the lead (especially Britain and the Netherlands), while the Asian countries fell behind. India and China became poor countries, while only Japan was able to start its industrialisation process after the 1850’s; India and China only started to recover after 1980.

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Part 7:

Overview: Wealth, capitalism, urbanisation, and demographic development

The leading industries during the Industrial Industry were:

1. 1760-1840: textiles, coal, iron, steam engine
2. 1840-1880: railways, steamships
3. 1880-1920: chemicals, steel, electricity, internal combustion motors, automobiles

The effects on wealth and economic growth were:

1. An increase in productivity through mechanisation in the cotton industry from 1750 to 1825
2. An increase in productivity in the iron industry in Great Britain from 1790 to 1860
3. An increase in income per capita, especially in Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and the USA

With regards to population growth, Europe swelled from 150 million to 400 million inhabitants during the time frame between 1750 and 1900. Along with this, urban population expanded from 17% to 54% between 1801 and 1891, while the principle of the market was extended to the whole of the economy; labour became a commodity and urbanisation and the market deeply transformed social structures and mentalities.

Lecture 7: The American Revolution of 1776

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Puritan eschatology
2. The conflict between the British crown and its American colonies
3. The Declaration of Independence of 1776 and the Constitution of 1787
4. Slavery before and after Independence
5. Westward expansion and native population
6. Democratic representation and social structure

Part 1:

Puritan eschatology

American colonies were only founded by its conquerers in the 17th century, and the political, cultural and religious beliefs that would be present there were brought in by settlers from Europe (in particular, Great Britain), a continent riddled with religious and political conflict.

One crucial group of settlers was the Puritans, who organised themselves in the form of joint stock companies; very often, the governors of States (such as John Winthrop, Massachusetts’ first governor) were also the heads of these companies, and thus these companies were comprised of a political, spiritual and entrepreneurial elite. Their ethos was close to protestantism and eschatology, and their main aim was to build a ‘new England’/a ‘new Zion’ in the colonies.

Another important ideology present in the colonies derives from John Locke’s theories, which mainly focused on the concept of liberty

“The natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of nature for his rule.”

Lastly, one of the other key trains of thought ‘departing from its station’ at the time was the one linked to the English political theorist of classical republicanism named James Harrington, and it had more to do with the proposition of a free State and the virtue of its arm-bearing citizens.

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Part 2:

The conflict between the British crown and its American colonies

The American Revolution can also be considered as one of the consequences of the Seven Years’ War, which extended over many continents and ended successfully for Great Britain.

At the end of the war (1763), France cede all mainland North American territories (except New Orleans) in order to retain the Caribbean sugar islands. Britain, on the other hand, gained territories east of the Mississippi river, leaving Spain with territories west of the Mississippi (the country also traded Florida for Cuba). These events constituted the first instance of friction between the American colonies and Great Britain, who wanted to pacify them.

Another aspect that upset the land speculators and real-estate companies among the American settlers was that, in 1763, king George III prohibited the extension of settlements west of the Appalachian mountains, and thus the heads of the real estate companies became the leaders of the Revolution. Furthermore, the king also intervened in colonial affairs by granting religious freedom for the French Catholics of Louisiana, ‘offending’ the colonies’ claim to their ‘right’ over territories in the west.

Soon, a debate developed in Great Britain about the legitimacy of slavery, and the American settlers feared an abolitionist decree.

But the most important aspect is the quarrel of the finance of the past war and the defence of the companies; the monarchy had to raise taxes in order to finance the military and to pay off its accumulated debts, first with the Sugar and Stamp Acts (1765), and then with the Revenue Act (1767). The Americans felt that this was a great injustice and came up with the famous phrase, ‘no taxation without representation’.

The revolution broiled until new British troops arrived at Boston in 1678, and, as a sign of protest against tea taxation, American settlers threw tons of tea overboard from ships of the East India Company in what is known as the Boston tea party (1773). As a consequence, Massachusetts was stripped of self-government and the colonies boycotted British goods. The Continental Congress decided to meet for the first time in 1774.

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Part 3:

The Declaration of Independence of 1776 and the Constitution of 1787

The commanding chief of the Continental Army was George Washington, and the first armed conflict of the Revolutionary War occurred in 1775. This led to the Continental Congress’ emanation of the Declaration of Independence on the 4th of July, 1776; but the war took a twist when, in 1777, British and American loyalist (a number of other troops were also present, some of them on the side of the British, such as a lot of slaves that hoped for the abolition of slavery, while some sided with the settlers, especially the French troops, who wanted to take revenge for the horrors of the Seven Years’ War; one of the French commanders was General la Fayette) forces surrendered at Saratoga on the 13th of October. On the 1st of March, 1781, the Articles of Confederation were ratified, and on the 18th of October, the British forces surrendered. Many other important events followed, such as the Peace Treaty of Paris in 1783, the adoption of the American Constitution in 1787 and the vote for the Bill of Rights in 1791.

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Part 4:

Slavery before and after Independence

The role of slavery during the American Revolution has been recently revisited and has challenged the original narrative of ‘freedom for all’ that has been preached by American historians for decades. The reality of slave houses and plantations (especially in the Southern colonies) was at odds with the values of freedom and liberty, and more recent studies point out that Africans in the American colonies took arms on the side of the British, while the slave holders pushed for the revolution to prevent the introduction of an abolition decree. Freedom, for the founders of the United States, meant the freedom to keep others enslaved, and a strand of that argument can be found in John Locke’s theory. The American Revolution therefore centred on Americans’ right to control their property (which included other human beings) and reinforced the States’ commitment to keep the slave industry alive and kicking.

Slavery was outlawed in most northern States after the end of the war, but this only freed children when these turned 25 years old, and racism still persisted (as we can see in a Massachusetts law of 1786 that prohibited whites from marrying African Americans, Indians or people of mixed race).

Doubts about the moral aspects of slavery never really took serious hold among white folk in the Lower South. In fact, after the Mexican Revolution, US slaveholders settled in Texas, completely disregarding Mexican legislation. When the war between the US and Mexico broke out in 1836, Texas already had 5,000 slaves. When Texas joined the United States in 1845, the state was home to at least 30,000 slaves, a number which swelled to 58,000 in 1850.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE CIVIL WAR

After a four-year Civil War (1861-1865) between the United States and 11 slave-holding Southern states, these all formed the Confederate States of America. Regarding slavery, things took a turn in 1865 with the 13th Amendment (passed by Congress on January 31st, 1865), which states:

“Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction”

What ensued was a mass incarceration of African-Americans in order to legally keep them as slaves. From 1875 to 1965, State laws and local regulations came into existence that enforced racial segregation (apartheid) in the USA, especially in the Southern States. Only under the pressure of the Civil Rights movement did the States start the process of overcoming Jim Crow in 1964, a racist caricatural character of African-Americans that has been present since the 1820s.

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Part 5:

Westward expansion and Native Population

With the Revolution, a process of territorial expansion began. The United States first started expanding its territory with the Treaty of Paris, proceeding both Westward and Southward, conquering land through wars and peaceful treaties, such as with Mexico. On a diplomatic level, it was still in the logic of colonial territorial administration (such as with Mexico and Alaska, which was purchased in the 1860s by the USA from the Czarist Empire for 7.2 million dollars), but this was not the case with many native populations. On these lands lived a consistent number of native Americans who had deported to these areas by the settlers themselves. The conquer of these regions was seen by Americans as a conquer in the name of ‘civility’. The conquer, once completed, continued in the direction of the Pacific Ocean (Hawaii) and on to places like Cuba. It was also seen as the conquest of ‘virgin land’; according to the legal philosophy of colonising European countries, savages who lived on a land and did not work it had no notion of the modern legal theory regarding private property extending to the land, and thus had no right to the possession of said land; they were the ‘illegal’ dwellers that were then dehumanised by settlers. It was a systematic genocide.

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Part 6:

Democratic representation and social structure

The American Constitution reflects the traditions of political thought in the 18th century and American society.

Social structure:

1. SLAVES

Slavery of Africans existed in all the British American colonies.

1. FREE BLACKS

The British American colonies had a small but important population of free men and women of African decent.

1. FARMERS

During the 18th century, most Americans lived and worked on small farms.

1. MIDDLING TENDENCIES IN THE SOCIETY

In the 18th century, a new group gained a larger role in society and government. These men and women worked in trades or as professionals, such as lawyers and doctors, or merchants who owned stores.

1. GENTRY

The gentry were the ‘upper crust’ of colonial society. They were the large landowners, very wealthy merchants and financiers.

The political system is the following:

1. The people elect members of Congress and the President
2. Congress approves the Cabinet’s (executive body) decisions and has the power of impeaching the President
3. The President nominates members of Cabinet

The people who had a right to vote for the first American Congress were the following:

1. 60-80% of white adult male citizens
2. Many poor white, and most of the black, both free and enslaved, were excluded
3. Women were excluded
4. Natives were excluded
5. Nevertheless, the right to vote was much more ‘general’ than in most European liberal systems of the 19th century

Lecture 8: The French Revolution and the Napoleonic period, 1789-1814

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Major turning points of the revolutionary process
2. A new concept: “sovereignty of the people”
3. The Nation as religion
4. Peoples’ sovereignty and the rule of law
5. France 1789-1814: a laboratory of different possibilities

Part 1:

Major turning points of the revolutionary process

The French Revolution originated from social discontent triggered by the economic difficulties of the lower class and the discontent of the growing social class of the bourgeoisie, who did not have the possibility of being politically represented; they possessed great economic power, but no political power. The immediate triggers were, like in the States, were fiscal crisis (the wars that France had waged around the world had been quite expensive and caused the monarchy to go into debt; for this reason, they introduced unsuccessful financial and monetary reforms, causing quarrels), and the following protests which emulated those of the American Revolution (which was viewed very positively in France). Elected representative bodies of the three Estates had not been called in since 1614, but the King called it in again in the spring of 1789 to have the consent of the French population regarding these taxes. The elections were held at the end of a process of broad political mobilisation, in which the bourgeoisie wanted political participation and the urban working classes wanted improvement and political participation. There were quite high tensions when the Third Estate (the common people), having negated that every deputy would have one vote, declared itself the National Assembly. After the storm of the Bastille (July 14th), King Louis XVI recognised its validity, and the Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizens.

What followed was a suppression of religious orders (which created a popular, counter-revolutionary movement mobilised by the clergy and by some peasants) and the abolition of feudalism and the nobility, and political parties such as the Gironde, the Cordeliers and the Jacobins grew in power. In September of 1791, a Constitutional Monarchy (which had already existed during the Revolution) was established thanks to the brand new Constitution. Foot riots ensued in Paris, followed by popular upheaval against the monarchy. Following some international developments, King Louis XVI was arrested and guillotined in 1793 when the most important outbreak of counter-rebellion sparked in the Vendèe. After this, the Committee of Public Safety was formed, and the most important figure was Robespierre. This was a radical acceleration of the Revolution, since he was a member of the Jacobins, a group which came to control the majority of the National Assembly and executed the majority of the Girondists to gain control. Under their control, the 1793 Republican Constitution was ratified by a popular referendum, allowing universal male suffrage.

At this very moment, riots were suspended because the Committee of Public Safety established the Reign of Terror to fight back and terrorise the ‘enemies of the Revolution’ (Girondes and Cordeliers); but during this process, nearly everyone was in danger of being accused of being one. A year later, monarchist forces and Girondist forces fought back and declared Robespierre and his allies the real enemies of the Revolution. Robespierre then executed himself.

A moderate period of the Revolution began with more conservative and monarchist political views, meaning that the progressive Constitution of 1793 was substituted by a Moderate-Liberal Constitution which limited political participation to the nobility and introduced a new form of execution. In a certain way, it harkened back to the Girondists’ views and urged expansionistic wars in Europe and Africa; Napoleon Bonaparte emerged, who proposed to ‘civilise’ these new territories. In 1798, he was defeated in Egypt and had to turn back to France in 1799. Nevertheless, he was seen as a hero and he took his popularity to organise the Coup d’Etat of 18 Brumaire, an event which marked the end of the Directory and the introduction of another Constitution (which foresaw the leadership of a restricted number of people, which included Napoleon, who was elected as First Consul), in which a Consulate was established (all of this was founded on general assent ratified by a popular referendum, whereas the Directory was restrictive).

There were a number of clashes during the Revolution, the symbolic meaning of which was superior to their military weight. The most important was the Storming of the Bastille, in which the bourgeoisie defeated the noble troops. From that moment on, Paris was in the hands of the Revolution, and events like these demonstrated the social heterogeneity of the Revolution. The Municipality would be under the control of the poor, the working class and the bourgeoisie, who wildly accelerated the Revolution. The National Assembly represented the moderate majority of France, and their best instrument to qualm the broiling capital was the National Guard, which was under the command of La Fayette.

In the early days of the Revolution, there was a great wave of sympathy for the Revolution outside of France, but there was also a strong reaction against it. Edmund Burke was an Irish statesman who served as a member of the British house of commons for over thirty years. In the 1770’s, he had supported the American Revolution, yet durig the late 1780’s, his position contrasted greatly with that of the sympathisers of the French Revolution. His book, ‘Reflections on the Revolution in France’, became a European bestseller and was translated into several languages; it was the most influential text against the Revolution at the time. His concept of legitimacy and geopolitical equilibrium that had been destroyed and the responsibility of Europe with regards to this became major points in the Congress of Vienna. When writing his book, the execution of King Louis XVI was still beyond his imagination, and yet he was outraged by what he had already seen (such as the Women’s March on Versailles in 1789, a movement which forced the King and Queen to wear the Phrygian cap, a symbol of the Revolution). Burke wondered what could hold a political society together, and he came to the conclusion that it was the recognition of the constituted authority of governors, good manners, religion and traditions.

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Part 2:

A new concept: “sovereignty of the people”

The Revolution brought about ideological innovations, such as the sovereignty of the people, which rearranged the political meaning of the concepts of ‘people’ and ‘nation’. During the Ancien Règime (refers to the biological descent of the nobility and the clergy and implies their dominance in the hierarchy of soicety), the term ‘people’ referred to the individuals excluded from political decision and was a generic name for the amorphous mass of humans that had no say in the direction of the nation. This perspective was turned around during the Revolution, and in early 1789, Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès published the pamphlet ‘What is the Third Estate’, which would become a founding text of the Revolution and of the concept of the people’s sovereignty in Europe. Not only did Sieyès’ view of the ‘people’ correspond to the Third Estate, but he also claimed that it was the common people who formed the true nation. To argue this, Sieyès refused legitimacy through biological descent to point at citizenship and democratised this same principle: the noble conquerers either had to give up their privilege or return from whence they came from, that is, the forests of Bavaria (in this way, he weaponised their claims of biological nobility and introduced mythical legitimisation for the concept of sovereignty). In conclusion, those who dwelled on French soil for generations were the only genuine form representation of the nation.

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Part 3:

The Nation as religion

The mythical foundation of the people’s sovereignty was clearly a part of Revolutionary language: according to Robespierre, a sovereign individual is one who establishes its own new legitimacy of power derived from the eternal laws of reason, justice and nature. Robespierre also claimed that the people were sacred through the sacred laws of nature, while the King wasn’t, and thus that his authority was merely a farce. The allegories and the symbolism of the Revolution also confirmed the existence of this process of sacralisation, as concepts such as justice or nature or humanity were depicted as goddesses who fought back the evil spirits of obscurantism. This radical sacralisation culminated in the Parliamentary decision that the Supreme Being existed and that its veneration should be a public affair.

One of the most perceptive observers of the French Revolution was the early Romantic poet, Novalis; his 1799 pamphlet, ‘Christianity or Europe’, is not wrongly considered the founding manifesto of modern conservatism. Like Burke’s essay, it is a concise critic of the Revolutionary project. Yet, the text also reveals significant passages of appreciation. Indeed, for Novalis, the French Revolution marked the end of the political realisation of the Enlightenment. According to Novalis, the philosophers of this period had disparaged morality and the love of art, purging poetry of nature and the human soul; from his point of view, the French Revolution sent a signal of regeneration because these same Revolutionaries restored passion, religion and the concept of sacralised nature in a historically remarkable manner. In this way, politics became a matter of mass communication from the end of the Revolution onwards. This poet anticipated the principles of political communication in the coming era of the peoples’ sovereignty.

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Part 4:

Peoples’ sovereignty and the rule of law

Enlightenment thinkers like Montesquieu, Kant and Plato were hostile to democracy, which they only deemed the first step towards tyranny and the complete opposite of the Republic. The early liberals came up in the moderate part of the Revolution and shared Montesquieu’s and Kant’s skepticism of democracy, in which we can discern a concern for social and economic power and a concern for the rule of law. All along the 19th century, most liberals fought against democracy, because, by extending the right to vote for the lower classes, it would threaten the bourgeoisie’s power. They saw the rule of a socialist majority as a threat to sacred property rights; at any rate, the concern for the rule of law should be carefully taken into consideration. Why have plebiscites always marked the beginning of modern dictatorship in the 20th century? Hitler and Mussolini were incited by widespread popular consent. Montesquieu believed that the sovereign should be beneath the law, regardless of the social and philosophical connotations of this term. The people shouldn’t be the exclusive source of political legitimacy; weakening the distinction between sovereignty and political power would cause an imbalance and put the people above all others by following this radical concept of ‘natural superiority’. In the National Assembly, the legislative body of the people was entitled to absolute and unlimited sovereign power because it was a result of general will and national justice. The emergence of popular sovereignty and the Constitution divided them, subjecting political power to the control of counter-powers and caused the sovereign people to become more absolute and theoretical. Integrating them more into political life would cause the foul smell of tyranny to spread, such as during the emergence of Napoleon and when he was crowned as Emperor.

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Part 5:

France 1789-1814: a laboratory of different possibilities

If we look back at the twenty-five years that separated the end of absolute monarchy in France (1789) and its restoration in the Vienna Congress (1814), we can see that this period in France and Europe constituted an extraordinary laboratory of different political and constitutional possibilities, which delineated the possibilities that would be seen in the following two-hundred years:

1. Absolute monarch (1789)
2. Constitutional monarchy (1789)
3. Republican constitution of democratic character (1793)
4. Emergency regime of terror (1793-94)
5. Moderate elitist liberal rule (1794-1799)
6. Authoritarian populist rule (1799-1804)
7. Monarchic dictatorship (1804-1814)
8. Restored absolute monarchy (1815)

Lecture 9: Liberalism, Socialism and Feminism

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. ‘Liberty’ before Liberalism
2. Liberalism as a political movement
3. The Emergence of a Socialist movement in the 19th century
4. The Feminist movement and Women’s Rights before World War One

Part 1:

‘Liberty’ before Liberalism

Over the last decades, the history of political thought and conceptual history has criticised the self-narrative of liberalism, which dated itself back to the 16th century and put the school of thinkers of natural justice onto a single line of tradition. ‘Liberal’ as a political adjective was only coined in the 1800’s and then morphed in the early 19th century into the ‘liberalism’ we know today. ‘Liberty’, instead became a central concept of human thought from the early Enlightenment onwards thanks to individuals like Hume, Kant and Locke, and was inserted in this liberal mainline of ancestry; this is correct, yet on the other hand, this does not mean that we can necessarily place them on a strand of intentional tradition because the political outcomes these thinkers had in mind weren’t necessarily the same that 19th-century liberals would speak about later on. John Pocock and Quentin Skinner argued that there wasn’t just one meaning of liberty:

1. The contractarian tradition: concerned with maximising individual freedom and wealth under the condition of a political society (commonwealth)
2. The Roman republican tradition: reactivated by Macchiavelli and others, and was concerned with the freedom of the political society (republic) as a whole depending on individual virtue

Other main events in this period (such as the Dutch Republic, the English period of Civil War and Revolution and the American Revolution) also pertained to both strands of liberty.

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Part 2:

Liberalism as a political movement

Differently from the concept of ‘liberty’, ‘liberal’ still had no political meaning in the 18th century and referred to social and moral customs, as well as tolerant or loose moral habits. It became an adjective with a political connotation during the French Directorate (the moderate period of the French Revolution); it then became a fashionable word in the European establishment, especially regarding Napoleon and Czar Alexander I, who both referred to themselves as men with liberal principles. The liberal movement was born in the 1820’s, and at the time it was strongly characterised by international solidarity and freemasonry during the Restoration period, and its main areas of interest were Spain, Portugal, France, Italy and Greece.

Only during the first half of the 19th century was this great strand of ideas identified as ‘liberalism’, a standard reference to French and European moderate bourgeois political ideals, and often in favour to constitutional monarchy. After the 1848 revolutions, liberal groups and parties emerged under that name that had distinguished themselves from conservatives during the revolution on one hand, and democrats and republicans on the other. The most important philosopher of Liberalism was John Stuart Mill, who said that “people understand their own interests better and care for them more than the government does or is expected to”; this was said in a period when it became clearer that the government wouldn’t be the night guardian that would only grant society, but also take over administration and control of infrastructures, a development that liberals didn’t see as positive.

Great changes came in the 1860’s, when the former British Whig Party (of Lockean traditions) changed their name into Liberal Party. With regards to Europe, the great time of Liberal parties ended in 1918 with the transformation of constitutional monarchies, mass society and the mass extension of the right to vote. In the USA, on the other hand, the adjective ‘liberal’ had no great appeal until the 1930’s, when it became identified with moderate State intervention and social politics, and a commitment in favour of civil rights.

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Part 3:

The Emergence of a Socialist movement in the 19th century

To understand why the question of socialism and communism will be an aspect that will persist in the following years, we also have to understand that the emergence of the concept of private property on land (which was the main factor) in Europe was historically seen as relatively new, and it was argued by the first thinkers of natural justice as a social contract with work, and that people who worked the land were quite right to refer to it as their exclusive property. ‘Privatus’ (from latin) means that there is something subtracted from a greater common good, something of common use made into an object of private use. These thinkers claimed that this was a natural right because it was the fruit of someone’s work.

In the early 19th century, classical economy (Marx and Ricardo) fully recognised that the only source of wealth is work; they believed that other factors of production (capital or land) did not increase the plus value of wealth in a society. This led to private property of means of production (esp. of land) to always be a little bit on the defensive. The aforementioned was extensively discussed by thinkers of natural justice and also by marginalist economists (who relativised the meaning of labour). The promise of overcoming the private property of means of production and erecting socialist society grew in Europe; the effects of social polarisation were clear in European society and were a matter of discussion and of efforts of change (e.g.: during the French Revolution with Babeuf).

One of the most important thinkers of this age was Henri de Saint-Simon (1760-1825), who founded a more technocratic view (he argued in favour of State-organised industrial production and distribution) of industrial society, which was a very influential concept in the international technocratic tradition.

During the 1848 Revolution, there were efforts in France to erect working houses to abolish unemployment and create reservoirs of socialism under the protection of the State. There were also thinkers who thought that in the middle of the social environment of the liberal societies, the best thing to do was to begin to form a community that would put into practise communist forms of living; an example of one of the supporters of this was Robert Owen (1771-1858), who advocated the transformation of society into smaller local communities. He also vouched for no child labour, schools, free healthcare and affordable food in a New Lanark village, and he also formed a tightly-knit socialist community in New Harmony, Indiana, which followed ideals like 8-hour workdays and moneyless trade. His model was not emulated as he had thought it would be, however.

Similarly, from within this set of liberal thinkers emerged the anarchists (‘libertarian socialists’), who were a sort of liberal left wing rather than of the socialist movement because they do not wish to give the State a key role in society. They were prominent in many European countries in the mid-19th century, such as Switzerland, Spain and Russia. These various strands of thought were called ‘utopian socialism’ by Marx and Engels, who opposed against these due to their lack of political feasibility because they did not analyse the laws of history in a philosophical manner. Instead, they proposed an analysis (Marx’s economic analysis of the capital) in the Communist Manifesto (1848), in which they spoke of building in this idea of overcoming the contradictions introduced by capitalism in a way that was in line with a scientific philosophy of history. Thanks to this, with the advancement of industrialisation, (electorally) strong Socialist trade unions and political parties emerged in Europe. After the 1900’s, their revolutionary purposes were gradually marginalised in favour of reformist claims for a gradual improvement in the framework of capitalist society.

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Part 4:

The Feminist movement and Women’s Rights before World War One

Although Women’s suffrage in several countries was only reached in the 1890’s and the 1920’s, the Feminist movement started long before:

* Mary Astell (A Serious Proposal to the Ladies + Some Reflections upon Marriage) = “If all Men are born free, how is it that all Women are born Slaves?”
* Olympe de Gouges (Declaration of the Rights of Women and the Female Citizen) = exposed the failures of the French Revolution in the recognition of sexual equality; afterwards, in the 1790, Nicolas de Condorcet and Etta Palm d’Aelders unsuccessfully called on the National Assembly to extend civil and political rights to women
* Mary Wollstonecraft (A Vindication of the Rights of Women) = one of the earliest works of feminist philosophy, claims women’s right for education in order for them to take their role in society, as they are essential to the nation
* Clara Zetkin = Marxist theorist and activist for women’s rights; organised the first International Women’s Day
* Harriet Taylor Mill (the Enfranchisement of Women)

Lecture 10: The concept of ‘nation’ and Nationalism

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. The ideas of Nation: Essentialism vs Constructivism
2. The phases of Nation-Building
3. The Nation as an Imagined Community
4. Pedagogy and the invention of tradition

Part 1:

The ideas of Nation: Essentialism vs Constructivism

Reilly writes:

“The national idea — that the world is divided into separate people each with its own distinct culture and deserving political independence — is sometimes regarded as a natural and ancient organisation of human society. “

This has been the mainstream view of ‘nation’ all throughout the 19th century and most part of 20th century, and in most the cases it is the most widespread interpretation of national history and the concept of being a nation.

According to these idea, the idea of a nation had always been present yet invisible in the form of institutions of religion, feudalism, and of dynasties that had hidden it for centuries in order to achieve national unity before national consciousness could begin to spread. To become conscious of the existence of nations is the first step to reach rebirth and reemergence, or, in Italian, ‘risorgimento’. History that reestablishes the idea of nation is also called Essentialism. Federico Chabod was an Italian historian, and it was in his book, ‘The Idea of a Nation' (1961) that he makes several references to Rousseau, who underlined that at the centre of political society there are wilful acts. This is called Constructivism, and it claims that a political community will not come into existence without wilful acts that come from a place of determination, since a nation must be constructed with a wilful act as the number of communities that would come into existence on that territory is not decided beforehand — a second thought that not many scholars necessarily share. In fact, there were many intellectual confrontations between these two schools of scholars.

From the 1980s onwards, the Constructivist interpretation of nations was put forward by scholars who didn’t have patriotic interpretations of nations, more critical regarding the vary idea of the nation, which did not necessarily stick with the distinction with nationalism and patriotism. NAtionalism as the bad one, capable of the worse , extremist nationalist idea )nazi idea) , good nationalism civic patriotism. They referred more to the constructivist understanding and look back again to the history of the nation and national movements in this optics of constructivist principles.

Nevertheless, they looked also back an important text of1882 of ernest Renan on the topic of ‘what is a nation?’ We must think In 1882 France was still suffering the trauma of defeating against Prussia, basically frustrated and always concerned and wondering about the reason this disaster defeat and concerned about the lack of patriotism and solidity and solidarity with the nation. There was a huge reflection regarding the nation, also nationalist movements come to ‘defo’ in 1880, Ernest rennan had clearly a constructivist interpretation and was by no means critical or distant from the nation. On the contrary he tried to discover the will act behind nation trying to reform more French should willfully state behind a nation, so he underlined the constructivist character of the nation to reinforce patriotism. Nevertheless, the constructivist theory of one hundred years later referred importantly to this texts,.

Ernest Renan Qu’est-ce qu’une Nation? (1882)

Said Renan..

A nation is nothing objectively given, but ...

... a geographical entity that as a rule evolved from the transformation of pre-existing dynastic states; typically French late 19th century, in the French case absolutely true French nations states come out as no nations states, but of monarchy , not in the sense of popular sovereignty but as dynastic states (france was a dynastic state). True also for most of Western European nations states. There was Still present big empires in Europe which had not allowed yet many other nations states to be erected so this was an understanding reference

... a spiritual entity or principle based / or inheritance based on collective memory, and the feeling of belonging;

Nothing of these feelings or traditions must be necessarily there , some memories can also be forgotten, memories always selective. One major way of constructing the sense of A nation, very idea that the nation isn’t always worst, construction of a narrative that gives me in my present the idea that I belong to a chain of traditions that was always there and would be also without me or anybody memorizing commemorating recollecting that history, it would be nevertheless objectively there. The essentialist approach in his view is already the outcome of a coherent historical..

.... a coherent historical narrative based on facts selected to make them converge, such as to represent the nation as necessary, logical and coherent outcome.

So Renan himself underlines this aspect that the essentialist version of the nation which around the world , is a constructive narrative. He politically said lets reinforce this narrative . Appreciated by the constructivist theories hundreds years later ,it is not a necessary outcome of history , its selective historical narrative, a construction .

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Part 2:

The phases of Nation-Building

Ernest Gellner:  
Nations and nationalism (1983) Ernest Gellner, 1925-95

* Status ex ante (the French Revolution)
* • National irredentism/movements  
  • Emergence of the nation-state  
  • Phase of extreme nationalisms

• Phase of cultural convergence

In the 1960s/70s famous approach on the problem of nation building.

Enrest Gellener , In-between Essentialism and constructivist approaches in the vain of the social sciences of his time he tried to think from the chaos of history, from the varied picture and contingent aspects of history , some regularities that make it possible to formulate some sort of stages that would apply to all cases, all countries and nations and so on. Stages model refer to the stages antecedent, that appeared before the French rev, where there were not modern nation, idea of modern nations was triggered by French Revolution in Europe, it triggered also national movements in other places, made before imitations fro resistance In Spain and Germany, resistance against Napoleon that shaped the earlier national movements .

In the course of 19th century the new nation states came to existence and developed partly in the politically internal struggle an extreme nationalism, the period between the late 19th century and early 20th century was seen as then high day of extreme nationalism that produced jouvenism and militarist ambitions and ended up provoking two world wars. After the two world wars he saw the period of extreme nationalism ending, and the world converging to greater cultural commonality and national solidarity, on the place of extreme nationalism any civic patriotism of constitution , this was eschatological view that could not foresee the virulent return of national ideas in many places after 1990s up to our days.

Miroslav Hroch: Social preconditions of national revival in Europe (1985)

* Definition of a nation: a nation is defined by objective links and their   
  subjective reflection in the collective consciousness.   
  (formulation that is a bit essentialism and constructivist , not so much ethnic , social condition within marxist world)
* Three key moments of nation-building: (1) creation of a “memory of a common past”; (2) social communication across linguistic and cultural borders (3) spread of the idea of equality.   
  ( (2)from one region not educated at school could speak and understand and communicate with people from another region, so had to be created social communication)
* Three stages model:   
  phase A: individual intellectuals are committed to establish an idea of national identity;   
  phase B: political activism for the 'resurgence' of the nation;   
  phase C: the national movement becomes a mass movement and manages to include the majority of the population

The idea behind these stages model may be skeptic.

Phase A- Idealism- leibniz when there was no general idea oof German nation he developed the idea of German state

Phase B- cultural movements and starts and spread among wide areas of society, its was interesting to look at the stages model for at least 20 years ,

Culture unity spread before , even much earlier than we thought

In his home country he always found himself in a minority position, Czechoslovakia was a communist country, his constructivist position was too idealistic. After communism, the Czech republic and other states were rethinking and rediscovering national values, extremely patriotic.

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Part 3:

The Nation as an Imagined Community

“New national identities may initially have been ‘imaginary’, but modern political and economic changes forged them into powerful and competitive communities”. (Reilly)

Benedict Anderson: Imagined Communities:

He is an anthropologist, witness of the political events in Indonesia   
Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (1983):

1936-2015

* a nation is a real community, not in fact (face-to-face) but in the sense that members imagine themselves in solidarity with one another beyond the political and social contrasts;  
  a nation is both imagined and imaginary, since no single person belonging to it in his life will know all the others belonging to the same nation, as it would be in a de facto community
* communities (national, tribal etc.) should not be distinguished according to objective criteria, but only in the way in which they imagine themselves. \*\*

So this idea of imagined community has to do with distinction anthropologist name between face to face communities (villages) where inhabitant of the village know every inhabitant. No type of fear, of imagination, is living just five feet from my hut. Religious communities must based on imaginary bond on some ideology, that you belong to that guy, you belong to the community even if you never seen him. Christianity islamic humma, not face to face .

\*\* Jugoslavia was a national project put into practice in the 20th century an idea of 19th century and then socialist, people said was an artificial nation. He says it has Non sense distinction between artificial and natural, first of all all nations are imagined with those who succeed and those who don’t . Also we shouldn’t look if they are objectively artificial or not, but we should study how they represent themselves because this is the real level of objectification that we can excess , concept idea , the real material dimension of the national discourse. if we don’t study nations states, material borders or institutions , it is to question how did national phenomena came to practice, how whether nation behave and the objective level dimension that we can cross is ideas , idea , how the narrative goes, and this we can compare one to the other and not make an essentialist judgements about artificial projects.

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Part 4:

Pedagogy and the invention of tradition

Eric J. Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger: The Invention of Tradition (1983)

* national identity is based on the representation of the modern nation in terms of an ancient, primordial phenomenon, notwithstanding it is, in fact, a new historical phenomenon;
* to represent the nation as something that just must be 'rediscovered' or 'resurrected', alleged traditions are invented that did not previously exist;
* to be taken over by the 'masses' from the elites who invented them, these traditions are disseminated first by the means of culture (poems, novels, works, dictionaries, newspapers etc.), then through political propaganda;
* once the nation-state is founded, the education of the masses continues through the press, books, the cult of national heroes, school education, military service, public rites and a rewriting of the landscape (monuments, interventions urban, place names, street names, parks, unification of signs etc.).   
  National movements that created national states of 1700 created the imagine of the state

Now we have created Italy , we have to create Italians. To indoctrinate the masses in the era of people sovereignty, it was not indifferent what people thought as in the ancient regime, navy asked them if they had ocnsent. This changed in the era of people sovereignty in the post French revolution era. The elites of new matrons states, invention of tradition to involve the mindset of the masses Into the sense of national belonging and tell them that also that the nation has been ever there, traditions proved that, certain right, certain festivals.

Traditions, buildings and monuments created a UNITY

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi

Founding father of European pedagogism.

Education of younger generation.

19th century developed sophisticated methods for mental psychology, academic discipline later introduced. Concerned how to entrench in the infants minds, national identity to see how to make them identify as part of origin family and nation. Notion of the nation.

National narrative deeply in our mind from our childhood .. I’m French, Italian and so on..

Example of education of young people. Geography books. Parallel between family bonds . Tirol is sort of family area where you have so many good friends, parents living there since unmemorable times. Fatherland.

The text says ‘look at the brothers of our loved tirol, isn’t true that almost

Anne marie Thiesse

Invention of tradition, study of folkloric tradition which began in the period of Enlightment.

She call esthetic revolution, parallel to the developments of the late event of enlgihtment and national movements, conceptualization and realization of the first examples of people sovereignty with the folkloristic studies of a range of mitical material for political legimitazion of people sovereignty.

The Nationalization of the Masses (1975)

Nazism was the culmination of a movement that had begun in Germany over a century before Hitler and steadily gained in power and definition. Using fascinating examples from the arts, philosophy, politics, athletics, and many other aspects of the social organism, Professor George L. Mosse shows how early 19th-century nationalism was transformed into a popular political religion. In this landmark study of the evolution of political ideas, he dissects the forces of unreason that gave Nazism its undeniable hold on the German imagination and still haunt the human mind and spirit in this age of mass man.

Social transformation of europe brought mass participation politcs, mass organizations interest. This also because Technology and industrial development push for greater role of the states, nation state in regulating all day life, also in society, economy, communitarian life schooling and so on. Aspects where the state was not so present in the first half of 19tht century.

Education of the masses, even achieved the highest level and another scale of mass education and became also self organized . For eg. Arts, sports, so on..

This problem has been focus by George Mosse. From the German area survivor of the semitic persecution. How could be that the nazi power come to power ??

Nationalization of the mass. people far away from the state became part of the state organization.

Lecture 11: Social changes in Europe, 1800-1914

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. An Overview of Social Changes up until World War One
2. Transformations of Bourgeoisie and the ‘Liberal Idea’
3. Transformation of the working class and the ‘socialist idea’
4. The ‘residual’ sectors of society: the Nobility and Peasants

Part 1:

An Overview of Social Changes up until World War One

The 19th century was characterised by changes in class structure and in their names. With a rise in productivity from the times of the neolithic revolution, it was possible to construct a triangular social hierarchy in which there were less rich people than people in the working class:

Highest orders

Second class

Third class

Fourth class

Fifth class

Sixth class

Seventh class

Army and navy

This new hierarchy divided people according to their role within the productive system. Marx’s division of classes, considered by many thinkers of the 19th century, was the following:

1. Capitalists, or bourgeoisie (own the means of production and purchase the labor power of other workers)
2. Workers/Proletariat (do not own means of production and sell their own labor power)
3. Petite Bourgeoisie/“Middling” class (own means of production but does not purchase labor power)

In the first group, we have the model industrial great bourgeoisie on the left, and on the right, we have the Junger, lower-class men which still had a huge influence on the State, the military and particularly on land owners east Germany .  
 The next is what is known as the bourgeoisie, a group of people with varied professions who are on the same level as the agriculture entrepreneurs that possess the land and a certain amount of wealth.

Next we have the petit bourgeoisie, who are the equivalent of the old society are small and middle-class agricultural land owners.  
 And finally we have the rest, and what in British classification of early 19th century are called work mechanics and paupers are here put together at the end of 19th century in a category called the proletariat which also has a traditional part: the workers and men of agriculture.

In short, the division of classes was oriented according to the position of the individual in the production process, and according to Marx and other 19th-century thinkers, there were three groups of people in this hierarchy:

1. The first were the capitalists, or bourgeoise, a term which indicates the owners of the means of production who purchase the labor of others to run the production process and take profit from it

2. The second group consists of the workers, or the proletariat, who do not own means of production and are forced to sell their own labor power in order to live

3. Then there is the middling class, also called the Petite bourgeoise, which own the means of production, but there are very few of them; the land they own is far too small to enable them to purchase the work of others, so they just work in a family enterprise on their own without exploiting the work of the others.

In the general projection by Marx and others it was foreseen that this petit bourgeoisie and middle classes would disappear and the whole society would polarise; small groups of owners of means of production in greater areas and an increasing group of workers meant that the latter were not owners of production and were obliged to sell their work to the aforementioned  
 With this in mind, a political background emerges: all workers operate under the same conditions and are all deprived of means of production, and thus they have to sell their workforce and this puts them into condition that is objectively opposed in the interest of those that own the means of production. At the time, however, not everyone was conscious of this fact: on one hand, there were classes defined by objective conditions, and on the other, there was a lack of awareness regarding consciousness of the class condition.

So what is a class for itself for its members?  
 According to socialist Thompson’s essay, in order to know how the working class saw itself or how it was seen by the rest of society, we must also look at how the members of that class fought to become one. In the years between 1780 and 1832, most English working-class people came to feel an sense of identity and a certain animosity towards men of other classes whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs. Thompson focuses much on what early thinkers called class consciousness and how they shaped what we can call the English working class. Although Karl Marx himself did not [articulate](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/articulate) a theory of class [consciousness](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/consciousness), he intimated the concept in his characterisation of the working class. According to Marx, workers first become conscious of sharing common grievances against capitalists (thus forming a class “in itself”) and eventually develop an awareness of themselves as forming a social class opposed to the bourgeoisie (thus becoming a class “for itself”), the proletariat. Class consciousness is a historical phenomenon, born out of [collective](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/collective) struggle. In this sense, Marx did not approach class consciousness as a matter of pure ideality. Rejecting any separation of theory and practice, he used the term “conscious human practices” to emphasise the conjunction of subjectivity and objectivity in history. At the end, according to Heywood’s post-linguistic approach to reveal the history of the working class, the bourgeoise identified themselves as the embodiment of a new liberal ideology, the working class as the embodiment of the socialist ideology and the other classes as the conservative.

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Part 2:

Transformations of Bourgeoisie and the ‘Liberal Idea’

In Petri’s view, the most interesting part of Heywood’s analysis is that of the transformations of the bourgeoisie and the ‘liberal utopia’; he starts with describing the bourgeoisie condition as reflected by this liberal utopia. The latter expected that society would develop increasingly towards a context of free producers who need an exchange of goods on the free market in an optimal allocation of the overall resources of society. At the same time, they would confine the State’s function to the ‘night guard functions’ of securing the rule of the law, the security of property rights and of public security, but otherwise abstain from the organisation of their lives because that would be self-organised by civil society through the so-called public sphere of organisation, debate, and exchange of opinions, and there was a growing number of associations for leisure time or literally any purpose which testified the growing tendency of social self-organisation of the public sphere (typical of the ideals and the reality of this early bourgeoisie development). Another ‘sacred cow’ of the liberal utopia was the sharp distinction between the private sphere (exclusively home to the individual) and the public sphere. Symbol of this distinction was the role assigned to women, who now were more or less relegated to the private sphere; they might have acquired a role of command within the household, but they were excluded in this liberal utopia’s public sphere.

Heywood then chooses to analyse the second half of the 19th century and looks at how these expectations were or were not met, how these expectations of a liberal utopia then proved to be inadequate with regards to the various changes in society and what discrepancies this produced in other ideologies. First of all, contrary to the expectations of the first half of the 19th century, there was no conversion of society towards the middling strata of producers, but, on the contrary, it became evident that there was a growing sense of social polarisation. In the broad landscape of enterprises, it became clear that there was a concentration process in the making that hampered free competition thanks to an oligopolistic and monopolistic market structure (born with the creation of trusts and cartels). Important producers of raw materials and commodities (such as coal and steel) would agree on a price for the market which all the buyers and consumers were obliged to pay; this was the complete opposite of a free market.

The next phenomenon we should look at is how the class consciousness of the bourgeoisie changed. Many of these ‘new rich’ people (who became such through the development of their industrial enterprises) developed aristocratic ideas and social models where this was possible; they applied to become nobles through various contrasts because they saw this as a matter of social prestige. The economically most successful representatives of the bourgeoisie did not personify the liberal utopia, but tended towards other social models in their own self-reflection regarding themselves. On the other end of the bourgeoisie spectrum, burrowed deep within the oligopolistic shape of the market, chock-full with trusts, big banks and cartels, we can find the economic existence of small shopkeepers who could not easily compete with the competition of the industries and producers, so they developed a sort of animosity towards these upper-bourgeoisie classes (whom they suspected to be a conspiring group of jews) and hoped that the regulating hand of the State would intervene (due to this, they developed State-oriented, nationalist and corporatist sympathies). New forms of menagerie capitalism within enterprises gave birth to new types of bourgeoisie people and professions such as employers, engineers, managers of firms, etc., who were not quite characterised by markets, but by hierarchies, and formed sort of ‘small States’ with both bureaucratic and military organisations.

Lastly, thanks to these market and industrial developments, a skilled workforce was formed through public schooling and increased the number of bourgeoisie professions that directly depended on the State as well as their expectations (which depended on political dynamics and expectations of the State to protect their interests). It is in this way that the liberal idyll collapsed.

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Part 3:

Transformation of the working class and the ‘socialist idea’

Heywood, in this next section, replicates the same epidemiological scheme and speaks of the first worker’s movement in the first half of the 19th century (which Marx would then call Utopian Socialism) organised in correlation with the Petit Bourgeoisie, a republican and democratic wing organised in cooperative movements that preached political participation and justice. Some utopian thinkers include Owen, Fourier and Weitling, and their organisations were very often religious and regarded subjects such as healthcare and political justice; there were also statist socialist experiments in the 1848 Revolution in France (where this socialist view had its roots in Saint-Simon’s works), which concluded with the term ‘social rights’ being included in the country’s Constitution, and this certainly transcended the bourgeois horizon of political and social organisation, guaranteeing the absence of unemployment and poverty (workhouses were also erected).

Heywood declares the Revolution of 1848 a ‘watershed moment’ that then gave rise to new and unprecedented forms of working class-oriented socialist organisations which became visible beyond the left-wing and republican forces of bourgeois origin and became autonomous with their own socialist ideologies; these then became particularly influenced by Marxist theories and erected this theoretical edifice of scientific socialism.

Then, in the second half of the 19th century, these merged with practical experience, so that the programs of socialist parties and trade unions could be seen as a product of both practical experience and dialogue with theoretical elaboration (e.g.: reforms for democratic participation of the working class operated on both grounds). Heywood also pointed out, however, that the ‘real’ workers weren’t really involved in this dialogue, as the objective interests of the working class were more important than the subjective self-consideration of workers; this was a qualitative difference that was both an element of political strength and one of division between the individual and local consciousness of the average worker, who would certainly fight for higher wages and reforms, but nevertheless, would stay in an open field of ideological competitions. For example, what was not fully reflected in these theories was that industrialisation brought about hierarchisation in the working class; the theory said that their interests were common (they were all workers who needed to sell their work force), but that meant little compared to the daily abuse and exploitation of each singular worker during the production process. The reality of the working class was not homogeneous, and everyone experienced the system differently. On an ideological level, the working class (especially when mass organisations and nationalists came into power in the second half of the 19th century) was not impermeable; proof of this was the First World War. Until then, the political orientation of the socialist parties had been strongly anti-war and internationalist, but many workers were still captured by the enthusiasm of patriotic and national mobilisation when the war broke out.

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Part 4:

The ‘residual’ sectors of society: the Nobility and Peasants

The last part of Heywood’s analysis is dedicated to Conservatism and the upper strata, the so-called ‘high society’ that had been around since the Ancien Règime and the feudal social order of earlier times. They were made up of the high clergy, the nobility and the aristocrats, who conserved a major role in society and politics (e.g.: in the constitutional model of Great Britain), but were also great land owners in many European countries (all for constitutional reasons; the nobility has a permanent role in the state apparatus, especially in the Tsarist Empire, the Habsburg Empire and Germany). So even in an industrial society they had kept their positions, and Heywood interprets this as the ‘conservative protest’ against progress; according to conservatives, industrialisation has also its negative consequences (unfair competition on the market for small craftsmen and little shopkeepers). This paternalistic old model favoured both the nobility and the poor, who were open to conservative ideas, fearing a competitive market.

Lecture 12: World timeline, 1750-1914; Western Domination

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Napoleon in Egypt
2. Technological innovations and transport systems
3. Imperialism and the Industrial Age
4. Western Expansion in Asia

Part 1:

Napoleon in Egypt

The first example of European expansionism in the late 18th/19th century was Napoleon Bonaparte’s expedition in Egypt; symbolically, it represented a number of different elements that were behind the reason for this project.

On July 1st, 1798, Napoleon landed in Egypt with 400 ships, 54,000 men (including 150 scientists, engineers and scholars whose responsibility was to learn about Egyptian culture and the history of the territory). Upon arrival, the French installed a large library and several librarians who looked after the books, who brought them to prospective readers; the French particularly enjoyed it when a Muslim visitor appeared to be interested in the sciences, and they welcomed them immediately and showed them all of the literary works that were at hand. The appreciation of the French troops’ arrival can be seen in the writings of Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, an Egyptian intellectual. However, while Jabarti spoke of the arrival of the French in Egypt (particularly in Cairo) in a positive light, their presence soon brought about the destruction of any barricades they encountered, the Mosque of al-Azhar and millions of Qurans. All the colonisers had for Egyptian (and Muslim) culture was disgust and disdain. We can also cite sources from Egyptian Christians (copts) who experienced the arrival of the French in the same way as Muslims (such as Jabarti) did. French sources are also indispensable in describing the colonisation of Egypt, as even they referred to the conquering methods used as ‘massacres’.

The French Republic, under Napoleon, had two strategic goals in the Mediterranean: to control it and to create a French corridor to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean in order to create a disadvantage for the Ottoman Empire and Great Britain. In diplomatic terms, this meant the betrayal of the alliance between France and the Ottoman Empire that can be traced back to the 16th century. Since he was aware of this, Napoleon tried to present his expedition to the Egyptians as something that was done in the name of the Sultan against the Mamluks (who desired independence), hoping that the Sultan wouldn’t consider his strategy as treason (and would ally himself with Russia and other traditional adversaries) and that Egypt wouldn’t greet his men with initial hostility.

Napoleon’s expansionistic, economic and imperialistic ambitions are easily reducible to certain motives, but, as we say today, “the West does not go to war only for oil”. The West presented itself to other nations as a beacon of freedom, humanity and civilisation that operates on a sincere self-referential belief that had both a philosophical and a theological background: on the one hand, it built on some anti-Catholic traditions that dated back years, and on the other, the anti-trinitarian visions of the Enlightenment and the Supreme Being (voted by the National Assembly) make the assertion that the French were the best Muslims in the mind of those who pronounced it to be so.

But the Mediterranean unity dreamt by the French elite transcended the present thanks to the tailors of history; this was the fruit of European semantic construction that lasted two or three centuries and that assigned the Mediterranean an exemplary role (with a special place for Egypt). On the eve of the battle against the Mamluks, this idea had matured long since, so it was easy to see how a French victory would be able to breach the past and the future. It is thanks to this ideology that Napoleon motivated his troops: they were each puzzle-pieces in history, and the result of their efforts would mark humanity for centuries to come. This secular vision of history will always be an ideological drive behind European expansionism.

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Part 2:

Technological innovations and transport systems

Behind Western expansion was also a whirlwind of technological innovations and transport systems (both brought around by the Industrial Revolution) that allowed expeditions to travel far and wide:

1. Military means (breech-loading rifles, machine guns)
2. Circulation of people and goods (lowering of transport coast, transoceanic steamship routes)
3. Steam ships, building of channels (Suez built by the french and Panama in the 20th century) and the transatlantic telegraph

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Part 3:

Imperialism and the Industrial Age

Western expansion continued in the same pattern as 16th-century European Imperialism and 15th-century European Colonialism; but this new phase of Western expansion differed in many ways from the earlier one. Now the primary focus was on Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Pacific societies rather than on the Americas, and the main ‘players’ were no longer Spain or Portugal, but rather Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Russia and the United States.

We can summarise the motives behind this expansion as:

1. ECONOMIC MOTIVES

* Export of industrial surplus production
* Export of capital and profitable investment
* Raw materials
* Internal social ‘pacification’

1. GEOPOLITICAL MOTIVES

- Competing nationalisms

1. IDEOLOGICAL MOTIVES

* Export of a higher form of humanism
* Dissemination of Christianity
* Export of technical progress
* Export of economic wealth
* Education

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Part 4:

Western Expansion in Asia

Colonial expansion in the 19th century can be described as Western, and not just as European, because the United States took a big part in it as well. The nation had already had colonial ambitions in the early 19th century in Africa, creating the colony of Liberia (a name which was given because it was a land that was believed to host emancipated African-American slaves who were sent back to their homeland) and expanding in the Pacific towards Hawaii and other islands, landing the Black Ships on the coast of Japan in 1854 and forcing the nation to open its borders to Western trade. This triggered many changes in Japan, like the end of Shogun-rule (1867) and the beginning of the Meiji-Restoration as well as Japanese industrialisation.

In Asia, anti-colonial movements were quick to surge (especially in India and in the Philippines) in the mid-19th century; the Philippines succeeded in temporarily freeing itself of colonial rule with its Declaration of Independence in 1898, but the island were ceded to the United States by Spain.

A great transformation occurred concurrently In Indonesia, where the trade ports on the spice islands, which had been controlled by the Dutch since the 17th century, were swept aside; the Netherlands had proclaimed Indonesia to not only be a mere colony, but a nationalised colony known as the Dutch East Indies.

Similarly, in India the East India Company had immense control of the territory, but had to face rebellion in the mid-19th century. By 1858, Great Britain had eradicated the Company and transformed the country into a colonial government (AKA, a colony).

Finally we have China, a populous Empire where Western forces tried to interfere in various ways, such as the British, who took the first opportunity to influence the country’s population in the first Opium War. Great Britain wanted to force the country into accepting copious flows of opium in the name of free trade, which created worrying social dilemmas in China. The First Opium War (1839-1842) ended with the Nanking agreement, which was in favour of the UK. This led to the spark of the Second Opium War (1856-1860), in which the anti-foreign Boxer Uprising (the Yihetuan movement) was a key factor. The Opium issue came to an end at the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1911.

Lecture 13: Global Changes; Colonialism and Imperialism

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. British takeover of India
2. The British-Chinese Wars of 1835-41 and 1856-60
3. Scramble for Africa, 1875-1924
4. American Expansion
5. Russian Expansion

Part 1:

British takeover of India

In India, the power of the Mughal Empire waned in the 18th century due to political tensions between the Muslim Emperor and his Hindu subjects, as well as the sparks of violence generated by regional rivalries. Some wealthy Indian traders, resenting the demands of Mughal authorities, helped finance the military forces of the British East India Company, and a remarkable number of Indian men joined European-led armies, attracted by the security and opportunity for enrichment they offered. So the power of the East India Company grew large enough in the territory to marginalise other European competitors, and this Company took control of the subcontinent until the mid-19th century.

The Indian Rebellion of 1857/8 began with a cultural clash in the military when Indian troops refused to use cartridges greased with animal fat; the Hindus feared that the fat came from holy cows, while the Muslims feared it came from filthy pigs, so this led to a rebellion that spread to all regions of Northern and Central India and became a generalised uprising against British-style reform and Company; a cruel and violent repression of the mutiny followed, and this period ended with the dissolution of the East India Company. The administration was taken over directly by the British government, which proclaimed the Unitary State of India, which was then transformed into vice-royal territory (a colony). At the same time, Great Britain introduced a British-style parliamentary system, an element that would later favour them in the organisation of political movements for Indian independence (these led to the formation of the Indian National Congress and similar organisations in 1885).

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Part 2:

The British-Chinese Wars of 1835-41 and 1856-60

The members of the British East India Company had long been frustrated for years at their inability to find any Western products that could interest China. The solution was found in India: opium. It had been grown since ancient time for medical purposes; the Company increased its production, and with the help of corrupt Chinese officials, imported huge quantities into China, where the highly addictive drug found a ready market. This was illegal from every point of view (social, economic, etc.), and after years of discussion, the Imperial government decided to crack down on the smugglers and British traders that were caught in the act.

Chinese authorities destroyed large quantities of drugs, and Great Britain took this as an opportunity to wage war on China with the purpose of controlling its external sea trade by attacking coastal cities and ports. After Great Britain’s victory, it forced China into an agreement that decreed the creation of coastal colonies and the right of British traders to operate under extraterritorial conditions (not subject to Chinese jurisdiction). It was the later foreign prime minister and first president of the British liberal party Henry John Palmerston, who was one of the most important politicians in the 19th century, that made the following comment regarding the British victory over China:

“There is no doubt that this event, which will form an epoch in the progress of the civilisation of the human races, must be attended with the most important advantages of the commercial interests of England.”

It is here that we see for the first time that drugs (regarded in the same manner as oil and armaments), the third most important commodity within trade, enter the stage of geopolitics as an instrument of Western power.

In China, the Nanking agreement and everything it implied facilitated the birth of social tensions which articulated themselves more openly in the form of protests and uprisings, causing the beginning of a period of political and societal upheaval that culminated in humiliation and the Second Opium War (which ended with the Siege of Beijing by the British and a wide range of European powers). All this ended in 1911 with the breakdown of the Chinese empire and the end of the Qing Dynasty.

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Part 3:

Scramble for Africa, 1875-1924

Since the colonial period had begun in the 15th century, European interest in Africa had mainly been limited to trade posts, but for a number of reasons, there had never been an interest of conquering the territory (except for the South African area, where Cape Town was devising a settler-colonial project that was extending towards the North).

In 1870, only 10% of Africa was under European control, but by 1914, it had increased to 90% of the continent thanks to the increased need for raw materials brought around by the Industrial Revolution; only Ethiopia (Abyssinia) was still independent, as newfound African colonies had become the main source of raw materials for the European economic and industrial elites.

To avoid a war among European powers, the Berlin Conference of 1884 decided to regulate European colonisation and trade in Africa (without African citizens themselves having any say in the matter) and was the starting point of the Conquest of Africa. There were almost no military conflicts between European colonising powers in this period, and the military conquest of Africa had began in a low-cost and systematic manner.

Of course, this all put the Africans at a disadvantage, who didn’t have the technological means to effectively oppose the colonisers’ military conquest; small military units of European powers could control large areas of African land.

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Part 4:

American Expansion

“American history has been in a large degree the history of the colonisation of the Great West. The peculiarity of American institutions is the fact that they have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changes of an expanding people.”

- Frederich J. Turner

The effort of pushing American progress beyond their frontiers had developed Southward and Westward, as the doctrine of President James Monroe claimed that the States were the supervisors of Latin America and territories that spread Eastward. In 1822, the American Colonisation Society created Liberia in Africa. Ironically, these efforts were sold under the trademark of anti-colonialism, particularly in the Caribbean, with which the States had traditionally very tight connections. In Cuba, the citizens fought several wars to free themselves from Spanish colonial control (1868, 1879-1880, 1895-1898); at the end of the last war (1895-1898), the Cubans were on the brink of winning independence, but the USA intervened and its Newspapers ran wild headlines like “Spanish Cannibalism”, “Inhuman torture” and “Amazon Warriors Fight for Rebels” that radically dehumanised the Spaniards. The Americans came to the help of the anti-colonial rebels, sending the USS Maine warship to Havana Bay on February 15th of 1898; a huge explosion of unknown origin wrecked the ship and killed 266 American sailors. This was an excuse to declare war on Spain and enter the war under an anti-colonial pretext (when in reality, the USA only wanted to occupy Cuba and other Spanish colonies). In 1902, Cuba obtained a form of independence whose conditions privileged American presence in Cuba (these regulations were only removed under the presidency of Roosevelt, when Cuba became a de facto American protectorate).

However, American progress decided that the West was its preferred frontier, so it spread to California and the Pacific Ocean, conquering Hawaii, opening Japan to the benefits of Western trade and looking for other Spanish colonies; it found the Philippines. Here, all throughout the late 19th century, several rebellions against the Spanish monarchy developed in 1896 under the oppositions’ leader, Emilio Aguinaldo. The Filipino movement would then proclaim independence on June 12th, 1898, but soon a contrast was born between the American troops and Filipinos, who then engaged in the prosecution of a war of Independence against occupying American forces. This second war lasted until 1902 and ended with American victory, resulting in the death of over 4,200 Americans and over 20,000 Filipino combatants and 20,000 Filipino civilians (who died due to violence, famine and disease).

The anti-colonial endeavour against the Spaniards gave America the opportunity to conquer strategical important areas, such as Puerto Rico and Panama (where the channel would control Atlantic and Pacific trade). Expansion into the Pacific brought Hawaii under American control, as well as Guam and the Philippines (strategically positioned close to China, Japan and the strait of Malaga).

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Part 5:

Russian Expansion

The Tsarist Empire had been expanding towards Siberia since the 17th century and continued ‘till the 19th century, spreading eastward towards Japan and China and southward towards South Asia (which created many conflicts with the British Empire, which had the opposite ambition in Asia).

However, in East Asia a previously unheard-of adversary emerged: Japan. This nation exhibited increasing military and economic strength, and the Russian-Japanese war (1904-1905) broke out over rival imperial ambitions in Manchuria and Korea. The Russian defeat was a major blow to the Tsarist regime and its expansionistic ambitions; nevertheless, looking at the development of Russia towards the east, we can see many parallels with American expansion towards the West (regarding overcoming frontiers, bringing civilisation and progress and enlightening ‘the natives’), but there were also many differences, namely that Russia had the traditional approach of an Empire towards conquest (like Great Britain) and tried to integrate these populations in order to create a multicultural and multi-religious Empire.

Lecture 14: Global Changes; the effects of Colonialism and Imperialism

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. The effects of Colonial Imperialism in India
2. The effects of Colonial Imperialism in Africa
3. Migration and racism
4. The effects of Western influence on China
5. The effects of Western influence on Japan

Part 1:

The effects of Colonial Imperialism in India

In India, Great Britain introduced institutions such as railroads, new schools, new streets and parliamentarianism; these were benefits that certainly would leave a mark on Indian society for years to come and would unite its people also by creating alternative means of communication (lingua franca, etc.).

If we look at the development of India’s share in world manufacturing, it was at 25.0% in 1750, and had shot up to 1.4% by 1913; we can say that it was raised thanks the huge dimension of the Indian population. However, the production of cotton textiles was greatly reduced; initially, Great Britain had introduced protectionist laws during the Industrial Revolution to prohibit the import of cotton into the UK, and over time, it became a matter of technological advantage. At the end, Indian goods could no longer compete with English goods, not even on the English market, thus creating a sort of dependency on England, the ‘mother country’.

This ‘mother’ was not always so generous and well-meaning. During the second half of the 1870s, there was a great famine in India, six to ten million people died of hunger. The food prices soared, so flour was expensive, and the Indian population asked for a regulation of food prices. This proposal was instantly rejected by the Famine Commission and by the British parliament because the laws of ‘lesser fair’ were sacred as were those of ‘free trade’; in addition, the British government believed that famine was a ‘righteous punishment’ for India’s ‘overbreeding’.

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Part 2:

The effects of Colonial Imperialism in Africa

Unfortunately, hunger crises were a normal occurrence in agricultural societies; the last major hunger crisis in Europe was caused by a series of bad harvest in 1846/7. Hunger crises happened cyclically in densely populated areas where there was no availability of uncultivated land to expand the usable area during times of great difficulty, and in Africa, there were certainly many hunger crises. Nevertheless, these cyclical crises had everything to do with the structural dependency that became the colonial footprint in the continent. The consequences of these disruptions were so strong that Africa became a symbol for of poverty and a need for ‘Western help’, reinforcing racist and supremacist views typical of these colonial elites.

These structural disruptions cut deep into the heart of African society. When the colonial system expanded in the area, forced labour was used for infrastructure by all colonial powers, and the worst exploitation of all occurred in the Congo Free State, which was privately owned by Leopold the First (King of Belgium), famous for his exceptional brutality.

The change of the agricultural structure and the crops that were cultivated was important; the land dedicated to the cultivation of industrial foodstuff that were thought for the world market and served industrial societies radically changed the continent. There was less land for the African population to grow crops that they needed to keep themselves alive and well, leading to numerous hunger crises and to their migration to poor urban areas and mines; often, the latter was conditioned to the rule that young men couldn’t bring their families with them (especially in South Africa), so this also split families so that the social structure of African society was shattered completely.

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Part 3:

Migration and racism

In the late 19th century, there were huge migration flows from Europe to North or South America; if 15 million Europeans left from Europe, at the same time, 38 million Chinese and Indians migrated for the same reasons, mostly to Southeast Asia, where they built local communities that would become ethnic networks on the long run; many Indians also migrated to South Africa. African slavery had produced European racism as a legitimisation of slavery because they were ‘beasts’ or inferior to the ‘white man’, and was a tool to soften the moral threat that slavery posed. But when it was gradually abolished in the 19th century, racism was reinforced by society to maintain the subjugation of the African population. Now that slaves were free men, racism soared higher than ever.

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Part 4:

The effects of Western influence on China

In the late 19th century, the Chinese Empire suffered defeat against the West and Japan and was riddled by anti-foreign Boxer uprisings and internal conflicts. This social and political unrest brought about the end of the Qing dynasty and the institution of imperial China in 1911; just like with India, the development of Chinese share in world manufacturing was at 33.0% in 1750, and this remarkable share was reduced to 3.6% in 1913. How did this happen?

The mechanisms were similar to what happened in India as far as the general circumstances were concerned, such as the growing productivity gap between Europe and China thanks to the Industrial Revolution; not even in the later 19th century there was no significant structural change in China, remaining a rural society. A sense of loss pervaded Chinese society at the end of the Qing dynasty and a refusal of Western influence, and this translated in a return to the desire of reaffirming Confucian principles and in an opposition to the imitation of Western techniques. The conservative forces prevailed in China, and this, similarly to India, did not accelerate the industrial recovery of China as one may have expected in the second half of the 19th century, whereas this was the case in Japan.

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Part 5:

The effects of Western influence on Japan

Japan was an Empire where the main executive power was not assumed by the Emperor, but rather by the Shogun (the highest military leader), whose authority was so strong that its office became hereditary. After the first opening of Japan, however, dissatisfaction with the Shogunate’s politics bloomed among some elites, driven by nobles and the pro-Emperor Samurai. These elites were confused as to how to react to Western influence: should they rebuke Western culture completely, or apply certain reforms to industrialise the nation and grow above Western powers? The Meiji reforms pertained to this party (the alliance that was created by the young Emperor Meiji) and led to the resignation of the Shogun and a civil war in which imperial forces claimed victory and reinstated full imperial rule on the basis of a Constitution like in Western countries; this was instrumental for these reform objectives. Delegates of Japanese scholars were sent out to Western countries to best understand their societies and ‘borrow’ the principles and ideas that would help Japan; this led to a process of modernisation, industrialisation and other successful changes because the cultural mindset and traditions of Japan were never erased, but they were rather instrumental to reinforce Japan on their own terms. A certain Japanese nationalism developed along with militaristic/imperial ambitions that gave way to spectacular victories, the most important of which were:

1. The First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)
2. Victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905)
3. Control of Taiwan, Korea and the southern half of Sakhalin

Lecture 16: Theories of Imperialism

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. “Progress or Exploitation?” Debates on Western Imperialism
2. Hobson: Earth hunger and the scramble for export markers
3. Lenin: Structural features of the highest stages of capitalism
4. Amadori Virgilij: Craving for a world-wide moral empire

Part 1:

“Progress or Exploitation?” Debates on Western Imperialism

It isn’t strange to ask ourselves what the reasons behind accelerated European expansion actually were and what the factors were to make this extension possible. If we are to answer this question, we should first consider the economic factors.

It was thanks to industrialisation that Europe and the United States of America quickly became the centre of manufacturing and economic growth. But in order to industrialise, a country needs raw materials, something which Europe was in dire need of after exhausting its reservoirs. So the continent’s nations expanded imports from other colonies in order to obtain raw materials such as dyes, cotton, vegetables, metal ores and later petroleum from overseas. Regarding industrialisation, we can also say that the invention of railroads assisted in transporting massive amounts of goods to and from the colonies, and that the telegraph greatly facilitated communication and the administrative control over the colonies.

However, it is also crucial that we analyse the military factor. The United States of America and Europe both continued to advance in military technology, which was also a side effect of industrial and technological development. Chemists created deadly explosives (and later, poisonous gases) that could be used in war; an example of ones of these chemists is Alfred Nobel, who invented Dynamite. With innovation in production technology, industrial countries were also able to manufacture imported firearms and greater amounts of munition. By the 1880s, the machine gun had become an effective battlefield weapon, which gave European armies an advantage over their opponents (like over the Zulu in Southern Africa during the Anglo-Zulu war in 1879).

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Part 2:

Hobson: Earth hunger and the scramble for export markers

In the 1900s, John Hobson proposed the first comprehensive, systematic and analytical study of imperialism, which was a phenomenon he had witnessed for a number of years during the scramble for Africa or the wars in the Philippines. He wondered what drove these industrialised, wealthy countries to wage war against poorer, ‘third-world’ countries and to dominate them.

According to Hobson, the main drive behind this development was the concentration of wealth in the richer, industrialised nations of the world. Industrial development had created a small class of industrialists and bankers who grew wealthier by the day; the number of enterprises shrunk, and so production facilities adapted to this new situation and produced a huge amount of consumer goods. Unfortunately, there weren’t enough wealthy people to actively consume these goods. This led to underconsumption (also known as overproduction), and thanks to the phenomenon, rich bankers and industrialists could enjoy their new wealth and selfishly keep the level of profits staggeringly high. The State was now under the control of the interests of this wealthy minority, which invested in rearmament and increasing the State’s power through waging wars against poorer countries in order to conquer new export markets.

Hobson was not a marxist revolutionary who would have insisted that there be a rebellion to end this state of affairs; he was a left-wing reformist liberal who was of the opinion that this wasn’t an inevitable situation and could be overcome by reformist solutions, which could be found through new State policies that were more worker-friendly. This way, the State could contribute to increasing income levels of the working classes and the poor, who constituted the majority of the population at that time.

Thus, the State had basically two ways that it could evade this situation:

1. Abandon the legislation that had been unfriendly to trade union powers for decades
2. Introduce a minimum wage law

Another way would be progressive taxation, which is a tax reform that would benefit the great majority of the population so that the rich would pay much higher taxes and attenuate the tax level of the poor and the working class. It would also be crucial to adopt welfare measures (such as unemployment benefits) so as to increase the income level. With a higher income level, the population would be able to reap the benefits of these overproduced consumer goods and balance the economy.

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Part 3:

Lenin: Structural features of the highest stages of capitalism

Vlamidir Lenin was the leader of the Russian socialist majority wing and wrote his most influential works regarding imperialism during World War I when he was in exile in Switzerland. His analysis started out as loosely based on Hobson’s work, and he wrote:

“The social liberal Hobson correctly takes into account two ‘historically concrete features of modern imperialism. First, the competition between several imperialist nations, and secondly, the predominance of the financier over the merchant.”

In the first point, Lenin says that Hobson was right in stating that the competition between imperialist powers was inevitable and would lead to war, as it had already done when Lenin was writing. The second point, however, concerns the economic analysis behind the political process; Lenin says that Hobson was also right in distinguishing the older form of capitalism from a new phenomenon he calls financed capitalism, which had been explained by Rudolf Hilferding (and shared by Lenin) within the marxist theory; Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun and in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed. Banks and industrial cartels had merged into homogeneous groups of financed capitalism, just as Hilferding had pointed out. But why is this an important point in the explanation of imperialism?

Firstly, these monopolistic enterprises stemming from the merging of big banks and industries take on a dimension that leads to the over-accumulation of capital. This means that a certain level of capital accumulation stays in the single bank or industrial enterprise and within this monopolistic form as a whole, which makes it impossible to remunerate the investment of a reasonable profit trade on the domestic market. As a consequence, they have to export capital to countries with less developed economies in order to regenerate the extra profits that the whole market is not able to anymore. This is different if compared with Hobson, who had concentrated on the production of goods and the necessity to find export markets for these goods. Lenin argued that the main interest in question is not the export of commodities, but rather to place direct investment in less developed countries.

Secondly, Lenin writes:

“The prevailing types of enterprises were no longer those freely competing inside the country and through contact between countries, but within monopoly alliances of entrepreneurs and trusts.”

This new age of monopolistic capitalism makes the apparatus of financial capitalism so powerful that it controls the State, its rule, its laws and public spending on the domestic market, reinforcing once again the oligopolistic position of big enterprises.

Lenin’s third point is that the State, as an expression of financial capitalist interest, must also intervene abroad to safeguard the monopolies’ possibilities of profit-making; this explains the aggressive imperialist foreign policies and the military effort to establish direct colonial control over Africa, Indo-China, etc.. It may be interesting to see how Lenin describes the tendencies of what we today would call globalisation.

In his book published in 1902, Hobson also remarked on the endeavour of the well-meaning philanthropist, which we may consider the equivalent to the relief and assistance organisations of our time. These epically motivated reformists and missionaries devotedly followed the world of even the most ferocious imperialists in order to do well in their jobs. These philanthropists, according to Hobson:

“Believe in that religion and utilise it for their ends.”

According to Hobson, the ingeniousness of these people has become an instrument that makes the apparatus of imperial power work smoothly.

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Part 4:

Amadori Virgilij: Craving for a world-wide moral empire

However, for the Italian sociologist Giovanni Amadori Virgilij (who published “Il sentiments imperialista” four years after Hobson), the craving for goodness is not just a fake pretext, but the very core of imperialism:

“Along the general lineation of imperialist sentiment lies this altruistic concept, which is one of the main factors of moral confidence and faith in the destiny of this empire.”

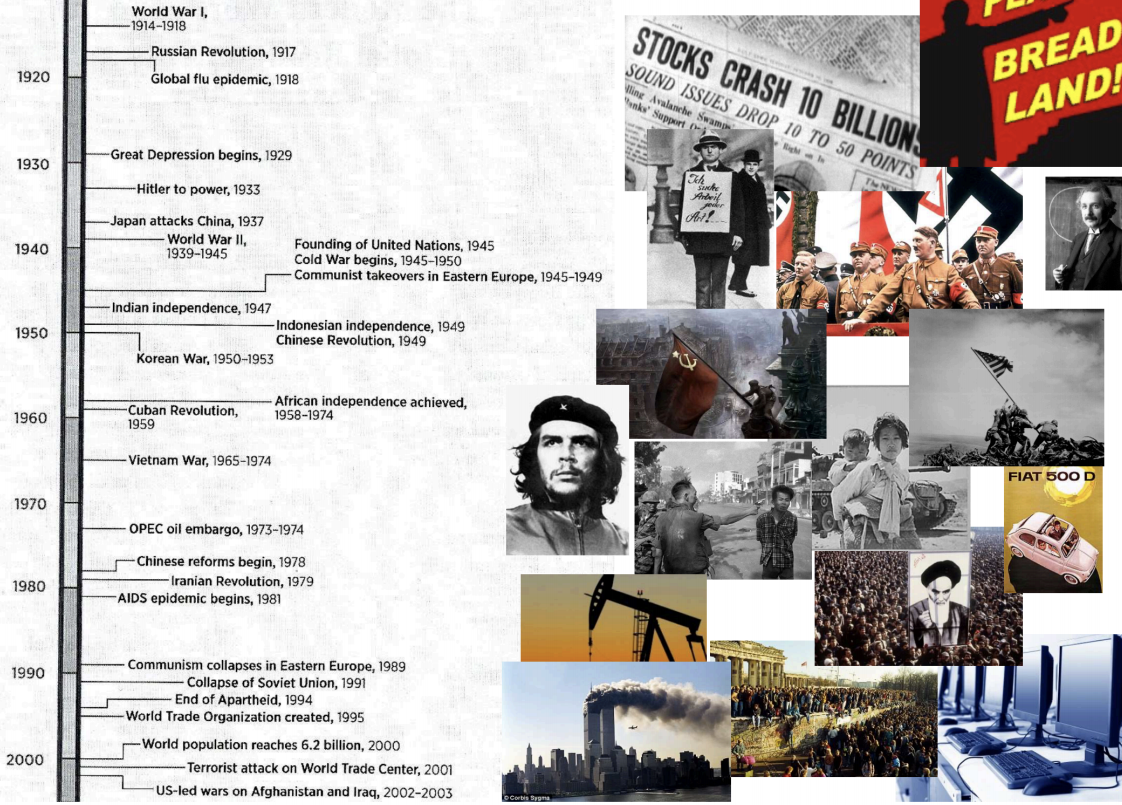
At the core of imperialism lies the ideology and imperialist sentiment, which is why one should criticise ‘the absolute inadequacy of all definitions that explain the phenomenon as a result of political and economic tendencies’. Entities are good intentions in itself, and that, for Amadori, is the core problem of imperialism. The economic definition of imperialism is not wrong, but it fails to explain that it can unfold only thanks to a belief system and a sentiment that are both deeply entrenched in the psyche of popular mass sentiment. According to Amadori, imperialists believe to act in the name and interest of civilisation — that is, in the name of history. Imperialism is a general feeling of the people and the collective concept of domination.

Lecture 17: World Timeline (1914-2003)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

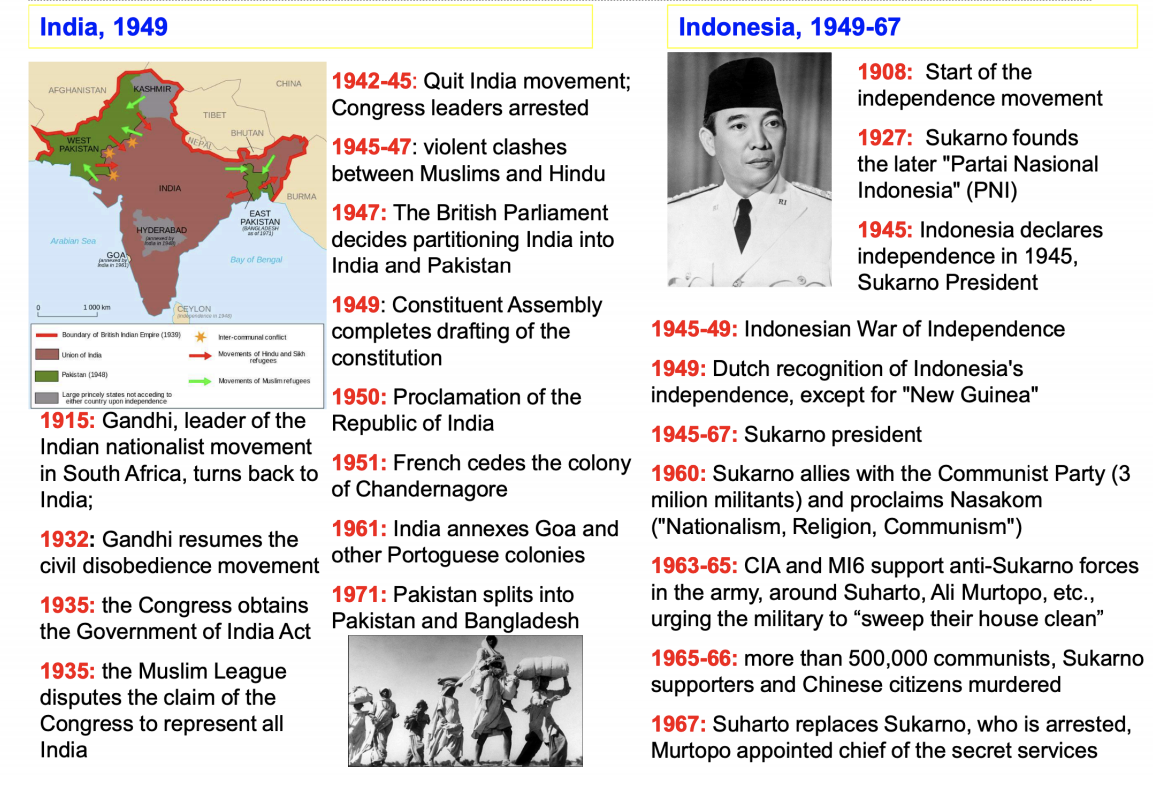
1. On the timeline: major events, 1914-2003
2. On the timeline: Independence of India, Indonesia and African countries, 1947-1989
3. On the timeline: the Vietnam war, 1965-1974
4. On the timeline: the Iranian Revolution of 1979

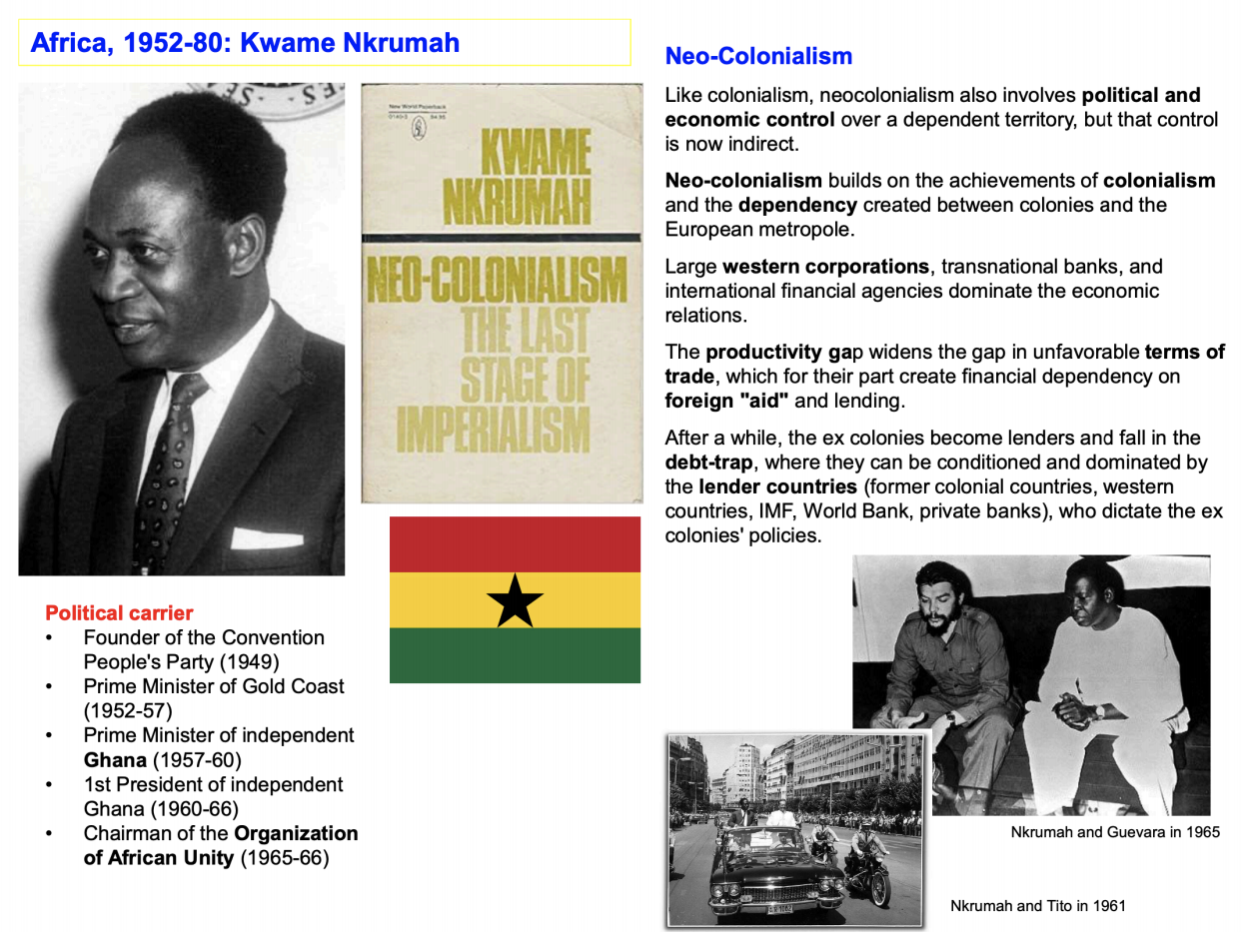
Part 1:

On the timeline: major events, 1914-2003

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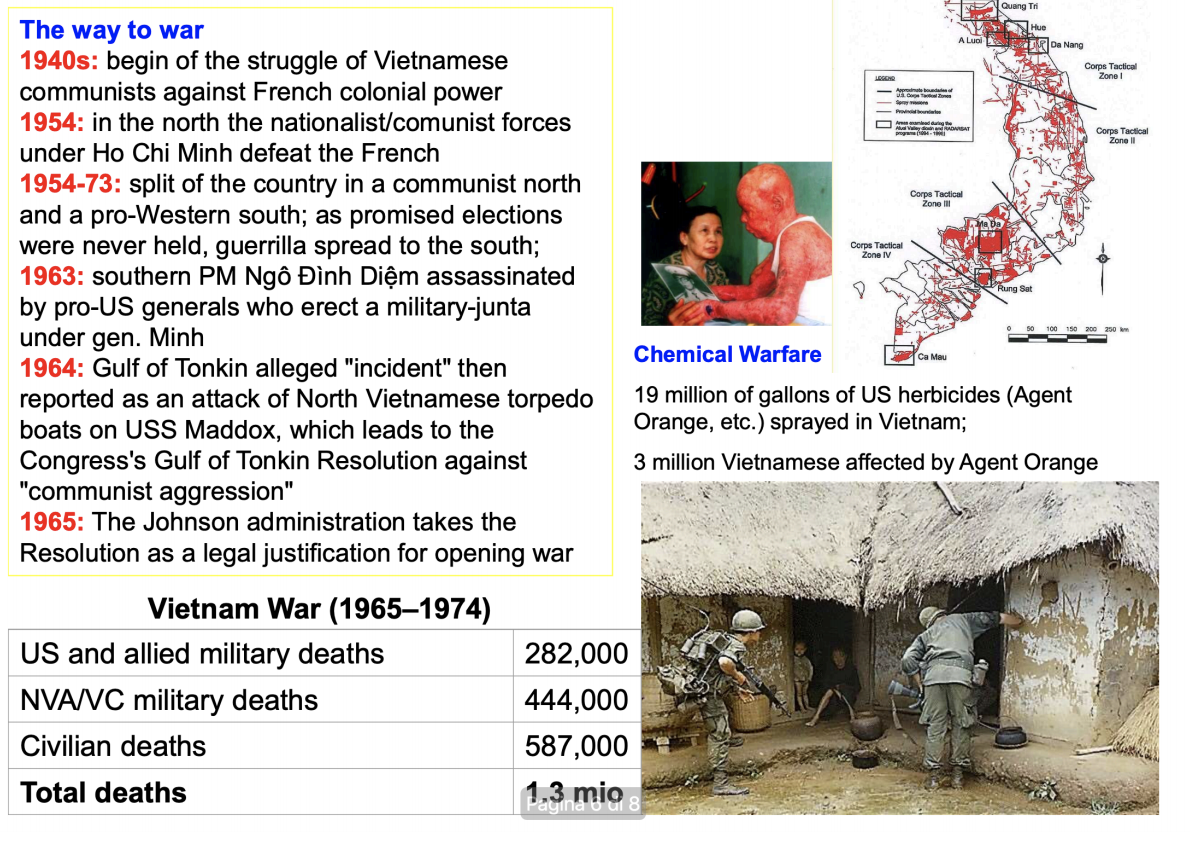
Part 2:

On the timeline: Independence of India, Indonesia and African countries, 1947-1989



Part 3:

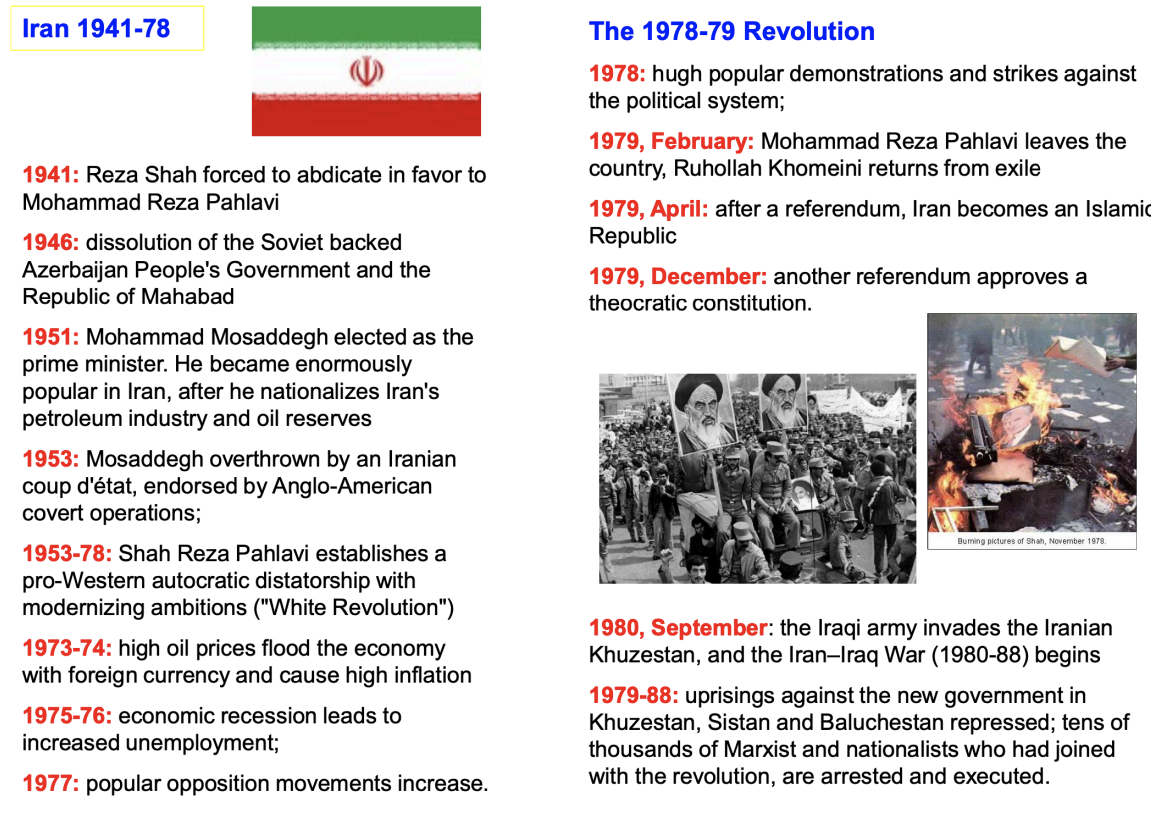
On the timeline: the Vietnam war, 1965-1974



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Part 4:

On the timeline: the Iranian Revolution of 1979



During World War II, Iran was assigned an important strategic role by Churchill and Stalin, who were allies, and their Anglo-Iranian company took great interest in the country. After the anglo-soviet agreements in 1941, Reza Shah was forced to abdicate in favour of Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. After the war, soviet influence strengthened the position of the communist party.

Lecture 18: World War One

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. A gradual escalation of ‘regional’ conflicts among great powers
2. The ‘Entente’ and the ‘Central Powers’
3. Technology, mechanisation, industry, labour force mobilisation
4. A new global power rises, while empires break down

Part 1:

A gradual escalation of ‘regional’ conflicts among great powers

In 2014, historian Christopher Black published ‘The Sleepwalkers’ about how Europe went to war in 1914; according to the book, none of the great powers actually wanted to end the war, and that, like sleepwalkers, the European governments woke up in the reality of a terrible war that no one had actually wanted. The fact is that, for example, the Socialist International had predicted a clash between imperialist powers as a structural necessity for capitalist development. Liberal and conservative governments had plenty of opportunities to confute this marxist ‘nonsense’, which, however, they didn’t do.

The World War had many roots: one was the breaking up of the alliance between Russia and Austria during the Crimean War sixty years earlier. This had translated into competition between these two nations in the Balkans where they fought for dominance and often had conflicts of interest, especially when an Austria-friendly king was substituted by a Russia-friendly one.

Formal Austrian annexation of the Bosnian protectorate in 1908 sharpened the tensions between Serbia and Austria; but this was just one part of the story. Another was the series of social and political mutinies in the Ottoman Empire, which led to the Young Turk Revolution in 1908 and a break-away tendency in the Middle East. Great powers in neighbouring countries observed the ‘ill man on the Bosphoros’ like vultures in the sky, hoping to take the part of the dying Empire’s body that they desired.

In 1897, Greece and Turkey fought over Crete. In 1911, Italy waged colonial wars against Libya, Greece and the Ottoman Empire. The further weakening of the Ottoman Empire encouraged Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Greece to go into battle in the First Balkan War in 1912, and the Ottoman Empire was expunged from many European territories.

One year later, during the Second Balkan War (1913), Serbia and Greece confronted Bulgaria, which wanted to annex Macedonia, and a year later, Bulgaria would ally itself with Austria, Germany and the Turkish arch enemy against Serbia in the occupation and violence against the civilian population of which Bulgarian troops would become infamous for.

As we said before, Italy started its colonial adventure because, like Germany, it felt that it deserved the colonial greatness that every other nation possessed through the ‘humanitarian’ mission of civilising its colonies. In North Africa, Italian and French interests had clashed lots of times; thousands of Italians had settled in Tunis, for example, but France had conquered it.

The division of spheres of interests foresaw that Italy should look after Tripoli and Cyrenaica, and once French ambitions were nearly satisfied in Morocco, someone must have decided in Rome that it was high time to take action before it was too late. Morocco had been a Sultanate that had successfully stayed independent in the early modern period (notwithstanding Spain and Portugal’s attacks), but at the beginning of the 20th century, France tried to upgrade its role as a colonial world power. Going against the Maastricht convention of 1880, it decided to conquer Morocco, but France’s plan was foiled by Germany, who was allied with the Moroccan Sultanate. In 1911, France declared direction of a Moroccan protectorate, and Germany opposed and sailed its boats off the Moroccan coast. But then Berlin green lighted French conquest of Morocco if it would cede a piece of French Congo and grant free access to the Moroccan market. The typical Germany steadfastness was reaffirmed in this way: business was business. The Moroccan resistance was broken with great brutality.

The most important fault line, however, remains the industrial rise of Germany and its rivalry with Britain. Germany built up a huge modern navy with the openly declared purpose of challenging the maritime superpower of the time, Great Britain, which took this boasting quite seriously. The Reich had a strength also as a continental power, one that Britain lacked in Europe; Britain felt the threat of Germany building a Berlin-Baghdad railway to the Mesopotamian oil fields (which it considered to be its very own private property), the British saw little point in easing the tensions.

If these were ‘sleepwalkers’, then the phrase ‘a sleeper is not a sinner’ must be revised: no one was innocent. In early 1914, the game was ripe to turn into war at any moment.

The trigger, however, was Gavrilo Princip and the death of Archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28th, 1914 in Sarajevo. It was the perfect pretext. Still, it wouldn’t have been an adequate excuse had the previous tensions not been apparent to Europe before, as the killing of archdukes and important figures was quite widespread at the time: in 1898, Empress Elizabeth of Austria was shot, and so was, in 1900, Umberto I of Italy, and so on. The Empress of Austria had been murdered by an Italian, but still Austria hadn’t declared war on Italy. Gavrilo Princip wasn’t even a Serbian subject, but rather a subject to Vienna itself. There could have been diplomatic solutions if there had been a will.

Austria gave Serbia one month to declare itself responsible; it agreed on everything settled by Austria but one detail, and so Austria declared war on Serbia. Germany declared war on Russia and France and violated the neutrality of Belgium in order to provoke France so that Great Britain had a good reason to intervene. In the fall of 1914, the major European powers found themselves in the midst of a great war.

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Part 2:

The ‘Entente’ and the ‘Central Powers’

Standing between the lines that formed in World War One were the Central Powers: Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. Their adversaries were the Entente Powers, formed by Great Britain, France, Russia, Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Ireland, Romania, the US, China, Japan and others.

In East Asia, the battles revolved around German colonies: one of them was on the Chinese mainland. On the Western front, Germany invaded France through Belgium and conducted massacres against its population, including (but not limited to) civilians, priests and officials who tried to resist the occupation of the country. It was the violation of Belgium’s neutrality, however, that allowed England to enter the war.

On the Balkan front, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Bulgaria tried to occupy Serbia and parts of Greece by committing acts of violence against the civilian population. On the western front, on the other hand, the war was soon blocked in the trenches. Officials sent soldiers out of the trenches to die en masse so that they could conquer 200 metres of land, only to be thrown back into battle the next day as inane sacrifices. The war itself cost the lives of 400,000 dead soldiers during the first four months of battle in the west between France and Germany. French and German soldiers had gone into war with patriotic enthusiasm, but they soon became aware of the fact that they were mere tools in the hands of high commanders who had no intention of getting their own hands dirty.

In 1915, when signs of fraternisation between French and German soldiers became apparent, the headquarters of both sides repressed this phenomenon with harsh punishments and increased the exposure of soldiers to hate propaganda.

Italy remained neutral for a year and some liberal forces (as well as the Church) felt it was wiser to maintain its good relationship with Austria, but nationalist and democratic forces pushed the nation to join the Entente in order to complete the ‘Risorgimento’ and regain the southern part of Tyrol, an area of Trieste and Dalmatia. When the Entente powers made a deal with Italy on its own terms, the country entered the war. Soon, the southern front was blocked in the trenches, just like the west.

In the east, Austrian and German troops managed to conquer great part of what today is known as Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania and other Baltic countries. In 1917, the conflict entered Finland in the form of a civil war.

In Russia, the situation was very diverse. The partial collapse of Russian defence and economic problems laid the groundworks for the 1917 Revolution. The Bolsheviks came into power in the fall of 1917, right after the centrist revolutionaries’ government refused to stop the war, which the Russian population didn’t see the point of continuing. It was then that the Bolshevist government established the Brest-Litovsk armistice with Germany and Austria.

USA had delivered a large amount of armaments and munition to France and Great Britain during every war. When it entered the war in 1917, the immobile fronts in the south-west began to move.

In 1918, the Central Powers were defeated, and the nations that had been involved slowly came to terms with the human costs of the war: around 8 million soldiers had been killed, as well as a large number of civilians. Countries like Germany and Russia would suffer greater losses in World War II, but for many others, this war would remain as the Great War in everyone’s memory.

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Part 3:

Technology, mechanisation, industry, labour force mobilisation

Industrial production had come to a stall during the years characterised by colonial warfare, but in the period right before the start of World War I, new means of transport, pieces of artillery, torpedoes, submarines, air force bombardment, chemical weapons, tanks, automobiles and rifles were introduced in the late 1800s; these were decisive factors in many historical events that would occur later on (such was the strategic importance of railways in Russia’s victories over France). Industry had a great impact on the industry and rearmament, but many of the modern armaments that were first produced in the 1890s only came into full use during World War I.

But this new technology also had unprecedented social consequences:

1. The lack of men in industrial production led to them becoming soldiers and perishing in the war
2. A new feeling of ‘belonging’ was born, leading to a novel nationalisation of the masses
3. People became aware that war was only a matter of political interest
4. The bourgeoisie in Russia constituted the first example of ‘class enemy’, but they wouldn’t be the last
5. Politicisation of the masses
6. For the first time in history, women had a role in industrial production

The deaths of soldiers during World War I was literally a part of industrial mass killings in a war that was fought on an industrial scale; huge masses of people and soldiers were needed, just like artillery and rearmaments. Soldiers and peasants of humble origins came into contact with novel technologies they had never seen before as well as other soldiers from regions they hadn’t even known existed. The war created a feeling of common belonging and boosted the nationalisation of the masses as well as the politicisation of soldiers: they realised that it was not in the common people’s interest to be at war with each other when they saw that common soldiers were being treated as slaved and sent to a more or less certain death instead of the officials and top commanders that ordered them to. This realisation was what caused the birth of the revolution against the bourgeoisie in Russia, the November Revolution in Germany and the civil war in Finland.

With the men at the front, fields and factories were filled by women to replace the husbands, brothers and fathers that had worked there prior to the war. After this development, many countries introduced female suffrage at the end of World War I.

Furthermore, World War I was a turning point also because it inaugurated a new area of warfare: it was perhaps the last war in which more soldiers died than civilians. It was in modern wars that civilians were targeted by mass bombings, terrorising, deportations, exterminations, massacres and mass rapes. Today, being a member of the armed forces is (statistically) the most secure position.

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Part 4:

A new global power rises, while empires break down

The USA was the most important power by the end of the 19th century; however, in the realm of international commerce, finance and monetary policies, this fact was not fully perceived and visible. The State were more inward-looking and depended less on foreign trade. Its banking system was more vulnerable to cycles, and the Federal Reserve Fund was only created after 1914. Since a central bank didn’t exist, the dollar’s full economic strength was not visible to non-experts on international markets. All this changed in World War I, when American became a world power and gave birth to the ‘American century’.

Great European powers (such as Great Britain and France) were actually in huge war debt to American banks. It was also the slow decline of European imperialism that further demonstrates America’s rising dominance on the market as well as the mechanism of operations imposed on the war’s losers (Germany in particular).

The geopolitical consequences of the war, however, were equally immense. The end of the Tsarist, Hapsburg and Ottoman Empire created a new landscape in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Middle East. New nation states were created and established: Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Albania, Austria and Hungary. Italy, on the other hand, obtained Trento and Bolzano, but not Trieste and Fiume, and thus the results of the war did not satisfy the population’s nationalist appetite. The same occurred in Romania, Hungary and Germany, who felt that they had been treated unjustly; they developed a craving for revenge, and the stage seemed to be set for another war.

The extremely important consequences of the war were also experienced in the Middle East. The former Ottoman Empire’s provinces were divided according to the borders that the British and the French representatives had made in 1960 according to both parties’ imperial interests. After the war, England and France would erect protectorates in these colonies except in Mesopotamia, which became an formally independent nation state (then substantially independent after World War II). In 1970, the British foreign secretary Delfoure stated that Britain would support the establishment of a national home for jewish people in Palestine.

Lecture 19: The Economic Crisis of 1929 and the right-wing dictatorships of the interwar period

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. The Peace Treaties and the Debt Cycle
2. The financial crisis of 1929
3. The Great Depression of the 1930s
4. Authoritarian and dictatorial regimes in the 1920s and 1930s

Part 1:

The Peace Treaties and the Debt Cycle

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Part 2:

The financial crisis of 1929

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Part 3:

The Great Depression of the 1930s

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Part 4:

Authoritarian and dictatorial regimes in the 1920s and 1930s

Lecture 20: World War II and the Shoah

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. World War II: origins, alliances, overview
2. Chronology and major turning points, 1939-1945
3. Germany’s anti-Jewish extermination policy, 1943-1944
4. The results of the war

Part 1:

World War II: origins, alliances, overview

World War II lasted from September 1st, 1939, to September 2nd, 1945; its main battlefields were located in Europe, the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, Southeast and Southern Asia, China, the Middle East, North Africa and the Mediterranean. Its carnage was unprecedented. Over 60 million soldiers and civilians lost their lives, of which more than one third were Soviet citizens. On average, 20,000 people were killed every day, and this made it the most destructive war in human history; 9 million Germans, 4 million Chinese and 3 million Japanese lost their lives. The war developed in steps, but from 1942 onwards, the primary combatants were the Axis powers (Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan; they signed agreements concerning mutual assistance, but never made a comprehensive plan of action due to difficulty regarding communication, while the Allied powers did) and the Allied powers (Great Britain and its Commonwealth nations, the Soviet Union and the United States).

There is one other important date besides September 1st, 1939 (when Germany invaded Poland and England and France declared war on Hitler’s Nazi state): July 7th, 1937, when the Chinese-Japanese war began. This war, when viewed separately from World War II, becomes an integral part of it and would come to a parallel end in 1945 with the liberation of China and the end of World War II. Imperial Japan sought to drive its industrial development ahead; after the victories over the Chinese and Russian Empires in the mid 1890s and its victories with the Entente in World War I, it was very confident in its own force and had to find more raw materials and workforce to keep itself at the same level of productivity. In order to do so, Japan had to work in competition with Western colonial and imperial powers in the Pacific. This is why it supported anti-colonial movements in Southern Asia and colonial conquest with the annexation of islands in the Chinese sea (plus the invasion of Manchuria). In July 1937, a full-scale war sparked between China and Japan.

In the meantime, Italy tried to put the Mar Nostrum policy into place and become the dominant Mediterranean power by basing its strategy on that of the Ancient Roman Empire; in North Africa and the Balkans, the politics of fascist Italy followed in the steps of late liberal Italy. A breaking point with Western powers was the invasion of Ethiopia in 1935/1936; up to that moment, the relationship between these countries and Italy had been quite good, but then Italy established a partnership with Nazi Germany and exited the League of Nations as a response to the sanctions imposed upon the country. Italy had also opened questions with Nazi Germany over South Tyrol, Austria and the Balkans, but these questions were more or less settled. They became allies in the Spanish civil war. In 1939, Italy occupied Albania, which was its launchpad in its failed 1940 attempt of conquering Greece; this unsuccessful occupation was the reason why Germany felt obliged to come to Italy’s assistance in occupying the Balkans (a front which Germany had not considered before).

In Germany, Adolf Hitler capitalised on the economic decline of the country and the deep resentment towards the League of Nations (due to the Treaty of Versailles) that boiled within its foundations. Hitler began establishing the airforce in 1935, which was a violation of the 1919 Treaty, then proceeded with organising the army in 1936. From the start, the Nazi movement had declared that Germany needed ‘living space’, which was almost a direct declaration of war against its Eastern neighbours, because the ‘living space’, according to the Nazis, was in Eastern Europe. In 1938, at the Munich Conference, Great Britain and France agreed to the division of Czechoslovakia (against the will of the country’s population). German-speaking areas would be annexed by Germany, while Polish-speaking areas would be annexed by Poland, and that contributed to keeping peace in Europe (that was their theory). But this only stimulated Germany’s appetite for revenge. In 1938, Austria’s pro-fascist government was replaced by a pro-Nazi government with the consent of the majority of Austrians.

Stalin’s Soviet Union had argued against the Munich Agreements and had taken the Czechoslovakian government’s side in the decision of remaining a single nation; it had also been the only country to deliver official assistance to the Republican government of Spain, and besides this, the USSR was the main power that opposed the moves of the Italian-German fascist and nazi Axis in Europe. It had also repeatedly tried to create an anti-Hitler union with Britain and France, but these attempts had always been rejected, as Poland met them with a firm opposition (because it was against any sort of agreement with the USSR).

In 1939, the USSR was the only country that so far had not signed any agreement with Nazi Germany so far. It was largely isolated, and it was for that reason that in August 1949 that Soviet foreign minister signed a non-aggression pact with German foreign minister Ribbentrop called the Molotov Plan (a system originally created in 1947 in order to provide aid to rebuild the countries in Eastern Europe that were politically and economically aligned to the Soviet Union; it was an agreement made after the USSR refused to participate in President Truman’s Marshall Plan, which was a pledge of economic assistance for all European countries willing to participate). There was also a secret part of the agreement: de facto, the USSR would reassume the position of the Tsarist Empire in its later years regarding its relations with Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus and so on. But it is clear that this agreement was just a way for Germany to avoid Russia interfering in its plans. The 1st of September, 1939, the German invasion of Poland began; his was five years after the Polish government had sought good relations with the country with treaties and agreements that dated back to 1935.

The ‘sleepwalking’ theory in World War I was not present in World War II, as it was apparent that the aggressive expansionist drive between the Axis’ foreign policy was what ultimately caused the greatest was in human history. Still, we can speak of the law of ‘unintended consequences’ in both wars; the USA’s entrance in the war was actually triggered by the Axis’ own moves, and so on. Logistics, economic and military potential became a bias on the battlefield with regard to quality of armaments, as the Axis’ lack of raw materials near the end of the war made it quite clear that it could never win the war, and the main reason why Germany’s allies had joined the Axis was because the nation’s Blitzkrieg’s had assured it a seemingly infinite source of raw materials. Another reason why the Axis lost was because it had made the grave mistake of attacking Russia, a decision which resulted in the same devastating consequences as it had for Napoleon.

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Part 2:

Chronology and major turning points, 1939-1945

After the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939, Britain and France declared war on Germany. But in 1940, the German Blitzkrieg overwhelmed Belgium, Holland and France; in the meantime, Britain was under siege of heavy German bombings. Churchill decided to resist at any cost, although lots of Brits tried to negotiate with Germans. At the end, Germany’s attempt to invade Great Britain failed, foiling Hitler’s plans.

In 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union. Allied troops confronted Italian and German troops in North Africa. At the end of 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbour, and this was the moment in which the US (sovereign of Pearl Harbour) entered the war.

Three major turning points occurred in 1942: the German-Italian defeat in El Alamein and the German surrender at Stalingrad. This year was also marked by the various sea battles (Battle of the Coral Sea, Battle of the Java Sea, etc.) between Japan and the US.

Starting from 1943, the Axis powers were on the retreat. When the Allied troops invaded lands pertaining to Italy (Sicily and Southern Italy), the nation surrendered. Germany occupied Northern Italy and installed a ‘puppet regime’ under Mussolini. At the same time, British and Indian forces defeated Japan in Southern Asia. The Red Army was marching Westward.

In 1944, while the Red Army pushed towards the West, Western forces landed in Normandy and liberated Paris. Nazi Germany was cornered from all sides.

In 1945, the Red Army reached Poland and started entering Germany from the East while Allied troops started conquering Western Germany. On April 30th, Hitler committed suicide and Germany surrendered.

In Asia, the war continued even though Japan was practically defeated, but the nation resisted occupation. The USSR offered the face that burden, but the US (now under President Truman) launched atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan surrendered on August 14th, and World War II came to a definite end.

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Part 3:

Germany’s anti-Jewish extermination policy, 1943-1944

The genocide perpetrated against the Jewish population was a key feature of World War II. After the Nazis came to power, there was a continuous escalation of antisemitism and discrimination within Germany. With the start of the war, these politics and hate crimes soon extended to Europe under German influence, but especially to Eastern Europe, home to millions of jews. Pogroms took place in Poland and the Balkans, and special mobile killing squads of SS soldiers began to mass-murder the jewish population in the Soviet Union after the invasion of there USSR. From summer to the end of 1941, German forces murdered around 1,400,000 people (most of them being jews). The jewish population was deported from various European countries and concentrated in ghettos in Eastern European countries.

As the situation became militarily difficult, Nazi and SS chiefs met in Wannsee (close to Berlin) to decide what to do to these European jews in the ghettos. Several proposals were put forth, and at the end, the ‘Final Solution of the Jewish Question’ (as the Nazis called it) prescribed the systematic genocide of the jewish population through death camps and work camps, such as Auschwitz, Treblinka, Belzec, Chełmno, Majdanek and Sobibor; more than 4,200,000 jews died in these camps, while about 5,700,000 jews were killed during the course of the Final Solution.

This is now called the Shoah/Holocaust, meaning ‘destruction’. It is also crucial to remember that, even though the majority of deaths by genocide were jewish, that other minorities were subjected to the same treatment: Soviet prisoners of war, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, ethnic Poles, Ukrainians and Belorussians, Roma, the disabled and political opponents.

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Part 4:

The results of the war

Despite winning the war, Britain lost much of its Empire. The developments in the colonies were already pointing at this final outcome, and Britain was ready to accept that; however, it still saw itself as a main world power, a position defended until the 1950s. The structurally weakened British Empire began to scramble. The War led to the revival of US economy, and half of the industrial world economy was American from that moment on. The USSR had taken the brunt of the war and had been weakened by the consequences of the war (differently from the US), but it emerged as a major winner. The US and the USSR rose to become the world’s two superpowers and entered the Cold War, which dominated world politics until 1990. Europe was divided between US and USSR alliances along the lines of the 1945 Yalta agreement between Stalin and the West. The end of the Soviet Union later on completely changed European geopolitics.

Lecture 21: The affirmation of Communism and the USA-USSR confrontation

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. The Russian Revolution of 1917 and the Chinese Revolution of 1949
2. Industrialisation and repression under Communist regimes
3. Cold War in an ‘American century’
4. Cultural empire and anti-Americanism

Part 1:

The Russian Revolution of 1917 and the Chinese Revolution of 1949

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Part 2:

Industrialisation and repression under Communist regimes

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Part 3:

Cold War in an ‘American century’

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Part 4:

Cultural empire and anti-Americanism

Lecture 22: “Third World”, political Islam, decline of Soviet communism

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. The Nonalignment movement
2. The idea of a “Third War”
3. The rise of political Islam
4. The Communist collapse

Part 1:

The Nonalignment movement

After World War II, the return of the colonial status quo was impossible. The weakening of European powers, the emergence of Cold War bipolarity and the beginning of internationalisation within the framework of the United Nations Charter would put a movement of emancipation into motion, which would have been favoured by a number of cumulative factors and converging forces.

The group of newly independent countries and those still struggling to obtain it became an arena for the competing models of internationalisation. However, many of these countries did not accept those competing visions passively, but tried to promote their own national agendas. The new nations were undertaking a path to create their own network through their association on the international stage. The first of these struggles was aimed at avoiding colonies from ending up under colonial control of the US or the USSR.

A significant demonstration of these nations’ desire for autonomy and their capacity of self-organisation was represented by the Bandung conference of 1955, held in Indonesia. A conference had already been held in Colombo (Ceylon) in 1954, and on that occasion, India, Pakistan, Burma (today, Myanmar), Indonesia and Ceylon showed their position against colonialism and the nuclear arms race and were instead in favour of peace and détente. The following year in April in Bandung (Indonesia), 29 states (for the most part, neutral) opposed to both colonialism and neocolonialism not only by European powers, but also by the US and the USSR. Of the 29 nations that were represented in the conference, six were from Africa: Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Libya and Sudan. The leading contributors of the Bandung conference were Burma, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Bandung had certainly had great importance, but it was not yet the founding moment of the Nonalignment movement.

Some countries accused China of leaning on the USSR’s support and displaying expansionistic behaviour in Asia; for the most part, these countries condemned pactomania, that is, the pressure to join one pact or another to decide on nuclear disarmament. In the end of the conference, a declaration of the Ten Principles of Bandung were issued, which focused on themes such as economic and cultural cooperation, human rights, national self-determination and International peace.

The Nonalignment movement was only born in 1961, and the term referred to the participants of the NAM conference of that same year, held in Belgrade, Yugoslavia; the objectives of the Nonalignment movement remained the lessening of military tensions and the proposal of alternatives to escape the blackmail of compromises imposed by the Cold War’s protagonists. The events occurring in the background of this conference were French nuclear tests in the Sahara, the unsuccessful invasion of Cuba by the US, the construction of the Berlin Wall and the flickering tension between China and USSR/India. Differently form Bandung, this conference saw the presence of Cuba, by which the alliance extended to Latin America (previously too dependent on Western powers). The hosting country was Yugoslavia, which would remain the only European member of the Nonalignment movement; this would draw political prestige from the opposition against the Western and Eastern bloc.

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Part 2:

The idea of a “Third World”

The idea of a Third World was as powerful as a fact, articulated by politicians, researchers, intellectuals and journalists in developing countries. It was individuals like Che Guevara (Latin America), Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Frantz Fanon (Algiers) and Gamal ‘Abd al-Naser (Egypt), however, that brought this concept to life and employed it in their beliefs and philosophy. Their idea of Third World (also known as ‘developing countries’, ‘global South’ or ‘poor countries’ by First World nations) was a search of the historical significance of their countries and movements in a world focused on the conflicts between the capitalist West and the communist East. They sought to distill a common meaning from the variety of struggles that had recently been overcome: spokesmen for the Third World distinctly opposed the concept that developed countries needed to ‘civilise’ them or help them develop. It wasn’t an innate element, but rather colonial rule that had caused the backwardness and poverty present in these nations, and this divided the world into imperialists and nations who were exploited by them and were known as the progressive, revolutionary South.

In the UN, countries pressed for more rapid decolonisation so that they could all focus on any issue other than the Cold War (which dominated the majority of official conversations). A growing number of independent nations made the UN swell into an organisation dominated by African and Asian states, which gave the Third World countries an ample stage to develop their ideas. In recent years, however, we can see that many of these countries are blackmailed by stronger ones to behave in a certain way to favour a specific political agenda. But in the 1960’s and 70’s, the Third World managed to become a court of world opinion that fought for what the majority of the world’s countries strived for (however, major capitalists countries such as the Soviet Union and China still held most of the power).

The Nonalignment movement remained half-completed due to the various conflicts and also because of the internals struggles between political and social models that tended to favour capitalistic models rather than Third World ones. Some countries were under suspicion of leaning towards one or the other bloc; indeed, between 1960 and 1980, Indonesia and China moved from pro-Soviet to pro-American positions. On the other hand, this Third-World position expressed itself in many Arab countries which spoke of Arab socialism and leaned on the Soviet Union for economic and political cooperation (internally, however, they harboured anti-communist sentiments).

Generally, countries fought for decolonisation, but depended on military aid from the USSR, while countries with financial problems depended on Western aid. From an economic point of view, in the 1970’s, OPEC (which had been founded to aid Third-World countries that exported petroleum) had had great success by reaching a four-fold increase in oil prices so that wealth, financial resources and capital would flow from First World to Third World countries, but many of these capitals flew back to New York and other Third World countries had to pay higher energy bills, along with increasingly expensive raw materials; what followed was an ever-worsening debt problem that lasted from 1970 to 1995 caused by this radical interference in internal policies with market-oriented reforms. Still, after 1990, when some of these debt problems were settled through debt cancellations in the early 2000’s thanks to the International Monetary Fund, which saw that the Third World would go into detriment of prices weren’t attenuated. But there was another aspect: in Latin America and Southeast Asia, there was a growing wealth in manufacturing countries after 1990, leading to the increase in wealth within those countries thanks to the low cost of the labour force and the diminishing costs of transportation/information, which allowed these developments.

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Part 3:

The rise of political Islam

When talking about Political Islam, it is useless to refer to pre-modern times, as the religion itself and politics were inseparable at the time, like Christianity; thus, it is essential that we speak of a modern phenomenon. After the end of the Mughal and Ottoman Empire, Islam began giving rise to the idea that State and religion should be separate; this distinction created the concept of Political Islam. Still, to understand it, pre-modern history is important. The parabola of Islam and Islamic expansion (which lasted for around a thousand years) was an age of glory embedded in the timeline of human history — it was a centre for cultural, artistic and spiritual development. In the 1600’s, under the impact of colonialism and European expansion, Islam was marginalised and crushed under the weight of these phenomena. In the 20th century, Islam was further marginalised with the creation of Israel to the detriment of the Palestinian population.

The political struggle of the Islamic community is necessary to heal all these wounds caused by history; the basic narrative of political Islam is eschatological as well. It tells us of a golden age, then a decay in history that can, must and will be healed in the future. Political movements of Islamic inspiration can be found in the Indian subcontinent in the second half of the 19th century and in the form of political parties (especially in India) since the 20th century. The Muslim Brotherhood, for example, is an important transitional Sunni Islamist organisation that was founded by Hassan al-Banna in Egypt in 1928; it would be influential in Syria, Jordan, Palestine and other areas.

After World War II, independence movements of secular nationalist character came to power in areas pertaining to the former Ottoman Empire, and military elites had a strong role in many Islamic countries, often representing the most important institution of the Republican state. One example of this is Gamal Abdel Nasser’s Arab Socialism in Egypt, as well as efforts of modernisation and secularisation of the nation (all the while rejecting Marxism and communism from outside forces). Since the 1980’s, secular and nationalist political orientation ended a period of crisis. Corrupt governments failed to meet the economic expectations of the citizens, who faced a growing sense of social inequality and the rapidly worsening phenomenon of youth unemployment, who had suffered from a lack of perspective. Political participation and critique were discouraged by oppression, and discontent regarding the expansion of Israel (with the help of the US) added to this general sense of frustration. Political Islam began to be listened to by the younger people thanks to the growing wealth of the oil monarchies in the Arab peninsula; the criticism of political Islam was directed against the lack of social equality and honest government.

The humiliation of muslim societies was attributed to a moral and religious decay. Western influence was also accused, because it promoted feminism and ‘immoral lifestyles’, as well as Communism because of its atheist worldview. Islam is divided among several sects/branches, and it is so politically as well. But what they all strived for was a division between religion and politics and the creation of institutions that conformed to the practises established by the Prophet Mohammed; in the social and private sphere, a religious and secular lifestyle should be substituted by one that conforms to Islam. This separation is innocuous in the eyes of Political Islam, as Islam’s prescriptions can regulate all aspects of human life. Today, Afghanistan, Mauritania, Pakistan and Iran are the references for countries with Islam within their Republican constitutions; there are kingdoms that build their legitimacy on that religion. Many other countries today accept the Shariah, while many parties of Political Islam hold the majority and the government. In some cases (such as in Egypt and Algeria), these were overthrown by a military coupe. The history of political Islam in the 20th century has been a success story.

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Part 4:

The Communist collapse

After 1979, the USA, under Reagan, stationed new types of cruise missiles in Europe and announced the militarisation of open space, triggering a new arm’s race, which turned out to be a heavy economic burden for the USSR. The USSR established pro-Soviet Afghan governments by intervening militarily in Afghanistan (1979-1989) while the USA sustained local Islamic resistance leaders as well as foreign fighters of the Arab world that came to the nation’s succour (like Osama Bin Laden); the arm’s race in the Afghan war exhausted the resources of the Soviet economy.

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev was nominated the general secretary of the Communist Party, which was the highest power position in the union. In 1986, he signed the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with the US, which partly ended the arm’s race, then introduced transparency policies (Glasnost) and economic restructuring policies (Peristroyka), but these reform measures only piled up on the Union’s economic hiccups. In 1986, the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl exploded, blasting a metaphoric crater in the environment and in the USSR’s credibility, as the information policy of the administration in the early phase of the accident was all but transparent. Food and clothing shortages, unbridled corruption and impoverishment in the years that followed all the way up to 1990 created a deep moral crisis that didn’t spare the elites.

In 1991, Gorbachev resigned and Boris Yeltsin took over. In the following year, 1991, the USSR was dissolved, and many Soviet republics gained independence. This process was also catalysed by what was happening in Poland; in 1978, a Polish bishop (Wojtyla) was elected Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, and in 1980, the Catholic union Solidarnosc was founded. In 1981(3, under general Jaruzelski, the authoritarian communist government of the Polish People's Republic drastically restricted everyday life by introducing martial law and a military junta in an attempt to throttle political opposition, in particular the Solidarity Movement (although martial law was lifted in 1983, many political prisoners were not released until a general amnesty in 1986). Under the impression of Soviet developments, in 1989, a round table between the Opposition forces and the Communist government negotiated re-elections, in which, in 1990, the leader of the Solidarity Movement, Lech Walesa, was elected president.

In most of the other European countries, the transition was non-violent; Communism had long lost its moral and ethical motivations among people in power, many who were surprisingly good at transforming into liberal/conservative/nationalist politicians (such as in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, GDR and Romania) who remained in some positions of power. Some used their leading position in the industry during the period of privatisation to steal wealth from social property and grow to become the elite in this post-Communist era. In Romania, however, the fall of the Union gave way to a kind of revolution and secret-service coup against Ceaucescu. From 1990 to 1991, former USS Republics obtained independence, such as Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine and Belorussia, while many more did the same in Yugoslavia between 1991 and 1992 (Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia; Yugoslavia only disbanded in 2000).

In China, after the fall of the USSR, foreign policy started favouring America, which sought to play out China against the USSR. In 1978, Deng Xiaoping (the leader of China) jumpstarted an economic reform process that foresaw liberalisation processes. In 1989, at the high of the Soviet crisis, students revolted and demanded political reforms similar to those in the USSR. During the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, protestors were massacred by the armed forces; still, most Chinese people were focused on working hard to improve their economic position, something that the Chinese system not only facilitated, but offered. Under Jiang Zemin, the Communist party would later on secure and cement its leading role for years to come. Mass consumerism spread, and the Chinese economy started to rebound from two hundred years of humiliation.

Lecture 23: Global changes: demographic, social, political and cultural changes

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. The growth of the world population
2. Progress and inequality
3. Nationalism and democracy in the global process
4. Cultural convergence an divergence

Part 1:

The growth of the world population

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Part 2:

Progress and inequality

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Part 3:

Nationalism and democracy in the global process

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Part 4:

Cultural convergence an divergence

Lecture 24: Two waves of economic globalisation?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Periodising globalisation
2. Industrialisation, capital market and financial flows
3. Trade, investment, migration and factor prices
4. Summing up similarities and differences

Part 1:

Periodising globalisation

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Part 2:

Industrialisation, capital market and financial flows

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Part 3:

Trade, investment, migration and factor prices

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Part 4:

Summing up similarities and differences