1. Module title  
Twentieth-century Europe
2. Module code  
HIST3620
4. Subject area  
History
5. Credit level  
4
7. Teaching institution  
Fordham/Heythorpe College London
8. Faculty  
History
9. Organiser contact details  
georgios.regkoukos@kcl.ac.uk

10. Educational aims of the module

This course invites students to approach a familiar period in world history from what will often be an unfamiliar perspective: that of overarching themes particular to the European continent, including such aspects as societal upheaval, gender, demographic composition and politico-economic evolutionary pathways of specific European regions/countries.

Between 1900 and 1999, Europe’s position as the world’s economic, technological and cultural powerhouse suffered a series of successive and crippling blows resulting from fundamental geopolitical shifts. During this period, the continent knew many of the extremes of modern capitalism: from remarkable affluence to hyperinflation and sovereign debt, from the need to import workforce to shattering unemployment, from the heights of Empire to the fragmentation of nationalism. From one end of the Old World to the other, governments old and new scrambled to address the complexities arising from the unprecedented rate of these developments, which struck them hard and fast. From the turmoil there arose a new order, more attuned to the needs of European society at large, but not before two catastrophic armed conflicts that forever changed the way we perceive History.

Those experiences have passed into a collective memory, a historical folklore that continues to shape socio-political developments and policy-making in Europe to this day. The module introduces students to the basic principles of causality and historiography, while considering the latter very much as a social science: the social, political and cultural influences on – and repercussions of – events in this period will remain the focus throughout.
11. Learning outcomes of the module (taking account of generic level descriptors)

By the end of this module, the students should be able to demonstrate intellectual, transferable, and practicable skills appropriate to a Level 4 module and in particular will be able to demonstrate a range of subject-specific skills:

i. An enhanced knowledge of the place and importance of major historical events taking place in Europe between 1900 and 1999.

ii. An understanding of the basic principles of historical science and historiography, in particular the reciprocal relationships between society, politics, and economics.

iii. The ability to formulated coherent written responses to the issues, themes, concepts and debates raised by the module.

iv. The ability to construct and interpret historic sequences or patterns in European history.

v. The ability to identify and review the main strands of argumentation (‘schools of thought’) in academic debate relating to European history.

vi. The ability to develop a set of assessment criteria to be used in a process of peer and self-assessment.

15. Contact time/directed study. Apart from field/unsupervised learning all the others are taught sessions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Seminar / tutorial</th>
<th>Field/unsupervised learning</th>
<th>Project work</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11x1-hour</td>
<td>13x2-hours</td>
<td>2x3-hours</td>
<td>1xpresentation per student</td>
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At its present form, the module does not include any elements relating to e-learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Number/amount</th>
<th>Duration/length</th>
<th>Pass Mark (40 for level 4; 50 for level 5 and 6; 50 for level 7)</th>
<th>Mandator mark/Qualifying mark</th>
<th>% of final grade of module</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessed coursework</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,500 word essays</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td>Class participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
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**Reassessment opportunity**

Students who fail to achieve a passing mark in the assessed coursework will be invited to resubmit their work within two weeks of the date they receive their feedback.

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### 18. Examples of key recommended text books

- **Tom Buchanan**, *Europe’s Troubled Peace: 1945 to the Present*, Chichester, 2012

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### 19. Useful websites

- Imperial War Museum Archival Collections online (1917 onwards) - [http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections](http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections)
- Jstor (institutional login) - [https://www.jstor.org/logon](https://www.jstor.org/logon)
- OpenAthens (institutional login) - [https://auth.athensams.net/?ath_dspid=ATHENS.MY](https://auth.athensams.net/?ath_dspid=ATHENS.MY)
- Various National Archives (materials in their respective languages) - [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/)
- Yale Law School Avalon Project (e.g. Treaty of Versailles) - [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/)
The module is taught every Wednesday from 1pm through 4pm, beginning on Wednesday August 31st and ending on Wednesday December 7th.

The individual sessions are arranged as follows:

1) **Introduction...**

   to the period and preparatory overview of key historical theories and theorists – overview of key textbooks – Q&A session on assessment, coursework, course structure, dealing with the sources.

   **Europe at the turn of the century: The Napoleonic Legacy**

   During the second half of this session we will establish a ‘knowledge base’ for all students, regardless of their familiarity with European history. A brief discussion on existing perceptions will be followed by the presentation of a narrative covering the most important events of the 19th century, from the Congress of Vienna to the Revolutions of 1848. Furthermore, we will discuss some key geographical and historiographical definitions, as well as our individuals aims and objectives for the course.

2) **WWI**

   WWI, The Great War, was deemed by George Kennan to have been ‘the seminal catastrophe’ of Europe’s ‘short twentieth century (Eric Hobsbawm). From a socio-demographic perspective alone, the figures are staggering: 8.5 million soldiers killed, a further 6 million maimed for life, while 10 million civilians also lost their lives (excluding the 1.5 million Armenians killed in Turkey). The War set in motion the century’s greatest period of societal upheaval; empires crumbled, borders were redrawn, and in Russia a new regime emerged that was to have a defining influence on world history.

   With the end of WWI we also witness the end of the first great era of globalisation and the beginning of Europe’s decline as the world’s politico-economic powerhouse. More than a century lager, we reflect upon the rich and expansive historiography on the subject, looking at the following key questions:

   - Why did the congress system break down?
   - What was the balance between long and short term factors in the July Crisis?
   - How were European populations mobilised culturally?
   - Why did the Entente win?
   - How did the memory of the Great War shape interwar culture and society in Europe?

3) **The Roaring 20s (or Science, Medicine and Technology)**
The interwar period saw the culmination of an era that saw unprecedented technological, scientific and cultural change. Accelerated urbanisation, the growth of transport and communications networks, new types of media, technologies and advances in medicine radically altered the way Europeans lived, worked, travelled and interacted. Spearheaded by the newly emergent ‘welfare states’ – these shifts brought about widespread euphoria and optimism in the West, whereas in the East a difficult balancing act was taking place upon the ruins of the Russian Empire.

We will be discussing ‘the roaring 20s’ in light of processes that begun at the turn of the century (if not even earlier), in order to better understand an aspect of Europe not normally covered in general history courses: the impact of technological, medical and scientific change. In so doing, we will be challenging the thought process that calls for it to be seen in terms of ‘progress’, i.e. advancement taking place in a relatively stable manner up until the outbreak of WWI, thereafter significantly accelerated. We will be discussing why historians are so uncomfortable with that view and whether even contemporaries regarded ‘progress’ as particularly apparent.

4) **Field trip A**

TBC

5) **WWII**

To the extent that the Second World War in Europe may be considered an ‘event’, it was by far the largest in terms of both geographical and demographic reach. With some 35 million people killed in Europe alone, there is no doubt that it has been the most catastrophic conflict in human history. It was a new type of war, bringing genocide, urban obliteration, violent partitions; to this day, we all still experience the demographic, geopolitical and ideological consequences of the Second World War simply by leading our lives. In contrast to the First World War, there is little controversy over ‘Why the Allies Won’ (Richard Overy): a resounding military victory reflected a profoundly favourable distribution of manpower and economic resources against the Axis Powers. Within the framework of a constantly evolving historiography, we will concentrate on the European aspects of the conflict, discussing the following key issues:

- To what extent can the Second World War be regarded as a continuation of the First.
- How and to what extent did the Home Front experience differ between East and West, North and South.
- What were the contributions of the respective belligerents to the outcome and whether we can pinpoint a ‘turning point’ in the war.
- The consequences of collaboration and resistance.
- The ways in which the memory of WWII continues to shape European life.

6) **Building ‘Europe’ Part I: East vs. West**
In Part I of this min-series dedicated to the ‘European construct’, we will be examining the driving forces behind European integration in immediate post-war era, while also looking back at some of the earliest and largely abortive ‘pan-European’ diplomatic and economic initiatives, including the infamous Nazi ‘New World Order’. While there can be little doubt that a rapprochement between erstwhile enemy nation-states could not have taken place before a time when shifts in the politico-economic paradigm (the rise of ‘capitalism with a human face’) and geopolitics coagulated into fulfilling the objective conditions where such a union would be made possible, it is interesting to examine some of the subjective conditions which allowed each member state, in turn, to join an ever-growing international community. We will therefore be discussing the early steps of European unification against the background of a continent divided into a solidly ‘Eastern’ and an equally solidly ‘Western’ bloc.

7) Building ‘Europe’ Part II: North vs. South

Part II of the series on European integration is dedicated to the causes of a rift appearing within the community in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Diverging economic models of development and the disappearance of ‘the opposing force’ brought European politicians face-to-face with crucial dilemmas. We will be exploring the long-range consequences of attempts to form an ever-closer union and the reasons behind its (initial) success, as well as the motives behind the decision to stipulate that one of the community’s aims is to pursue expansion, nominally in general, but in essence eastwards. Against the background of recent developments, this seminar will encompass elements from diplomatic history and international law in a free-flowing discussion over a historian’s perspective of the EU ‘then and now’.

8) Field trip B

TBC

9) France

Although political change in France after 1900 is arguably nowhere near as impactful as her 18th and 19th-century legacy, Europe today owes much to the III, IV and V Republics. From the instability and crises of the first, to the seeming ‘finality’ of the latter, French politics remain bitterly divided between groupings with fundamentally different visions for the country. A once great overseas empire reduced to a cultural one, then further reduced simply to ‘a great player’ within Europe proper, France has been characterised by great continuities and stability over the past century. Experiencing a much less dramatic spell of industrial development than neighbouring Britain, France has exhibited varied social attitudes – particularly with respect to gender – and tended to lag behind other European states in some respects, while leading the way in others. This session will consider the history of France in the light of this apparent disjuncture between ideological turmoil and relative social stability.

10) Germany
By far the most economically powerful European state today, Germany set the foundations of her success in the late nineteenth century, when she began to displace France as the dominant force on the continent. At the dawn of the 21st century, Germany remained crucial to the future of Europe. Over the period covered in this course, we examine Germany’s evolution from maverick to model state, discussing the many oscillations, detours and dead-ends it met with along the way. Undoubtedly bearing the brunt of the blame for both World Wars and having perpetrated the most lethal genocide in modern history, Germany’s modern political history – in its many and varied 20th-century manifestations as Reich, GDR, Bundesrepublik, etc. – is obviously characterised by dramatic regime changes and a ‘special path’. Yet beneath all of that, we can discern long-term trends and continuities, often quite comparable to those experienced by neighbouring states. For historians, Germany serves as a valuable reminder that historical change can happen at different paces and levels which are more often than not far beyond the control of even the most doggedly determined political regimes. During this session, we will be looking at the balance between these different tiers of historical change, and how they come together to formulate a critical reflection on the storied ‘peculiarity’ of German history.

11) **Russia (or The Birth and Death of the USSR)**

Seldom has there been a topic more replete with contradictions than the twentieth-century history of Russia. To this day, popular history publications mention the ‘Wild East’, into which they purportedly shine a bright light capable of penetrating the steppe mists and providing the reader with a fascinating ‘true’ overview of, in Ranke’s oft-quoted words, wie es eigentlich gewesen (‘how things truly were’). Our objective during this session will be to examine whether such a history is truly possible, and discuss if Russia is not indeed an ‘anti-Germany’ in the sense that its political history is replete with superficial continuity, whereas beneath the surface there is nigh-constant upheaval. To this end, we will approach Russia’s 20th-century history from the perspective of two episodes: the birth of the USSR and its death, by which the Cold War came to end. In the first place, the transformation of this state from an authoritarian empire to the world’s first socialist society, begs a series of important questions, without the answers to which it will be very difficult to understand Russian history in relation to modern European history as a whole:

- What sort of state is this? A multi-ethnic empire or a nation-state with colonial appendages?
- Why was it so difficult to govern?
- Was there a qualitative change with the formation of the Soviet Union after 1917?
- Does it make more sense to regard Russia as belonging to the European periphery or as a central player to key processes?

In the second place, we will look at the dramatic events of 1989-1991, which constitute one of the most important turning points in European history. In the same vein, we will attempt to answer the following questions:
- What was the balance between long-term and short-term factors in the collapse of Socialism?
- To what extent are the various national cases analogous?
- What were the long-range consequences of the ending of Soviet hegemony?

12) European Men, European Women

Women’s emancipation and eventual rise to almost-parity with men would seem to be fundamental to the study of modern European history. Women came to be more properly and publicly visible in the twentieth century, obtaining new opportunities for employment and gaining recognition for their interests by the state. During this time, they ‘even’ gained the right of universal and unqualified political representation, something practically unheard of in earlier times. Yet these improvements were not always as significant as they might appear. During this session, we will be looking at some of the unexpected causes and consequences of empowerment, which I will suggest is a more fitting term than ‘emancipation’. ‘Emancipation’ will thus be scrutinised against the background of a number of different topics: work and economic activity, political life, welfare policy, family and reproduction.

13) The European State

The penultimate seminar will be based upon concepts relating to Actor-Network Theory and Social Network Analysis, thus incorporating quantitative analytical methods in the study of history. Introduction to the very basic elements of these approaches is made possible by contemplating the nature of ‘state’, arguably the most familiar type of historical ‘actor’ and the entity we most often associate with ‘agency’, with the ‘making’ of history. Yet it is not always clear what we mean by the term ‘state’ or indeed by invoking the ‘agency’ of any state in particular. Oft-times historians use ‘state’ as a synonym for ‘society’ or ‘nation’, i.e. the entirety of a population subject to the rules of a particular government. More often, however, ‘state’ is understood to be something separate from society, an administrative apparatus, the ‘government’ rather than the ‘governed’. This source of potential conceptual confusion will be our starting point for a discussion on the relationship between state and society in modern Europe. Some of the questions we will be looking at are:

- Has the state continuously expanded in Europe’s twentieth century and if so was the expansion gradual or did it progress in leaps and bounds?
- What are the factors driving change in the role and size of the state?
- Have the state’s tendencies differed over time and are democracies and dictatorships subject to the same trends?

14) Ends(?) of European History

We will be discussing the following key years in European history: 1974, 1989, 2001. Our aim is to examine closely and with reference to these major turning points whether a historian of Europe can still provide valuable and relevant
insight on the processes defining the world’s historical evolution in the 21st century. At the same time, we will revisit some of the main schools of thought in historiography and examine their relative merits with respect to their ability to analyse and explain what took place on the continent on 1974, 1989 and 2001 respectively.

15) **Revision**

An entirely student-driven catch-up session will be scheduled for the final week of the taught course. Our aim will be to discuss and resolve any issues or questions arising either during the preceding weeks or as a result of the students’ own home study and essay work. Building on essay and classroom feedback, we will attempt to cover any lacunae and briefly talk about how to best go about ‘the final push’.
Indicative Bibliography

Week 1 – Europe at the turn of the century: The Napoleonic Legacy

Core Reading
Michael Rapport, Nineteenth-Century Europe, Part 1, Chapters 1-3.

Supplementary Reading
Alexander Grab, Napoleon and the Transformation of Europe (2003)

Week 2 – WWI

Core Reading
Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison (eds), The Economics of World War I (2005).
Alexander Watson, Ring of Steel: Germany and Austria-Hungary at War, 1914-1918 (2014).

Week 3 – The Roaring 20s

Core Reading
Susan Morrissey, 'The Economy of Nerves: Health, Commercial Culture, and the Self in Late Imperial Russia,' Slavic Review 69, 3 (2010), 645-675
Robert Nye, 'The Rise and Fall of the Eugenics Empire: Recent Perspectives on the Impact of Biomedical Thought in Modern Society,' Historical Journal 36, 3 (1993), 687-700
Chandak Sengoopta, “‘Dr Steinach coming to make old young!.”’ Sex Glands,
Vasectomy and the Quest for Rejuvenation in the Roaring Twenties,’ Endeavour 27, 3 (2003), 122-126.

**Supplementary Reading**
Ronald E. Doel, ‘Dieter Hoffmann and Nikolai Krementsov National States and International Science: A Comparative History of International Science Congresses in Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia, and Cold War United States,’ *Osiris* 20 (2005), 49-76


Week 5 – WWII

**Core reading**
Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent*, chapter 5 ['Hitler's New Order'].

**Supplementary Reading**

Week 9 – France

**Core Reading**


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**Week 10 – Germany**

**Core reading**


Juergen Kocka, 'German history before Hitler: The debate about the German Sonderweg', *Journal of Contemporary History,* Vol. 23, No. 1 (1988), pp. 3-16.


**Supplementary Reading**


Riccardo Bavaj and Martina Steber (eds.), *Germany and 'The West': The History of a Modern Concept* (2015).


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**Week 11 – Russia**

**Core Reading**


**Supplementary Reading**


**Supplementary Reading**


Week 12 – European Men, European Women

**Core reading**

Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent*, pp. 77-105.
Seumas Milne, "Women are now to the left of men. It's a historic shift" *The Guardian*, 5 March 2013
Toby Helm and Mark Townsend, "'Shameful' failure to tackle slavery and human trafficking in the UK", *The Observer*, 9 March 2013

Week 13 – The European State

**Core reading**

E. Davidheiser, 'Strong States, Weak States: The Role of the State in Revolution', *Comparative Politics* 24 (1992): 463-75
Y. Kotsonis, "'No Place to Go': Taxation and State Transformation in Late Imperial and Early Soviet Russia', *Journal of Modern History* 76 (2004): 531-77.
Supplementary Reading
Y. Kotsonis, "'Face-to-Face': The State, the Individual, and the Citizen in Russian Taxation, 1863-1917", *Slavic Review* 63 (2004): 222-46

Week 14 – Ends(?) of European History

Core reading
Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', *The National Interest* (Summer 1989), pp.3-18
Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993), pp.22-48

Supplementary Reading