



Boston University Study Abroad London

Boston University Study Abroad London Britain and the European Question: The Confluence of History and Politics CAS IR 392/HI 243 (Elective) Summer 2012

Instructor Information

A. Name

Dr Michael Thornhill

Course Objective

To provide an overview of Britain's relations with Europe between 1945 and 1991 in the context of European supranational integration, the evolution of the Cold War, and Britain's on-going desire to maintain a world role.

Course Overview

The course examines Britain's relations with Europe – both west and east – from the end of the Second World War to the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1991, the moment when the European Economic Community (EEC) became the European Union (EU). This name-change proved contentious in that it brought about greater political integration and so exacerbated tensions within British domestic politics about national sovereignty and Britain's place in the world. This timeframe also coincided with the Cold War, a global struggle which had European issues at its centre. We will assess how the German problem lay at the heart of not only the Cold War, but also over both tracks of post-1945 European integration: one track was intergovernmental in character and focused overtly on security (the NATO alliance); the other was supranational and was ostensibly motivated by economic concerns (the European Coal and Steel Community and then the EEC). The role of the United States in these political, economic and military developments will be an underlying theme throughout.

Course Methodology

The course is taught in nine classes, followed by a written examination lasting two hours. Most classes will begin with a formal presentation after which there is usually a discussion period based on an assigned reading or readings. Documentaries will also be used to support student learning. Students are required to attend all sessions and participate in discussions. This aspect will account for 10% of the final grade. A further 10% will be awarded for a presentation based on primary source materials. A 2000-word essay (about 8 typed pages, double-spaced in 12 point font) must be submitted to the lecturer at the start of class 8 (a further 40% of the grade). In the written examination (worth 40%) students must answer two essay-type questions from a selection covering all aspects of the course. No notes will be allowed in the examination room.

Set Text

John W. Young, *Britain and European Unity 1945-1999* (Macmillan, 2000)

Class Schedule

* Denotes compulsory class readings and/or documentaries which will be viewed in class

Class 1: Monday 28 May

- The impact of Europe's second 'Thirty Years War'

(Topics: the German problem; the human and economic consequences of war; the demise of the European states system; differing postwar attitudes to national sovereignty amongst European states; Western tensions with the Soviet Union; attempts to reform the British empire; relations with the United States).

* Documentary to be showed in class: 'The Price of Peace' in *NATO: From Cold War to Hot – The First 60 Years* (released 2010: NATO archive propaganda film made by John Edwards).

Class 2: Tuesday 29 May

- Britain leads Europe, 1945-1949

(Topics: Britain's ambitions to be a third superpower; the onset of the Cold War; the British empire's crisis of readjustment; Marshall aid; the US connection in British eyes; the creation of NATO).

* Young, chapter 1

* John Kent and John Young, 'The Third Force and the Origins of NATO: In Search of a New Perspective' in Robert O'Neill and Beatrice Heuser (eds), *Securing Peace in Europe, 1945-62* (London, 1992).

Class 3: Friday 1 June

- Missing the European bus, 1950-1957

(Topics: attitudes to the ECSC in the context of the nationalization of British coal and steel; Britain's continuing imperial preoccupations; the failure of the EDC; Eden's Messina snub; Anglo-French relations and Suez; and the Treaty of Rome).

* Young, chapter 2

* Piers Ludlow, 'Paying the Price of Victory? Postwar Britain and Ideas of National Independence in Dominik Geppert (ed), *The Postwar Challenge: Cultural, Social and Political Change in Western Europe, 1945-1958* (Oxford, 2003).

* Documentary to be showed in class: 'The Lost World of Communism' – The East Germany episode (BBC2, transmitted 2007)

Class 4: Friday 8 June

- From empire to Europe, 1957 to 1963

(Topics: Britain's shifting trade patterns; Suez and the decline of British political will; rapid disengagement from empire; the creation of EFTA; the decision to apply for EEC entry in 1961; De Gaulle's first rejection in 1963).

* Young, chapter 3

* Documentary to be showed in class: 'With Friends Like these: Affairs with the French' (BBC2, transmitted 2003)

Class 5: Monday 11 June

- Two rejections and then British entry, 1963-1973

(Topics: De Gaulle and French nationalism; French attitudes to the Anglo-American relationship; CAP and British attitudes; France and NATO; Europe as a trading rival to the US; the manner of the British applications; the significance of political changes in France and Germany in 1969; Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik and its Western corollary; Edward Heath and Britain's belated entry).

* Young, chapters 4 and 5

* Documentary to be showed in class: 'Krautrock: the rebirth of Germany' (BBC4, transmitted 2009)

Class 6: Tuesday 12 June

- Workshop on British government documents

(Students will be shown how to use the National Archives on-line catalogue and then guided on how to assess various government record groups with a view to presenting their research in the following week's class)

* 3pm: Field trip to Churchill Museum

Class 7: Monday 18 June

- The scholarly debates about Britain's European Identity

(Topics: missing the European bus; strategies of national modernization and macroeconomic policy; the sources of Euroscepticism; the Euroenthusiast discourse; party politics and the domestic objectives of foreign policy; misperceptions of sovereignty and federalism).

* Class presentations based on British official documents.

Class 8: Tuesday 19 June

- The end of the Cold War and the deepening of European integration

(The intensification of the Cold War in the early 1980s; the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s; Thatcher and the German question, 1989-90; Thatcher's three phases regarding European supranational integration – getting a rebate, the Single European Act, and the Tory government's civil war in the run up to Maastricht).

* Young, chapters 5 and 6

Documentary to be showed in class: 'With friends like these: don't mention the war' (BBC2, transmitted 2003)

Class 9: Monday 25 June

- Stocktaking: Which was more important to European peace – NATO or the EEC?

* William Wallace, *Rescue or retreat: The nation state in Western Europe, 1945-1992*

* Young, chapter 7 and 'Conclusions'

* Situation comedy to be viewed in class: *Yes Minister*, 'The Devil You Know' (BBC1, transmitted 1981)

* **Contingency Class Date:** Students are required to keep 22 June free to attend a make-up class should any class need to be rescheduled.

Examination: Tuesday 26 June

Exam times and locations will be posted on the BU London website and in the Student Newsletter two weeks before exam dates.

Course Reading

The class readings other than the Young set text are posted on the course webpage:

<http://www.bu.edu/london/virtual-library/ir392> (you must be logged in to view this page)

See especially, but also use your own research skills in the BU library:

Stephen George, *An Awkward Partner: Britain and the European Community* (Oxford, 1990)

Piers Ludlow, *European Integration and the Cold War: Ostpolitik and Westpolitik, 1945-1973* (2007)

Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name* (London, 1993)

Timothy Garton Ash, *Free World* (London, 2004)

Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (London, 2005)

Stephen Wall, *A Stranger In Europe: Britain and the EU from Thatcher to Blair* (Oxford, 2008)

Dominik Geppert (ed), *The Postwar Challenge: Cultural, Social and Political Change in Western Europe, 1945-1958* (Oxford, 2003)

Oliver Haddow, *Britain and Europe since 1945: Historiographical Perspectives on Integration* (London, 2004)

John Killick, *The United States and European Reconstruction, 1945-1960* (Edinburgh, 1997)

Grading

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria, attendance requirements and policies on plagiarism: <http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester>

Terms and Conditions

Attendance at all classes is mandatory. Students missing lectures without a doctor's letter or authorisation from the Director or from the Placements Team will automatically be docked a - or a + from their final grade. Please see the Academic Handbook on the BU London website for the attendance policy: <http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester>

Persistent lateness will also be penalised in the final grade. **Students must check their email and the weekly Student Newsletter for field trip updates and reminders.** A register of attendance will be taken at the beginning of each session, and marks will be awarded for attendance. Absence can be conveyed by advising a senior member of staff in the Academic Affairs Office with a request that the information be passed on to me. Leaving it to another class member to convey messages will not be acceptable. Appointments for interviews for internships should not conflict with attendance at classes.

Course work must be delivered before agreed deadline. Failure to hand on time will result in deducted marks.

I will make some time available in each session for students to raise questions etc. Should students wish to discuss matters with me in person I will also be available during the break mid-lecture.

Michael Thornhill
May 2012