Course description: The history of twentieth-century Central Europe is widely regarded as an era of nationalism and has typically been studied through the prism of national histories. But how might we study the tumultuous history of this region in transnational, international, or global perspective? This paper provides students with an opportunity to explore the social, cultural, and political history of Central Europe from the collapse of multi-ethnic empires and the formation of new states after the First World War through the violence of the Nazi New Order and the coming of the Cold War until the eastward enlargement of the European Union in 2004.

The paper explores Central Europe as a laboratory for new national and international orders, and as a region that has been shaped by alternative globalisations in the twentieth century. We will ask how the national histories of particular countries – including today’s Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, or Poland – have been influenced by global processes of circulation, connection, and structural transformation that transcend their borders. This approach seeks to inspire critical engagement with concepts familiar to European historiography and social science, such as ‘nation’, ‘revolution’, ‘progress’, or ‘society’. Themes will include migration and displacement, space and environment, labour and welfare, protest movements, gender and race, genocide and violence, and human rights and humanitarianism.

This paper draws on concepts and approaches from social, political, and international history, inviting reflection on the everyday and intimate lives of Europeans throughout the twentieth century, as well as high politics. Students will encounter a diverse range of historical actors, from international lawyers and statesmen to refugees, immigrants, and relief workers, from workers, peasants and priests to housewives and students, on the streets of Berlin or Prague, in the Alps, along the Danube, or amidst the industrial pollution of coalfields and factories. We will study source material including diaries, films, novels, press, oral histories, or the archives of non-governmental organisations and international organisations. More broadly, the module aims to engage with debates about writing Europe into global history.

Mode of teaching: The paper will be taught by means of fifteen weekly 2-hour discussion classes in Michaelmas and Lent terms. Classes will include lectures, student presentations and discussions of readings. There will be a revision session in Easter term. Each student will receive 5 supervisions in either term, in groups of 2-4.

Students with the ability to read sources in languages other than English will have the opportunity to do so, although this is in no way a requirement for the paper.

Maximum supervision capacity: 15

Reading list:
General reading


List of classes

1. 1919: Central Europe and the End of Empire
2. New Europe I: Nations, Nationalism, and National Indifference
3. New Europe II: International and Imperial Entanglements
4. ‘Bloodlands’ or ‘Neighbours’? Violence in the Nazi Empire
5. Laboratory of Internationalism: Reconstructing Central Europe, 1945-47
6. Brave New World: Building Socialism in the East
7. From Guns to Butter: Western Europe’s Golden Age
8. Violent Peacetime: European Communities and Decolonisation
9. Socialist Internationalism as Alternative Globalisation
10. 1968: A Global Rebellion?
11. Gender, Sexuality and the Family
12. Environmental Histories
13. Voices of Dissent: Human Rights
15. Return to Europe?

Class Reading Lists

1. 1919: Central Europe and the End of Empire.

Core Reading


Further Reading

Bartov, Omer and Eric D. Weitz, eds. *Shatterzones of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013)
Case, Holly, The Age of Questions: Or, A First Attempt at an Aggregate History of the Eastern, Social, Woman, American, Jewish, Polish, Bullion, Tuberculosis, and Many Other Questions over the Nineteenth Century, and Beyond (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018)

Cornwall, Mark, and John Paul Newman, Sacrifice and Rebirth : The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War (New York: Berghahn, 2016)

Healy, Maureen, Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire : Total War and Everyday Life in World War I (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004)


Core Reading

Further Reading


Stauter-Halsted, Keely, The Devil's Chain: Prostitution and Social Control in Partitioned Poland, 2015


3. New Europe II: International and Imperial Entanglements
Core Reading

Further Reading
Fink, Carole, ‘Minority Rights as an International Question,’ Contemporary European History 9 (2003), 384-400.
Gorman, Daniel, The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s (Cambridge, 2012)
Slobodian, Quinn, Globalists. The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism (Cambridge, Mass., 2018)

4. ‘Bloodlands’ or ‘Neighbours’? Violence in the Nazi Empire

Core Reading:
• Gross, Jan Tomasz, Neighbours. The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland (Princeton 2001)

Further Reading:


5. **Laboratory of Internationalism: Reconstructing Central Europe, 1945-48**

**Core Reading**


**Further Reading**


Reinisch, Jessica (ed.) Special Issue on Relief in the Aftermath of War: *Journal of Contemporary History* 43:3 (2008)


6. **Brave New World: Building Socialism in the East**

Core Reading:

Further Reading
Spurný, Matěj, *Making the Most of Tomorrow: A North Bohemian Laboratory of Socialist Modernism* (Praha: Karolinum, 2019)

7. **From Guns to Butter: Western Europe’s Golden Age**

Core Reading:
8. Violent Peacetime: European Communities and Decolonisation

Core Reading:

Further Reading
Buehnner, Elizabeth, *Europe after Empire: Decolonization, society and culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016)

9. Socialist Internationalism as Alternative Globalisation
Core Reading


Further Reading

Dragostinova, Theodora, ‘The “Natural Ally” of the “Developing World”: Bulgarian Culture in India and Mexico’, *Slavic Review*, 77 (2018), 661–84

### 10. 1968: A Global Rebellion?

Core Readings


Further Reading

Brown, Timothy, Lorena Anton, eds., *Between the Avant-Garde and the Everyday Subversive Politics in Europe from 1957 to the Present* (New York: Berghahn, 2011)
Clifford, Rebecca, ‘Emotions and gender in oral history: narrating Italy’s 1968,’ *Modern Italy* vol. 17: 2, pp. 209-221
Hajek, Andrea, ed., *Memory Studies: Special Issue (Challenging dominant discourses of the past: 1968 and the value of oral history)* January 2013: 6(1)
von der Goltz, Anna, ‘Generations of 68ers Age-Related Constructions of Identity and Germany's “1968,”’ *Cultural and Social History* (December 2011), 8:4, pp. 473-491

11. Gender, Sexuality and the Family

Core Reading:
- McLellan, Josie, ‘The “Problem of Women” in Post-War Europe’, *English Historical Review* 130

Further Reading
Evans, Jennifer V., Life Among the Ruins: Cityscape and Sexuality in Cold War Berlin (London: Palgrave, 2011)
Fidelis, Malgorzata. Women, Communism, and Industrialization in Postwar Poland (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010)

12. Environmental Histories

Core Readings:
• Roeder, Carolin, ‘From Neo-Slavism to Internationalism: Interwar Central Europe and the Search for the Lost Mountains’, Contemporary European History (October 2019)

Further readings:
Arndt, Melanie, Tschernobylkinder. Die transnationale Geschichte einer nuklearen Katastrophe (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2020)
Brown, Kate, Plutopia (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014)

**13. Voices of Dissent: Human Rights**

**Core Readings:**
- Betts, Paul, ‘Socialism, Social Rights and Human Rights: The Case of East Germany,’ *Humanity* 3 (Winter 2012), 407-426

**Further Readings:**

Core Reading

Further Reading

15. Return to Europe?

Core Reading

Chari, Sharad and Katherine Verdery, ‘Thinking between the Posts. Postcolonialism, Postsocialism, and Ethnography after the Cold War’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51/1 (2009), 6–34