MA (Res) in Modern History

Britain and European integration since 1945

Dr Matthew Broad

European integration has been one of the most hotly debated and complex questions discussed in British politics since the Second World War. This module provides a stimulating analysis of the issue up until the present day. It follows a largely chronological approach in order to understand developing British political and societal attitudes towards ‘Europe’. It will involve a dissection of the policy-making mechanisms of central government, considering not only the approaches successive administrations have taken to European integration but why. How have prime ministers constructed European policy against a backdrop of a divided Cabinet and vacillating media, parliamentary, public, business, and pressure group support? Are there clear continuities as well as changes in how political elites have responded to European integration? What role have external actors played in shaping the relationship? What does all this tell us about Britain’s shifting world role after 1945 and its foreign policy more generally? Central to these discussions is the perenniely vexed issue of British identity, the place of ‘Europe’ in the British consciousness and the question of whether it is right to chastise the UK for being ‘awkward’, ‘peripheral’ and the ‘other’ in European politics. There will also be a strong methodological strand focusing on trends and different schools of thought in the relevant historiography, paying special attention to the importance of ideology, place and time in dictating how historians have themselves constructed narratives about Britain and European integration. Throughout we will address key concepts such as sovereignty, subsidiarity, differentiated integration and transnationalism.

Seminars
We will meet every Monday 4-6 in my office, HUMSS G27C. The sessions will be both informal and conversational so please do be prepared to discuss issues that are of particular interest to you.

Contact details
Please do make sure you get in touch should you want any help with the module. In addition to our seminars, you can either email me at m.broad@reading.ac.uk or come and see me during my office hours, which in the Autumn Term are Mondays 12-1 and Tuesdays 11-12.

Reading lists
Below I have delineated some of the relevant literature that you should access during the course. Please do note that the bibliographies are by no means comprehensive. For instance, I have not listed the array of memoirs, biographies and autobiographies available. Of course, regularly consulting publications such as The Economist, Guardian and The Financial Times will be useful for current debates.

In addition to the material listed below, you may also want to familiarise yourself with more general literature on British foreign policy. Some of the more important titles include:

C. Barnett, The Collapse of British Power (Stroud, 1997)
C. J. Bartlett, British foreign policy in the twentieth century (Basingstoke, 1989)
J. Dumbrell, A special relationship: Anglo-American relations from the Cold War to Iraq (Basingstoke, 2006)
G. Fry, The politics of decline: an interpretation of British Politics from the 1940s to the 1970s (Basingstoke, 2005) – ask for electronic copy
J. Young, *Britain and the world in the twentieth century* (London, 1997)

There is also specific information related to European integration history/historiography that you should examine during the course of the module. Titles include:

W. Kaiser and A. Varsori (eds.), *European Union History: Themes and Debates* (Basingstoke, 2010)
A. Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation State* (Abingdon, 2000)

See also Palgrave’s *The European Union Series* for background on the EU and European integration theory.

Please note that the *Journal of European Integration History* is available online free and can be found at [http://www.eu-historians.eu/journal](http://www.eu-historians.eu/journal).

The Government of Luxembourg also maintain an online database of primary documentation relating to the European Integration process called the *Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance de l’Europe*. You can access the material free at [www.cvce.eu/en](http://www.cvce.eu/en).

**Week 2 – Britain and Europe: background and historiography**

**Introductory reading**

N. Crowson, *Britain and Europe: A political history since 1918* (Abingdon, 2011)
A. Geddes, *The European Union and British Politics* (Basingstoke, 2004)
M. Holmes, *European Integration: Scope and Limits* (Basingstoke, 2001) – ask for electronic copy
A. May, *Britain and Europe since 1945* (Harlow, 1999)
H. Young, *This Blessed Plot: Britain and Europe from Churchill to Blair* (London, 1998)

**Week 3 – Into the cold: Britain and European integration, 1945-51**


**Week 4 – Missing the boat: European policy, 1951-63**

W. Kaiser and G. Staerck (ed.), *British Foreign Policy, 1955–64: Contracting Options* (Basingstoke, 2000)
N. P. Ludlow, *Dealing with Britain: The Six and the First UK Application to the EEC* (Cambridge, 1997)
A. May (ed.), *Britain, the Commonwealth and Europe: The Commonwealth and Britain’s Application to Join the European Communities* (Basingstoke, 2001)
Week 5 – Joining Europe: the second and third membership applications

Overview of period

Wilson government/second application
M. Camps, European Unification in the Sixties: From the Veto to the Crisis (London, 1967)
O. Daddow (ed.), Harold Wilson and European integration: Britain’s Second Application to join the EEC (London, 2002)
T. Macintyre, Anglo-German Relations during the Labour Governments, 1964-70: NATO strategy, détente and European integration (Manchester, 2007)
M. Pine, Harold Wilson and Europe: Pursuing Britain’s Membership of the European Communities (London, 2007) – ask me for electronic copy

See also special issue of Contemporary British History, 20/3 (2006)

Heath government/third application
E. Heath, ‘European unity over the next ten years’, International Affairs, 64/2 (1998)
C. Lord, ‘Sovereign or Confused? The “Great Debate” about British entry to the EU 20 years on’, Journal of Common Market Studies, 30/4 (1992), 419–36
S. Young, *Terms of Entry: Britain’s Negotiations with the EC, 1970-72*

**Week 6 – Enrichment week, more information to follow**

**Week 7 – In or out: Renegotiation and the 1975 referendum**

M. Baimbridge (ed.), *The 1975 Referendum on Europe, Volume 1: Reflections of the Participants* (Exeter, 2007)
R. Broad, *Labour’s European Dilemmas: From Bevin to Blair* (Basingstoke, 2001)
B. Donoughue, *Downing Street Diary* (London, 2005)
J. Smith, ‘The European dividing line in party politics’, *International Affairs*, vol. 88, no. 6 (2012), pp. 1277-95, especially pp. 1280-1

**Week 8 – Awkward partners: Towards European Union under Thatcher and Major**

N. J. Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European integration since 1945: At the heart of Europe?* (Abingdon, 2007)
D. Dinan, *Ever Closer Union: An Introduction to European Integration* (Basingstoke, 1999), chp 4-6
George, *An Awkward Partner*, chapters 5/6
Gowland, Turner and Wright, *Britain and European Integration since 1945*, chapters 3-4
A. May, *Britain and Europe since 1945* (Harlow, 1999), chapter 8
D. W. Urwin, *The Community of Europe: A History of European Integration since 1945* (Harlow, 1995), chapters 14-16
Young, Britain and European Unity, chapter 6
Young, Britain and the World in the Twentieth Century, pp. 213-19

Week 9 – New Labour, New Europe: European policy under Blair and Brown

N. J. Crowson, The Conservative Party and European integration since 1945: At the heart of Europe? (Abingdon, 2007)
O. Daddow, New Labour and the European Union (Manchester, 2005)
Forster, Euroscepticism in Contemporary British Politics, chapters 6-7
George, An Awkward Partner, chapters 8
Gowland, Turner and Wright, Britain and European Integration since 1945, chapters 6-7
S. Wall, A Stranger in Europe: Britain and the EU from Thatcher to Blair (Oxford, 2008)
W. Wallace, ‘The collapse of British foreign policy’, International Affairs, 81/1 (2005), pp. 53-68
P. D. Williams, British Foreign Policy under new Labour, 1997–2005 (Basingstoke, 2005) – ask for electronic copy

Week 10 – Conclusions