

**Politics and Society
in Modern Europe**

2024-2025

The Middle Ages as a period of history; its scholarly patterning by reference to western European developments and its global significance

Western Christendom of the Middle Ages among other agrarian civilizations

The notion of a complex, state-endowed agrarian civilization, by reference to the two greatest thresholds in global historical development: the Neolithic Revolution (the emergence of agriculture) and the Industrial Revolution

Social stratification in agrarian societies; status and class as competing criteria of stratification; the disentanglement of the warrior and the clerical groups from the social body constituting the origin of status differentiation; the salience of the warrior (aristocratic) and clerical status categories throughout the evolution of complex agrarian societies

The seeming backwardness of Western Europe at the beginning of the early modern period, by comparison with other societies of the world

This was followed by the ascendancy of the West over the other societies of the world during the early modern and the modern periods, itself staying at the core of the globalization process (the most salient feature of modernity)

Hence, the need to understand the medieval origins of western exceptionalism

The tripartite division of the western European medieval period into the sub-periods of the Early, the High (Classical, or Central) and the Late Middle Ages; the further division of the former into the Merovingian and the Carolingian phases

The relations between church and state staying as a central thread of medieval developments

The Constantinian frame of the relations between church and state (in the late Roman Empire), maintained in Byzantium but not in the West

The dualism between church and state emerging in the Merovingian period as a result of the quasi-dissolution of secular structures, together with the survival, extension and consolidation of the ecclesiastic structures; the Catholic Church establishing itself as the real institutional inheritor of the Western Roman Empire

The theoretical bases of the church-state relations elaborated by St. Augustine; *auctoritas* and *potestas*; the interference of the church in temporal affairs

The kings endowed with sacral attributes; the practice of anointing kings; the ensuing interference of the state in spiritual affairs

Pope Leo I and the supremacy of Rome over the other Christian patriarchates

Pope Gelasius and the doctrine of the two swords

The Christianization of the Germanic peoples in the Arian rite; the Frankish exception, with king Clovis adopting Christianity in the Catholic rite; this fact staying at the basis of the privileged relation between the Papacy and the Frankish monarchy

The beginning of monasticism in the West, with the Benedictine order; the third Synod of Maçon and the establishment of the ecclesiastic tithe; pope Gregory I and the First Gregorian Reform of the church

The patrimonial conception of the state prevailing within the barbarian Germanic kingdoms; their customary partition by kings among their inheritors, in the fashion of patrimonial assets; this pattern contributing significantly to the fluidity and superficiality of secular political structures during the same Merovingian period

The deepening of the privileged relation between the Frankish monarchy and the Papacy; the Pepinian Donation and the creation of the Papal State; its legitimation by virtue of the False Decretals of Pseudo-Isidore

The usurper Carolingian dynasty itself legitimated by the Papacy; Charles the Great (Charlemagne) and his coronation by pope Leo III; the resurrection of the

Western Roman Empire in the format of the Carolingian Empire

The partial resurrection of secular political structures, however confronted with the existing ecclesiastic ones, developed and endowed with a high degree of autonomy over the previous age; the ensuing dualism between church and state staying as a cornerstone of western political pluralism over the long run (with no counterpart in other agrarian civilizations)

The later fragmentation of the Carolingian Empire; deeper fragmentation on the feudal pattern in Carolingian Europe, taking place under the pressures of the last waves of migrations

The reshaping of political power on the basis of relations with a private character established between the members of the feudal structure (seigneurs and vassals); the delegation of state powers and responsibilities throughout the feudal society (later to be recovered by the centralizing monarchies under the heading of regalian rights)

Feudal fragmentation itself acting over the long run as a factor contributing to the overall elaboration of western political pluralism

The contractualist dimension of feudalism underscored as an integral part of this development of pluralism

The feudal power relations at the higher levels of society laying over the characteristic arrangements of

the relations between the aristocratic landowners and their peasant tenants, at the bottom of the social body

Economic decline, commercial atrophy and urban atrophy of Carolingian Europe

The partition of the Carolingian Empire by virtue of the Treaty of Verdun

The western and the eastern Frankish kingdoms resulting from this partition constituting the bases of the future French and, respectively, German states; the Oaths of Strasbourg

The Carolingian dynasty extinguished in the eastern Frankish kingdom; its replacement by the Saxon dynasty (also called Ottonian); coronation of Otto I as Roman emperor by pope John XII; the creation of the Roman-German Empire, a successor of the Carolingian one; the imperial worldview of Otto III

The Central Middle Ages as a period of economic, commercial and urban development, having as a manifestation the attempt at outward expansion of the western Christendom through the crusades

The recovery of regalian rights by the centralizing monarchs, together with the elaboration of the institutions of medieval mixed government

The prevailing conflict between the secular and the ecclesiastic powers, centered upon the conflict between the Empire and the Papacy

The decay of the church in the late Carolingian period; the practices of Simony and Nicolaism; the problem of investitures

Pope Gregory VII and the Second Gregorian Reform; the rule of celibacy and the corresponding disentanglement of the ecclesiastic world from the web of aristocratic social relations

The Salian dynasty; king Henry IV and his conflict with the pope; the humiliation of Canossa; the subsequent coronation of the king as a Roman emperor by pope Clement III

The further evolution of the conflict; the Concordat of Worms

The conflict resumed under the emperors of the Hohenstaufen dynasty; the Guelph and Ghibelline alliances; the Lombard League and the battle of Legnano

Emperor Frederick II and his imperial worldview; his political experiences in Sicily as an anticipation of the monarchic absolutist arrangements; his death issuing into the Great Interregnum

The failure of the process of centralization within the Empire; the establishment of the elective principle for

the succession to the imperial throne; the college of electors

The imperial position adjudicated by the Habsburg dynasty (for a time in rivalry with the Luxembourg one)

The problem of the confrontation between state and church in the French and the English kingdoms, covered by reference to the evolutions of the sort previously considered with a focus on the Roman-German Empire

The western Frankish kingdom after the Treaty of Verdun; the alternation of Carolingian and Capetian monarchs

Hugh Capet and the entrenchment of the latter dynasty (whose direct and collateral descendants were to rule up into the XIXth century)

The feebleness of the monarchy in relation to the other feudal magnates of the realm; the small territory of the royal domain; the succession to the throne on the basis of the elective principle; the gradual imposition of the hereditary principle of succession (a precondition for the latter centralization)

The shaping of the English kingdom up to the Norman Conquest

The end of Roman Britain; the Anglo-Saxon invasions and settlements; the Celtic margin of Europe

A multitude of kingdoms (the Heptarchy); the Scandinavian invasions and settlements; the rise of Wessex and the first unification of England around it; England part of the northern empire of the Danish king Canute; the restoration of the dynasty of Wessex and the crisis of succession upon the death of Edward the Confessor

The duchy of Normandy within the French feudal system; its dynastic entanglements with England

The battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest; the beginning of the intertwining between the French and English medieval societies, lasting up to the XVth century

The new crisis of succession and the advent of the Anjou (Plantagenet) dynasty in England

The bounds between the two kingdoms deepened by virtue of this dynastic change; Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine; the Angevin empire and the seeming engulfment of France by the English crown

The beginning of state centralization in France under Philip II August; the royal domain extended to the detriment of the Angevin domains; the battle of Bouvines enhances the prestige of the crown in France

Centralization continued under Louis IX the Saint, the crusading king

The unfolding of this confrontation in correlation with the rise of representative assemblies and of the system of mixed government

The two evolutions mentioned taking place in England under Henry II and his immediate successors; the assassination of the archbishop Thomas Becket and the ascendancy of the state over the church

The rebellion of the aristocracy against king John, having in the background his defeats in France; Magna Carta and the beginning of English medieval parliamentarianism

The same evolutions taking place in France under Philip IV the Handsome; his confrontation with pope Boniface VIII; the incident of Anagni

The demolition of the Order of the Templars by the king

Clement V raised on the Holy See with the support of the French king; the shift of the Papacy to Avignon, under French control; the beginning of the Babylonian captivity of the Catholic Church, followed by the Great Schism within the church

The ascendancy of the state over the church, in a manner similar to the English outcome

The greater success of the English and French kings in solving the theological-political problem to their favor, by comparison to the Roman-German emperors

The development of the representative assembly in France under Philip IV, in correlation with the latter's victory over the church; the Estates General as a counterpart of the English Parliament

The multitude of parliaments in France as institutions with judicial responsibilities; the parliament of Paris and its ascendancy over the provincial bodies of the kind

The English and the French varieties of medieval mixed government with counterparts in other regions of Europe (the German world, the Iberian peninsula, Italy)

The succession of Philip IV by his sons, reigning in turn without descendants; the crisis of succession involving the rival claims of the English king Edward III and of the count of Valois

The problem solved in favor of the latter (acceded to the throne as Philip VI), with a general rule preventing the transmission of French royal succession through women

The ensuing Hundred Years War, coming from the continuation of English claims

The evolution of the war, from a dynastic struggle towards a confrontation between two states sustained by proto-national solidarities

The three phases of the war; the Burgundian factor in the third one

Joan of Arc and the turning-point; the final victory of the French crown and the expel of the English from France

Diverging evolutions taking place in the two kingdoms after the end of the war

Aristocratic anarchy in England, with the War of the Roses; the victory of the Tudor dynasty marking the end of the Middle Ages in England

A new stage of state centralization in France under Louis XI, marking the end of the Middle Ages in the context

The settlement of the Burgundian question to the favor of France

The transfer of a part of the Burgundian territorial inheritance to the House of Habsburg

The elaboration of characteristic cultural patterns in the Central Middle Ages, exhibiting an unstable balance between their aristocratic and clerical branches

The emergence of universities as institutions of learning with no counterpart in the ancient Greek-Roman civilization or in other agrarian civilizations

The Late Middle Ages as a period of crisis

The unbalance between economic resources and the upward demographic trend contributing to this; the Malthusian resolution of the problem by virtue of the Black Death in the mid XIVth century

The omnipresence of wars, a syndrome centered upon the Hundred Years War

The schism within the Catholic Church contributing to political instability

The crisis of the medieval worldview preparing the ground for the Renaissance

The XVIth century as the first century of European early modern history

Also as the last period in the history of Europe whose unfolding was centered upon the Mediterranean basin (largely dominated by Spain in matters of politics and by the Italian peninsula with respect to the economic and cultural developments)

It is for this reason that the survey of the medieval background can most appropriately be drawn to an end with a focus on the Iberian and the Italian peninsulas

The Iberian peninsula in the Middle Ages

Visigothic rule; the Islamic conquest; the surviving Christian strongholds

The Reconquista; the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa as a turning point

The emergence of Portugal; the consolidation of Castile and of Aragon; their personal union under Ferdinand and Isabella, staying as the pillar for the shaping of Spain

The fall of Granada and the end of the Reconquista

The consolidation of the Spanish state around policies of exclusion towards the Jews and the Muslims

The Inquisition in Spain (otherwise inaugurated earlier in the context of the crusade against the Cathars in France); its lasting connection with Spanish state building

Ferdinand and Isabella as Catholic Monarchs

Columbus and the discovery of America, having in the background the Portuguese circumnavigation of Africa; the Treaty of Tordesillas and the Iberian pioneering role in the western transoceanic expansion; the ensuing Iberian prominence at the beginning of the early modern period

The Italian peninsula in the Middle Ages

Ostrogothic rule; the Byzantine interlude; the Lombard invasion and settlements

The prevalence of political fragmentation

The northern part of the peninsula in the orbit of the Carolingian Empire, then of Roman-German Empire

The rise of a multitude of political structures in the North; their economic and cultural accomplishments, setting the region in the forefront of European developments in this respects over the last part of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the early modern period

The different evolution of the South; Normand rule; Hohenstaufen rule; Angevin rule, shattered by the Sicilian Vespers (then surviving in the southern part of the peninsula but replaced by Aragonese/Spanish rule in Sicily)

The creation of the balance of power system in international relations; its definition

Its historical preconditions: state centralization having in the background the relative decline of the universalist political entities (the Empire and the church)

The invention of the modern instruments of diplomacy (permanent embassies)

The balance of power system first experimented at the level of Italian politics; the Peace of Lodi

The extension of the same pattern at the level of European politics in the context of the Italian Wars initiated by the French monarchy

The inauguration of the Italian wars; Charles VIII and his claims for the Neapolitan crown; the Medici question in the peninsula; the initial Italian reaction to the French intervention

The subsequent creation of an anti-French alliance; the League of Venice (with France emerging as a threat to the balance of power system)

Louis XII and his claims for Milan; his negotiations with Aragon over southern Italy

The subsequent establishment of Aragonese rule over the whole of southern Italy

Pope Julius II and the Holy League; pope Leo X and the transfer of the war on French territory

Francis I and the consolidation of French control over Milan; the first stage of the Italian Wars ended with a French victory

The revolution in international politics issuing from the augmentation of Habsburg power

Charles Quint and his dynastic ancestry (Habsburg, Burgundian and Spanish); his accessions in Spain and in the Empire, conjoined with the rule over the Low Countries (formerly Burgundian)

Habsburg power emerges as the new threat to the balance of power system

The Lutheran Reformation within the Empire as a hinder to the design of Habsburg domination over Europe

The French kingdom as the pillar of anti-Habsburg alliances; the emergence of the pattern of international politics shaped around the French-Habsburg rivalry and surviving up to the mid XVIIIth century

The battle of Pavia and the Treaty of Madrid; the League of Cognac; the Sack of Rome and the anti-Habsburg feeling; the Treaty of Cambrai and the Habsburg hegemony in Europe

Charles Quint facing renewed Protestant opposition; the League of Schmalkalden

The Ottoman question along the eastern borders of the Empire

The inauguration of the French pattern of the reason of state politics, involving alliances with the Protestants of the Empire and with the Ottoman state against Habsburg power

Renewed military confrontations between Francis I and Charles Quint against this background; the peace treaties of Nice and Crépy, with undecided results

The beginning of the Counter-Reformation; the Council of Trent

The close connection between the Papacy and the Habsburgs

The battle of Mühlberg between the emperor and the League of Schmalkalden; the armistice of Augsburg

Henry II in France; the Treaty of Chambord and the Peace of Vaucelles

The religious Peace of Augsburg in the Roman-German Empire; the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio*, with the exclusion of Calvinism (to be treated later)

Its influence over Europe as a whole

The double abdication of Charles Quint

Philip II of Spain inheriting as well the former Burgundian possessions of the House of Habsburg, together with the Italian and the American possessions formerly acquired by the crowns of Aragon and Castile

Ferdinand I inheriting the Austrian possessions, together with the imperial crown and the royal crowns of Bohemia and Hungary

The Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis marking the end of the era of Italian Wars

The peace treaty consecrating the end of the Habsburg attempt at the unification of Europe, while also consolidating the Spanish ascendancy over the continent

The age of the religious wars in Europe

A look back at the beginning of the Reformation in the German world

The branch of Huldrych Zwingli

The radical branches of Thomas Müntzer and of Anabaptism; the German Peasant War; the defeat of the peasant rebellion following the battle of Frankenhausen

The top-down Lutheran Reformation in Sweden and in Denmark

The Calvinist reformation; its highly international profile

The Reformation in the English context, as the most significant of all the varieties of the phenomenon proceeding on the top-down pattern

The general background; dynastic change, with the advent of the Tudors at the end of the XVth century; the social transformations accompanying it, with the rise of the gentry to the detriment of the magnate nobility; the economic transformations, with the movement of the enclosures and the commercialization of agriculture; the capitalist reshaping of English

agriculture setting the baseline for the emergence of the world capitalist system

Henry VIII and the Act of Supremacy; the creation of the Anglican Church

The dissolution of the monasteries

The correlation between the course of the Reformation and the general evolution of the political system under the Tudors; the whole process also connected with the marital history of Henry VIII

Edward VI and the brief consolidation of the political and social arrangements revolving around the regulation of the religious question

Mary I and the Catholic reaction; her marriage with the Spanish king Philip II

Elisabeth I and the return to the fold of Protestantism; her confrontation with the Calvinist-Puritan challenge, alongside the Catholic one; the persecution of the Puritans; Anglicanism as a middle ground path, followed consistently by the queen; the Elisabethan era

Reformation in the Scottish context

John Knox and Presbyterianism, the local version of Calvinism

Catholicism defended by the crown; regent Mary of Guise and her French connections; queen Mary Stuart building upon the same connections

The defeat of the crown in the religious conflict; the abdication of Mary Stuart and the accession of her son James VI

The English exile of the former queen; Scottish Reformation emerging as an important entanglement of English politics

Calvinist Reformation in the French context

The Huguenots; the beginning of the religious wars in France

The family of Guise and the Catholic religious-political faction; the family of Bourbon and the Huguenot faction

Calvinist Reformation in the context of the Netherlands

The general background, with the gradual shift of the center of economic dynamism in Europe from northern Italy to the Netherlands; the connection between the province and the early capitalist transformations taking place in England; the Antwerp stock-exchange

The Spanish crown trying to use the province as a headquarter of the Catholic reaction over the continent; the spread of Calvinism and the Spanish repression

William of Orange, the revolt against the Spanish crown and the ensuing war, lasting up to the Peace of Westphalia

The pacification of Ghent; the split between the Union of Arras and the Union of Utrecht; the former surviving as the Spanish Low Countries; the latter proclaiming its complete separation from the Spanish crown

The State of the Estates General; its republican organization; the office of the Stadtholder

The consolidation of the Spanish power, alongside the spread of the Reformation in various contexts

The creation of the Jesuit Order, in connection with the Council of Trent and with the overall development of the Counter-Reformation

The victory of Lepanto over the Ottoman Empire

The battle of Alcântara and the personal union between Spain and Portugal, with the Portuguese overseas empire harnessed to the policies of Philip II

The fall of Antwerp to the Spanish crown and the subsequent ascendancy of Amsterdam

The execution of Mary Stuart in England; the ensuing campaign of the Invincibila Armada against England and the Spanish defeat

The unfolding of the religious wars in France

The successors of Henry II and the role of Catherine of Medici; Charles IX and the night of St Bartholomew

The creation of the Holy League and its occupation over Paris; the Catholic Paris Commune

The emergence of the faction of *les politiques*; Jean Bodin and the pleading for religious toleration conjoined with strong royal power

King Henry III and his closer connection with Henry of Bourbon; the assassination of the former and the accession of the latter, as Henry IV; the Bourbon dynasty

The conversion of Henry IV to Catholicism and his coronation; his regulation of religious toleration by the Edict of Nantes

The Spanish intervention in France, the anti-Spanish alliance and the recognition of the Dutch republic by France and by England; the armistice between the Dutch republic and the Spanish crown

The last stage in the evolution of the European religious wars centered upon the Roman-German Empire; the Thirty Years War

Its outbreak as a consequence of an imperial attempt at the imposition of Catholic conformity in Bohemia; the second Defenestration of Prague

The refusal of the Czechs to give recognition to the newly elected emperor, Ferdinand II; the battle of the White Mountain and the subsequent demolition of the Czech aristocracy, with the deeper absorption of the Czech lands into the German world

The extension of the conflict into a new round of the struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism within and beyond the borders of the Empire

The French involvement in the war, at first by supporting the Danish and Swedish military efforts against the Habsburg crown; the principle of reason of state politics applied consistently and laid down in clear terms by cardinal Richelieu

The Spanish intervention on the side of the Austrian Habsburgs; general Albrecht von Wallenstein and his confrontations with the Protestant armies, led successively by Christian IV of Denmark and by Gustav II Adolph of Sweden; the assassination of the general; the end of the war, with extremely high human losses in the Empire

The Peace of Westphalia, with the treaties of Münster and Osnabrück

The theories of the balance of power politics and of state sovereignty presiding over the peace treaties

The religious arrangements of the Peace of Augsburg restated within the Empire, with the inclusion of Calvinism and with provisions of religious toleration for minority denominations

The final recognition of the Dutch republic by Spain

The subsequent Peace of the Pyrenees between France and Spain; the end of the Spanish ascendancy in Europe; the era of French hegemony

General features of European historical development in the second half of the XVII century

French domination over the continent

The spectacular career of the Dutch republic as a major power, based on its economic, commercial and naval prominence

The partial eclipse of England as a major power, due to revolutionary transformations within

The emergence of monarchic absolutism as the main political model of the age and of English constitutionalism as its alternative

The substantial reshaping of the political map in Central and Eastern Europe

The entrenchment of the absolutist regime in France preceded by the period of the great ministers, cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin; the minority of Louis XIV and the *Fronde*; the suppression of the latter by Mazarin and by the regent Anne of Austria

The personal rule of Louis XIV, having as a precondition the eclipse of the Estates General, after their last pre-revolutionary convocation by the regent Mary of Medici during the minority of Louis XIII

The reshaping of the relation between the crown and the aristocracy, with the latter prevented from promoting centrifugal tendencies and transformed into a privileged recruiting-ground for the state bureaucracy

The evolution of the relation between the aristocracy and the ascending bourgeois class up to the end of the Old Regime

The growing disparity between the system of privileges and the actual distribution of power within society; the selling of aristocratic titles and the nobility of the pen

The royal residence of Versailles at the core of the Old Regime power relationships

The military preeminence of France among the other powers of Europe accompanied by the international standing of French culture

The wars and conquests of Louis XIV over the first part of his reign

The War of Devolution, the Triple Alliance of The Hague and the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle

The Dutch War and the Peace of Nijmegen; the end of a series of wars between England and the Dutch state; William III of Orange acceded to the position of Stadtholder

The French territorial annexations along the border with the Roman-German Empire; the occupation of Strasbourg

The revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV; the consequences of this policy

Renewed international efforts to maintain the balance of power system against France; the creation of the League of Augsburg

The revolutionary development of England in the XVIIth century

The Stuart dynasty and the personal union between England and Scotland; James I and the Anglican establishment

Charles I and his conflict with the Parliament; the Catholic leanings of the king

Archbishop William Laud and the trend of Episcopalianism within the Anglican church; the persecution of the Puritans and their abhorrence of the turn towards popery taken by the Church of England; the Book of Common Prayer and its imposition in Scotland

The Scottish revolt and the convocation of the English parliament; the Short Parliament; the Long Parliament

The Irish revolt and the English Civil War; the battles of Marston Moor and of Naseby; the capitulation of the king

The process of religious-political radicalization within the revolutionary party; the Presbyterian and the Independent (Congregationalist) factions, with the cleavage between the Parliament and the New Model Army

Further radicalization: the Levellers, the Diggers and the Quakers

Oliver Cromwell and his allegiance to the Independents; the persecution of the most radical factions and the purging of the Presbyterians from the Parliament; the Rump Parliament, the execution of the king and the abolition of the monarchy

The policies towards the Catholics and the Anglicans; the conflict between Cromwell and the Parliament and the abolition of the latter; Cromwell as Lord Protector; the death of Cromwell

The reinstallation of the Parliament; the Anglican majority in the Parliament and the Stuart Restoration

Charles II and his Catholic leanings; the renewed conflict with the Parliament; the royal Declaration of Indulgence in favor of the Catholics and the Puritans; the Parliament reacting with the Test Act, obliging state officials to profess allegiance to Anglicanism

The Act of Exclusion, denying the right to the throne to the Catholics; the formation of the Tory and the Whig parties

James II and his Catholic leanings

His protestant daughter Mary, the incumbent successor, married with the Dutch Stadtholder William of Orange; the Catholic baptism of his newly born child, James, and the fears regarding the entrenchment of a Catholic dynasty

The ensuing Glorious Revolution and the flight of James II; William III and Mary II crowned as associate

monarchs; the Bill of Rights and the constitutional monarchy

A comparison between the two English revolutions

The traditional view presenting the violent Puritan Revolution as a deviation from the ingrained gradualism of English political development and the Glorious Revolution as the fulfillment of the latter

Later views underscoring the break with the social structures of the past operated by the first revolution as a precondition for the success of the second one; the English emerging from this perspective as the most revolutionary people, in so far as they accomplished their revolutionary break with the past earlier than the others, thus endowing themselves with the preconditions for further gradual change

The following unfolding of the revolutionary process throughout the world, underscoring the connection between the delay of revolutionary breaks with old regime structures in various contexts and their greater magnitudes

The pattern of revolutionary change exhibited by the Puritan Revolution, stretching from the moderate beginnings, through radicalization, to military dictatorship; the same pattern encountered in various latter contexts

The political theory of liberalism emerging in the frame of English XVIIth century revolutionary change; Thomas Hobbes and John Locke; the transformation in England of the medieval system of mixed government into modern liberal constitutionalism, without the intermediate stage of monarchic absolutism

The connection between England and the Dutch republic in international politics; the two states joining the League of Augsburg; the War of the League of Augsburg; the battle of La Hogue and the Peace of Ryswick

The economic European and world space of the late XVIIth and the early XVIIIth century

The preceding general crisis of the XVIIth century; the debates about its causes; the decline of gold and silver imports from the Americas and the Little Ice Age

The subsequent economic growth and the creation of the Atlantic Triangle; slave trade staying at the core of the latter

The diversification of the patterns of colonization in the Americas, with the English, the Dutch and the French joining the Spaniards and the Portuguese;

The long-term evolution of slave trade between Africa and the American plantation economies; the temporary leading role of Dutch trade in this constellation

The War of Spanish Succession

Its origins; the Spanish branch of the Habsburg dynasty extinguished; the political testament of Charles II indicating Philip of Anjou as a successor and the prospect of a dynastic union between the French and the Spanish kingdoms

The Great Alliance of The Hague designed to maintain the balance of power on the continent

The peace treaties of Utrecht and Rastatt, enshrining the principles of the balance of power politics in clear terms; England (Great Britain) consecrated as the main promoter and protector of this system

The consequences of the peace arrangements; the Bourbon dynasty in Spain and the prevention of the dynastic union with France; the Spanish possessions in the Low Countries and in Italy transferred to the Austrian Habsburgs; the further decline of Spain and the end of the international career of the Dutch republic as a great power; colonial aggrandizement of England at the expense of France in North America;

The entire developments involved staying as part of a new Hundred Years War between England and France; the eventual resolution of this long-term confrontation

by virtue of the English victory in the early XIXth century

Survey of the restructuring of Central and Eastern European politics at the turn of the XVIIth and the XVIIIth century

The regional balance of power system at the beginning of the period, featuring the Ottoman Empire and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as the main powers, alongside the state of the Habsburg crown still largely defined by reference to German and western concerns; the Muscovite state still not a significant factor in European affairs

The Ottoman irretrievable decline after the second siege of Vienna; the inauguration of the Eastern Question; the Habsburg engulfment of the territories formerly belonging to the medieval Hungarian kingdom, in continuation to the older dynastic claim upon them and at the expense of the Ottoman state; the Treaty of Karlowitz

The Habsburg state redefined as a Danubian and East European empire, comprising extensive non-German populations kept together by the dynastic principle

The relapse of Poland-Lithuania into aristocratic anarchy, having in the background the political system of the elective monarchy; its transformation into a power vacuum and a second eastern question; the eventual resolution of this predicament by the Polish partitions at the end of the XVIIIth century

The redefinition of Russia as a European power

Its historical background; Ivan IV the Terrible, Muscovy as Tsardom and the fashioning of autocracy in the patrimonial guise

The end of the Rurik dynasty, the Time of Troubles and the accession of the Romanov dynasty; the reforms of patriarch Nikon and the schism within the Russian church; the Old Believers; the gulf between Russia and the West epitomized by the successive lags in coping with the western adjustments of the calendar (from the Julian to the Gregorian one)

Peter I the Great and the westernization of Russia; the turn from the Muscovite to the Imperial period in the evolution of Russian society

The turn from the patrimonial system of rule to the western conception of the state; the unfinished journey of this project in Imperial Russia; the survival of authoritarianism within the new legal framework of western inspiration

The transformation of the boyardom into a hereditary aristocracy patterned on the western model, together with the metamorphosis suffered by it as a service class deeply subjected to the crown; the Table of Ranks

The Holy Synod and the corresponding metamorphosis suffered by the church as an institution deeply subservient to the state

Westernization as a dramatic social process driven by state levers

The foundation of St Petersburg as a new capital and a cradle of westernization

The corresponding transformation of Moscow into a center of traditionalism; the turn of Russia towards European affairs

The emergence of Prussia as a new center of power in the German world, in rivalry with the Habsburg crown

The accessions of Protestant branches of the Hohenzollern dynasty in the Principality of Brandenburg and in Duchy of Prussia, following the emergence of the latter through the secularization of the state created by the Teutonic Order; the personal union between the two states

The Great Elector Frederick William and the emancipation of the Duchy of Prussia from the relation of vassalage towards the Polish crown

Frederick III and the transformation of the union into the kingdom of Prussia; his coronation as Frederick I

His successor Frederick William I and the patterning of the Prussian kingdom on the basis of entrenched militarism

The brief career of Sweden as a great power in the region of Central and Eastern Europe

Swedish ascendancy largely determined by the alliance with France against the Habsburgs

The profile of king Charles XII and his expansionist ambitions; the anti-Swedish alliance and the Great Northern War, staying as the eastern counterpart of the War of Spanish Succession; the battle of Poltava and the Peace of Nystad

The Swedish defeat and the consecration of Russian ascendancy in the region at the expense of Sweden; the territorial provisions of the peace treaty to the favor of Russia

The background of these transformations in the sphere of international politics represented by the rise of the eastern version of monarchic absolutism in the Habsburg state, Russia, Prussia and Sweden; the Polish-Lithuanian exception

The common social-economic background of both the regional absolutist pattern and the exception of aristocratic anarchy represented in its turn by the phenomenon of the Second Serfdom; its long-term evolution, with reverberations into the XXth century

The different patterns of the alliance between the aristocracy and the absolutist monarchy prevailing in the West and in the East, respectively; the East European version of absolutism serving as an instrument for the strengthening of serfdom and for the deepening of feudal economic patterns; the legacy of this syndrome up into the early XXth century

The War of Polish Succession

The dynasty of Saxony on the Polish throne and the crisis of succession upon the death of king Augustus II; his son pretending the throne as Augustus III and the support for the latter coming from the part of the Habsburg crown and of Russia

The pretender Stanislaw Leszczyński and his support from the part of France

The victory of Augustus III

The War of Austrian Succession

Its background; emperors Leopold I and Joseph I; the Hungarian uprising under Francis II Rákóczi; the Peace of Szatmár, with the confirmation of both Habsburg rule in Hungary and the political privileges of the Hungarian aristocracy; the different patterns of Habsburg rule in Bohemia and in Hungary respectively

Emperor Charles VI and the Pragmatic Sanction, preparing succession in the Habsburg hereditary domains to the favor of his daughter Maria Theresa; the death of the emperor and the accession of Maria Theresa as archduchess of Austria and queen of Hungary (subsequently also as queen of Bohemia)

Her contestation and the pattern of European alliances ensuing from this

The development of the war largely dependent on the vacillating attitude of the Prussian king Frederick II; the support of the Hungarian estates for Maria Theresa; the Prussian annexation of Silesia and the overall victory of Maria Theresa in the war

Her rule in association with her husband, crowned as Roman-German emperor under the name of Francis I; her latter association to the system of rule in the Empire and within the Habsburg hereditary possessions with her son Joseph II; the Habsburg-Lorraine branch of the dynasty

The Reversal of the Alliances in the mid-XVIIIth century, with the end of the long-term rivalry between France and the House of Habsburg, inaugurated in the early XVIth century; the two powers allied and opposed to the rival alliance between Britain and Prussia; the further extension of each of the two alliances

The ensuing Seven Years War, centered in Europe on the Austrian-Prussian rivalry and overseas on the French-British rivalry

The victory of the British-Prussian alliance; the peace treaties of Hubertusburg and of Paris; Prussia consecrated as a great power of Europe; Britain consecrated as the dominant maritime power, aggrandized at the expense of France in North America and in India

The successive partitions of Poland-Lithuania between Russia, the Habsburg state and Prussia

A new Polish crisis emerging upon the death of the king Augustus III; Stanislaw Poniatowski taking the throne on the basis of support from the Russian empress Catherine II

Russian influence in Poland correlated with the Russian pressures against the Ottoman Empire; the French support for the latter

Russian victory against the Ottomans, with the Peace of Kuchuk-Kainarji and the inauguration of the Russian Protectorate in the Balkans

The first Polish partition taking place upon the initiative of the Prussian king Frederick II such as to prevent Russia from taking exclusive advantage of the situation

The Polish reformist movement emerging in response to the national disaster and blaming the tradition of aristocratic republicanism as responsible for the crisis

The later stages of the process developing in the conditions created by the European impact of the French Revolution; the May Constitution aimed at combining the virtues of centralism and of aristocratic freedom and taking inspiration from various strands of the western Enlightenment culture; its pioneering status in European history (succeeding to the American constitution but shortly in advance of the first French revolutionary act of the sort); its failure

The second partition meant to prevent Poland from acting as a corridor for revolutionary culture

The uprising led by Tadeusz Kościuszko and the third partition

The War of American Independence as part of the development of revolutionary culture in the North-Atlantic world and as a stage in the series of

confrontations between Britain and France for European and world domination

The American Revolution as both a crisis of the British political system developed in the footsteps of the Glorious Revolution and as an event of global significance

The French intervention partly redressing the previous French defeat at the hands of Britain in the Seven Years War

The following development of British imperialism, able to contain the consequences of the crisis and to continue its course on the basis of rejuvenated dynamism

The development of the French and British political systems over the period predating the French Revolution

Louis XV in France and the attempt at narrowing the absolutist regime by the suppression of the parliaments; the experiment of the sort promoted by the minister René de Maupeou

The accession of Louis XVI and the reinstallation of the parliaments

The reign of William III in England after the death of his wife and associate monarch Mary II; the Act of Succession renewing the interdict for the Catholic pretenders to accede to the English throne

The reign of queen Ann and the end of the Stuart dynasty; the gradual shift of her preferences from the Tory to the Whig party

The fusion between England and Scotland and the creation of Great Britain (with an excursus over the future incorporation of Ireland into the later); the Union Jack flag and the symbolism of the political regime thus created

The accession of George I and the inauguration of the Hanoverian dynasty; George II and George III

The successive Jacobite uprisings meant at recovering the throne for the exiled successors of the deposed king James II; their repeated failures

The Whig oligarchy, surviving up to the American crisis

The entrenched venality of the electoral system; the rotten boroughs; the deficiencies of the sort thus exhibited by early British liberal constitutionalism bound to re-emerge in later contexts of incipient parliamentarianism all across the world, up to the present; the eventual elimination of the same phenomena in Britain during the XIXth century

The invention of the cabinet system by way of customary practice, with the team of ministers headed

by a prime minister and responsible as a unit in front of the Parliament and the monarch; Robert Walpole as the first prime minister

The inauguration of the Industrial Revolution in Britain; Britain as the only industrial country up to the early XIXth century

The French Revolution

The revolutionary process in broad outline

Its dynamics marked by two crisscrossing cleavages: the one between the absolutist state and the privileged orders, and respectively the one between the later ones and the underprivileged Third Estate

The inauguration of the process in the framework of the first variety of conflict and in a fashion reminiscent of the older aristocratic reactions against the crown; the further evolution of the process towards the prevalence of the second variety of conflict

The gradual radicalization of the revolutionary process; the dynamics of radicalization set in correlation with the interplay between the moderate and the radical strands of Enlightenment culture, best encapsulated in the political theories of Montesquieu and of Rousseau, respectively

The immediate background of the revolution represented by a fiscal crisis of the monarchic state, itself largely due to the overpressures upon the budget issuing from successive military engagements

The royal government forced to appeal to the privileged orders in order to refashion state finances; the attempt at obtaining such a support from the part of an Assembly of Notables; its failure

The subsequent appeal to the parliaments, their refusal to consent and the renewed attempt at their suppression; the popular reaction in favor of the parliaments and the subsequent decision of convoking the Estates General after a very long interruption

The debate over the system appropriate for the election of the representatives to the Estates General, with the customary rules for the equal representation of the clergy, respectively the aristocracy and the Third Estate contested and a corresponding demand for the proportional representation of the population in the assembly, to be obtained through elections by head count; the adoption of the middle solution, with elections held on the basis of customary procedures adjusted by the doubling of the Third Estate

Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès and his vindication of the Third Estate as giving representation by itself alone to the nation as a whole

The opening of the Estates General assembly at Versailles; the split within the clergy, with lower members of this order supporting the Third Estate; the proclamation of the Third Estate as a National Assembly; the Tennis Court Oath and the further proclamation of the Third Estate assembly as a National Constituent Assembly

The attempt of the king to stop the process and its failure; the subsequent recognition of the process underway by the king, with the deputies of the privileged orders joining the Constituent Assembly; the storming of the Bastille; the king harboring the tricolor emblem of the revolution in Paris

The spread of distorted understandings of the revolutionary proceedings from Paris across the territory of the realm and into the French countryside; the disarticulated peasant movements of rebellion and their inchoate demands targeted against the seigniorial arrangements surviving from the old feudal social-economic patterns; the Great Fear regarding a possible generalized peasant uprising

The prevention of such an outcome by the August Decrees abolishing all the constituent parts of the feudal system; the abolition of the privilege

The adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen enshrining the principles of popular sovereignty and equality before the law alongside the inviolability of property

The shaping of a political-ideological spectrum, exhibiting a royalist faction alongside a constitutional one; the popular assault upon the palace of Versailles, with the king, together with his family and closed entourage obliged to move to Paris and to take a new residence at the Tuileries Palace

The first revolutionary settlement of the ecclesiastic question, with the property of the Catholic church placed at the disposal of the nation and the nation professing to support the church; the accompanying enfranchisement of the Protestants; the decree preventing the deputies of the Assembly from becoming ministers; its consequences regarding governmental instability; the reshaping of the political-ideological spectrum, featuring the faction led by general La Fayette and the one of the count of Mirabeau

The Civil Constitution of the Clergy and the Clerical Oath; the ensuing split between the revolution and the clergy

The administrative reorganization of the country, meant at erasing traditional solidarities, abolishing regional privileges and furthering the creation of a homogenous, nationwide citizenry; the Departments of France and the Sections of Paris; the Federation Day on the Field of Mars at Paris, marking one year from the storming of the Bastille

The division between active and passive citizens, envisioning an electoral system based on limited suffrage and property qualifications; the foundation of

the Jacobin party, originally the Society of the Friends of the Constitution; the death of Mirabeau

The decree preventing the deputies of the National Constituent Assembly from being re-elected in the following legislative body

The attempt of the king and his family to flee the country and join the emigration hostile to the revolution; the turn towards republicanism of the various political clubs following the Flight to Varennes

The massacre on the Field of Mars, with the National Guard led by La Fayette suppressing a Paris uprising; the decline of La Fayette after the event

The Declaration of Pillnitz, issued against the French Revolution by the Roman-German emperor Leopold II and the Prussian king Frederick William II; its immediate background consisting of the nationalization of domains within France belonging to foreign people and to the Papacy; all these developments contributing to the radicalization of the revolutionary process

The adoption of the first revolutionary constitution, providing for a regime of constitutional monarchy; its promulgation by king Louis XVI; the Constituent Assembly dissolved; its replacement with the Legislative Assembly elected on the basis of census suffrage; the Girondin party and the clear crystallization of the Left-Right opposition within the Assembly

The declaration of war issued by the Assembly against the Habsburg state, with the war subsequently extended; the military operations on the territory of the Austrian Low Countries; the initial French defeats, issuing into the state of emergency

Further radicalization; the anti-royal insurrection with the assault upon the Tuileries Palace; the overthrow of the monarchy and the suspension of the constitution; the call for the election of a National Convention through universal male suffrage; the Revolutionary Tribunal and the beginning of the Terror; the emigration of La Fayette; the Montagnard party within the Assembly and the Jacobin club, superseding the Gironde in terms of radicalization

The turning point in the war, with the French victory in the battle of Valmy, coinciding with the first session of the National Convention

The abolition of the monarchy; the proclamation of the republic; the trial and execution of the king; the extension of the revolutionary war abroad; the anti-revolutionary movements within France

The Committee of Public Safety, the Jacobin dictatorship and the central position of Maximilien Robespierre; the purging of the Girondin leaders from the Convention, followed by their trial and execution; the assassination of Jean-Paul Marat, a figure holding a peculiar position within the Montagnard party

The Jacobin Constitution, the second of the French revolutionary acts of the sort; its significance as a document of political theory; its anticipatory vision of a package of social rights staying in continuation to the civil and political rights

The deepening of the revolutionary symbolism, with the corresponding attempt at disentangling French society from the symbolism of the Old Regime; the revolutionary calendar and the struggle against Christian symbolism, seen as closely correlated with the royal and the aristocratic one; the closure of the Paris churches and the civil cult of Reason

The execution of the former queen Marie-Antoinette as a manifestation of the culture of Terror

The expansion of the anti-revolutionary trends within France in response to the Terror

The apex of the Jacobin dictatorship; the dynamics of denunciations and purges targeting factions of the inner core of Jacobin power; the purging of Jacques Hébert and his followers (the faction of the “exaggerators”); the purging of Georges Jacques Danton and his followers (the faction of the “moderates”)

The dwindling support for Jacobin power and for the faction of Robespierre; the secret organization of a movement of opposition against Robespierre; the loss of support for Robespierre within the Convention; the trial and execution of Robespierre; the symbolism of Thermidor 9, Year II

The Thermidorian Convention and the retreat of the revolutionary movement from the fold of radicalism; the closure of the Jacobin Club; the end of the process of de-Christianization; the decree for the separation between church and state creating a new revolutionary framework for the administration of the ecclesiastic question

The political regime of the Directory; its patterning through the constitution of Fructidor 5, Year III, staying as the third revolutionary act of the sort; the bicameral legislature; the college of directors prefiguring a presidential institution; the prevalence of the executive branch of government over the legislative, against the tendencies manifested throughout the previous stages of the revolutionary process; the electoral system based on limited franchise; the National Convention dissolved

The general profile of the Directory period; a new social stratification, with the consolidation of the bourgeois class to the detriment of aristocratic landholding fortunes; the oligarchic and plutocratic features of the political class; the prevalent corruption and the growing unpopularity of the regime

The low contestation from the Left and the socialist Conspiracy of the Equals led by Gracchus Babeuf; the failure of this enterprise

The growing popularity of the army, in conjunction with the continuation and extension of military efforts abroad (to be treated later); general Napoleon Bonaparte as a peculiar embodiment of the phenomenon

Bonaparte dispatched to Egypt, in a regional context marked by centrifugal tendencies and separatist movements within the Ottoman Empire

His connections with political circles at home; his return to France after capitalizing on new military successes; the coup d'état of Brumaire 18, Year VIII

The fourth revolutionary constitution and the political regime of the Consulate; the tricameral legislative body, comprising both appointed and elected members and favoring the further consolidation of the executive around the First Consul; the plebiscitary consultation of the population regarding the format of the regime

The political pattern of Bonapartism, resting on a combination of authoritarianism and populism; its lasting legacy in Europe and the whole world

International relations over the period of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, in connection with the further transformations of the French political system

A look back at their beginning, mentioned beforehand in relation to the development of the revolutionary process

The series of six coalition wars, up to the defeat of Napoleonic France

The first coalition war; the initial French defeats; again the turning point marked by the battle of Valmy; the introduction of general conscription; a comparison between the French national army and the coalition mercenary armies

The French annexation of Belgium; the creation of the French sphere of influence in Europe and its consolidation by the foundation of the cluster of sister republics; the Batavian Republic in the Netherlands inaugurating this system of domination

The Peace of Basel between France and Prussia; the peace agreement between France and Spain and their subsequent alliance against Britain established by the Treaty of St Ildefonso; the Spanish defeat in the battle of Cape St Vincent

General Bonaparte on the Italian front, in confrontation with Austria; his victories and his personal politics in the region; the creation of the Cisalpine Republic in the region of Milan and the inauguration of the system of sister republics in Italy

The Peace of Campo Formio between France and Austria marking the end of the first coalition war; the treaty consecrating French rule in Belgium and Austrian rule over Venice; the extension of the system of sister republics in Italy and in Switzerland (the Helvetic Republic)

Again on the French campaign in Egypt; the battle of Abukir between the French navy and the British fleet led by admiral Horatio Nelson, alongside the French military successes on land; the victory of Nelson establishing British control over the Mediterranean

The second coalition war started in these circumstances; the initial French defeats and the fall of the system of sister republics in Italy; again on the return of Bonaparte in France, in the international context thus described

Bonaparte back on the Italian front after the coup and the establishment of his personal regime; the French victory in the battle of Marengo; the Peace of Luneville between France and Austria, restating the provisions of Campo Formio

The Concordat between the French republic and the Papacy

The Peace of Amiens between France and Britain, with the establishment of temporary British control over Egypt and with the British recognition of French rule over Belgium

The reorganization of French control over the Italian peninsula; the Italian Republic replacing the Cisapline Republic; the restoration of the Papal State in the framework of the Concordat

The establishment of the Napoleonic Empire; the character of the new political structure, claiming continuity with the revolution while at the same time targeting a better harmonization with the other political regimes of Europe

The Napoleonic Civil Code incorporating the founding political principles of the revolution; the Penal Code adopted in its footsteps; the extension of Napoleonic legislation in the areas under French control, marking the beginning of a long process of European and global development staying in continuity with the same legislative innovations

The global contest between Bonapartist-Napoleonic France and the British state; the overall British victory in this confrontation; the North American and the Caribbean contexts of the struggle

The province of Louisiana sold by France to the United States; the slave revolution on the island of Saint Domingue; its leaders, François-Dominique Toussaint Louverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines; the abolition of slavery by the French republic and the subsequent revocation of this act by Bonaparte; the victory of the revolution and the creation of the Haitian Republic

The third coalition war, provoked by the continuation of the French-British rivalry and by the French policies in the German area, against the provisions of the Peace of Basel; the decisive victory of the British fleet under admiral Nelson in the battle of Trafalgar; the entrenchment of overwhelming British naval supremacy; its survival up into the XXth century

The Napoleonic victory in the battle of Austerlitz; the Peace of Pressburg between France and Austria; its harsh provisions with regard to Austria, which loses advantages previously obtained at Campo Formio and Luneville; the annexation of the Illyrian Provinces by France

The reorganization of Napoleonic Europe; the sister republics replaced by satellite monarchic states ruled by relatives of the emperor Napoleon and by generals of his army

The Napoleonic reorganization of the German world; the creation of the Confederation of the Rhine; the end of the Roman-German Empire under Napoleonic pressures, with emperor Francis II renouncing the traditional title with universalistic overtones and adopting instead the title of the emperor of Austria; the contribution of such Napoleonic political innovations to the process of German unification over the long run

The fourth coalition war, centered on the confrontation between France and Prussia; the disastrous Prussian

defeat in the battle of Jena; the Napoleonic occupation of Berlin and the entrenchment of French control over Prussia

The Decrees of Berlin instituting the Continental System against Britain, meant to suffocate the economy of the latter in the course of being transformed by the industrial revolution, by preventing the continuation of commercial exchanges between Britain and the countries of the continent

The confrontation between France and Russia; the battles of Eylau and Friedland; the Peace of Tilsit establishing a political order on the continent resting on the collaboration between the Napoleonic empire and the Russian empire; the creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw as a satellite of France and at the expense of the Prussian partition of Poland; Russia joins the Continental System

The effectiveness of the System dependent on the French control over the Iberian peninsula; the French campaign in the peninsula; the initial establishment of the French control over Portugal; the inability of the French army to establish its control over Spain; the war at the grassroots in Spain supported by Britain; a British army dispatched in the peninsula; general Arthur Wellington

The fifth coalition war, provoked by the Austrian revolt against the Napoleonic system; the battles of Aspern and Wagram; the Peace of Schönbrunn and its harsh

provisions for Austria; adjustments of the Napoleonic system in Europe; the annexation of the Papal State; the annexation of the Netherlands

The new efforts of the emperor Napoleon to entrench his political regime into the fabric of European politics

The design of a dynastic marriage into one of the reigning houses of the continent as part of this effort; the failure of the attempt to establish such a link with the Russian Romanov dynasty; the subsequent marriage into the Habsburg family

The offspring of the marriage between Napoleon and Marie-Louise of Habsburg and his Catholic baptism with the title of the King of Rome; the enthusiastic support of the French population for this event, running against the memory of the revolution; the event marking the apogee of the Napoleonic empire

The defection of Russia from the Continental System and the subsequent Napoleonic campaign in Russia; the unprecedentedly great size of the French army on the Russian front

The battles of Smolensk and Borodino; the occupation of Moscow; the failure of the French army to obtain regular supply in the conditions of the Russian Winter; the failure to exploit the Russian countryside to this extent; the disastrous Napoleonic retreat from Russia

The general European revolt against the Napoleonic system following the defeat in Russia; the forging of stronger links between the European old regimes and

their populations, in the framework of modern nationalism

The sixth coalition war and the French defeat in the battle of Leipzig, or the Battle of the Nations

The allied occupation of Paris; the Russian emperor Alexander I as the hero of the victory over Napoleon

The abdication of Fountainebleau and the exile of the former emperor on the island of Elba

The Peace of Paris and its provisions regarding the restoration of the French borders prevailing before the beginning of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars; the inauguration of the Congress of Vienna

The comeback of Napoleon and the regime of the Hundred Days; the final defeat of Napoleon in the battle of Waterloo

The second Peace of Paris and the exile of the newly dethroned emperor on the island of Saint Helena

The Congress of Vienna

The restoration of the balance of power system based on the collaboration between the five great powers

The gulf stretching through the college of the great powers and separating the western countries of Britain and France from the central and East European ones of Austria, Prussia and Russia

The latter organized as a hard core of the system in the form of the Holy Alliance, fully dedicated to upholding the principles of the Old Regime, themselves relying on the notion of the alliance between the Throne and the Altar, against the danger of a revolutionary comeback

The Holy Alliance containing an element of self-subversion, in so far as its multi-confessional structure, bringing together a Catholic, a Protestant and an Orthodox power, was itself reminiscent of Enlightenment wisdom associated with the revolutionary temptation

Britain and France naturally estranged from the philosophy of the Holy Alliance by virtue of their accomplishments along the various layers of modernizing change; their connection as the countries of the dual revolution, following the end of the last Hundred Years War between them; the further strengthening of this connection, prefiguring the *Entente* presiding over the common involvement of the two countries in the world wars of the XXth century

The individual political figures presiding over the Congress and its outcomes; Klemens von Metternich as the defining European political figure of the decades following the Congress; Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand as the main architect of the French integration into the system

The development of the Congress of Vienna system

The Congress of Aachen and the retreat of the armies of occupation from France, together with the adjustment of French reparation debts

The Congress of Troppau, together with its Laybach sequel, and the principle of intervention, meant to allow the great powers to prevent the spread of revolutionary movements within the borders of the smaller states; the liberal revolts in Naples, Portugal and Spain

The Congress of Verona and the French intervention in Spain

The dynamics of international relations up to the dissolution of the Vienna Congress system

The anti-Ottoman uprisings in the Balkans as sources of tensions within the Holy Alliance and the Vienna system; the two Serbian uprisings; the Greek and Romanian uprisings and the Greek war of independence

The vacillating Russian attitude towards these events, deriving from the conflict between the dedication to the principle of anti-revolutionary intervention and the responsibilities accruing from the arrangements of the Protectorate; the Austrian opposition against the same

processes; the clash between Russia and Austria over the Balkan affairs

The support of public opinion in Britain and France for the anti-Ottoman revolts and the strong British support of the kind for the Greek enterprise; the gradual dissolution of the Holy Alliance and of the Vienna system largely due to the disagreements between the powers over the Balkans

Revolutionary developments of the period predating the moment 1848 with an impact on the development of the international system

The secession of Belgium from the Kingdom of the Low Countries, the latter created by the Congress of Vienna in continuation to the Napoleonic policies which had put an end to the Dutch republican tradition

Belgian independence; its consecration by the Treaty of London establishing the perpetual neutrality of the new country as a matter of international concern

The first Polish uprising against Russian rule; its suppression and the end of the Kingdom of Poland established by the Congress of Vienna and enjoying autonomy within the Russian empire; the Polish lands fully integrated into the Russian state by the means of the Organic Statute

The repeated failures of the sort encountered by the Polish national movement over the XIXth century

The Polish gentry emigration staying as an important component of the general European revolutionary movement

The cluster of associative structures developed within the framework of this movement

The German organizations of the kind and the Young Germany association, with an ideological program shaped by opposition to conservative Romanticism

The Italian organizations of the kind and the *Carbonari* tradition developed on this basis spreading in other parts of the continent

The figure of Giuseppe Mazzini, the foremost European advocate for the cause of national self-determination as a core article of the revolutionary creed of the age

The German area after the Congress of Vienna as a major source of international tensions and discontent

The German Confederation organized in continuation of the Napoleonic Confederation of the Rhine

Austria and Prussia constituting a particular category of Confederation member states, by virtue of their size and power as also by virtue of covering territories located both within and outside the borders of the confederative structure

Britain, Denmark and the Kingdom of the Low Countries constituting the second particular category of member states, participating to the Confederation as a result of holding provinces within the German world

The German Customs Union created upon the Prussian initiative and leaving Austria outside; its role in the process of German unification

The general characterization of the XIXth century as a period of history stretching from the Congress of Vienna to the outbreak of the First World War

The longest era of peace and stability in European history up to the present, with no generalized war and featuring only brief and localized military confrontations

These features of the era emerging clearly by contrast to the two periods of generalized war preceding and, respectively, succeeding it: that of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars and that of the XXth century world wars

The hundred years peace as a period of cumulative change and gradual improvement; the historical dilemma regarding the abrupt end of this period by the outbreak of the First World War, in its turn conducive to activating the radical politics of the Left and the Right in the XXth century, itself leading to the Second World War and ultimately to the configuration of the Cold War; the historical debates regarding the question

The sub-periods of the XIXth century thus defined

The period stretching from the Congress of Vienna to the European 1848 revolution

The prevalence of conservative and legitimist political views promoted by the establishments; the gradual return of revolutionary culture; the four strands of the revolutionary culture: liberalism, democracy, socialism and nationalism

The functioning of nationalism as a doctrine of the revolutionary Left; the program of redrawing the political borders of the continent according to the principle of the national state perceived as deeply subversive by the mainstream political forces

Russia staying as the dominant power on the continent; Britain staying as the dominant power on a world scale, a position maintained up to the early XXth century; the overwhelming British naval superiority

British preeminence in the field of industrial development; the beginning of the spread of industrialization from Britain eastwards on the continent of Europe; the emergence of privileged spots of industrial growth; the close connection between industrial growth and demographic growth

The ascendancy and dissemination of the Manchesterian branch of liberalism, supported by

Britain and relying on the notion of free trade unhindered by protectionist policies

The transition from the first industrial cycle, centered upon the textile industry, to the second industrial cycle, centered upon metallurgy, railroad construction and the building of steam engine ships

The restructuring of social stratification, with the urban bourgeoisie on advance to the detriment of the landholding categories of aristocratic origins and with the emergence of the industrial proletariat alongside the peasantry

The prevalence of the Marx-Dickens variety of capitalism, characterized by the absence of the policies of social protection, the absence of legislative devices for state mediation between capital and labor and the lack of syndical organizations

The prevalence of the Romantic cultural patterns; the gradual turn of the Romantic culture from the close association with the anti-revolutionary and legitimist political attitudes to the support for revolutionary views

The period stretching from the end of the 1848 Revolution to the creation of the new German Empire

France re-emerging as the dominant power on the continent, in conjunction with the continuation of British global domination

The establishment of liberal constitutionalism as a norm in Europe, outside Russia and the Ottoman Empire, with the corresponding entrenchment of the regime of civil equality

The steady advance of democratization, with increasing demands for the introduction of universal male suffrage

The evolution of socialism towards its Marxist form and the deepening of the Left-Right ideological polarization

The migration of nationalism from the Left to the center of the political-ideological spectrum and its adjudication by the establishments, in close correlation with the process of national unification in the Italian peninsula and in the German world; the contrast between the attitudes displayed with regard to the nationalist ideas by Metternich over the previous period and, respectively, by Otto von Bismarck over the period under discussion

The advance of industrialization to the confines of Russia and the Balkans

The bourgeoisie emerging as the dominant social class in the western countries and staying as a powerful challenge to the landholding aristocracies in the central and East European ones

The abolition of the social-economic arrangements of a feudal character in their remaining strongholds of the East

The growth of the industrial proletariat and the corresponding numerical reduction of the peasantry, related processes otherwise exhibiting great national variations

The apex of Manchesterian free trade liberalism; the turn from the Romantic cultural patterns to those of Positivism and Scientism

The period stretching from the German unification to the outbreak of the First World War

The revolutionizing of the balance of power system due to the emergence of the new German Empire; Germany the dominant power on the continent, in conjunction with British supremacy worldwide

The entrenchment of liberal constitutional regimes set on the course of democratization in the whole of Europe outside Russia and the Ottoman Empire; the gradual turn towards electoral regimes based on universal male suffrage; the emergence of isolated experiments with women suffrage

The full structuring of ideological polarization, exhibiting a socialist Left and a nationalist Right, around the liberal center

The organization of socialism at the national and the international level on the basis of the Marxist theory and against the background of its victory over the anarchist views

The further migration of nationalism along the political-ideological spectrum and the emergence of a new Right claiming to incorporate a deeper understanding of its demands than the establishments; France as the main laboratory of these ideological transformations; the links between the pre-war ideological polarization of the kind and the radical politics unleashed by the First World War

The bourgeoisie emerging as the dominant social class at the level of Europe as a whole; the prevalence of a sizable industrial proletariat, staying as the dominant segment of the working force in various countries and regions of the continent

The great variations in terms of social structure from West to East, featuring the near disappearance of peasantry in Britain and its still overwhelming share of the labor force in Russia and the Balkans; the survival of a sizable peasantry, numerically on a par with the industrial proletariat, in France and in Italy; the penetration of the industrial economy into Russia and the Balkans

The turn from the second industrial cycle to the third one, centered upon the chemical and petroleum industries

The relative decline of British industrial dynamism by comparison with Germany, the United States and Japan, the latter ones able to benefit from the advantages of relative backwardness by confrontation

with the challenges of such transformations of the industrial economy

A new stage in the development of colonial imperialism, marked by the penetration of colonial powers into the mainland areas of territories where imperialist control had hitherto been mainly confined to the coastal regions; the race for Africa at the center of the phenomenon

A peculiar connection between politics and economic life staying behind the surge for the expansion of empires

The emergence of monopolist capitalism resting on the cartelization of industrial branches around banking institutions, having in the background the drive away from Manchesterianism towards policies of protection and interventionism; the intermingling between political and economic groups of interest issuing from this

The crisis of overproduction encountered by the developed capitalist societies, with a corresponding search for markets and outlets of capital investment in the colonies; Britain able to keep the lead in the race for colonies

The balance of power system on the continent of Europe reshaped by the formation of two great rival alliances; the steady evolution of this constellation towards the outbreak of the First World War

The dynamics of international relations from the dissolution of the Vienna Congress system to the outbreak of the First World War

The 1848 European revolution and the dynamics of international relations

The different revolutionary patterns prevailing in France and in the western part of the continent, and respectively in the central and eastern part of the continent

The clash between the liberal-democratic program and the socialist demands characterizing the revolutionary process of the first kind

The clash between the liberal-democratic program and the nationalist demands staying at the center of the second variety of revolutionary developments

The Italian peninsula, the German area and the whole of the Austrian empire, with its composite national complexion, falling within the second pattern of revolutionary change described

In Italy the revolution unfolding both as a grass roots movement and as an enterprise driven by patriotic political establishments

King Charles Albert of Piedmont emerging as the leader of the war against Austrian domination in the North of the peninsula; the ensuing war of independence drawn to an abrupt end with the Italian defeat at the hands of Austria

The popular movement at the grass roots surviving this defeat on the battlefield and leading to the occupation of Rome by the revolutionary forces

The exile of pope Pius IX and the proclamation of the Roman Republic; the defeat of the latter by virtue of foreign intervention led by the new Bonapartist France

The French connection of the restored Papal State entrenched as an integral part of the international system

The revolution in the German world dominated by the search for the appropriate format of the envisioned unified German state, itself intended to serve as a venue of liberal-democratic development

The intermingling between German and non-German populations as a revolutionary predicament, alongside the non-German entanglements of Austria and Prussia

The creation of the all-German parliament at Frankfurt; the preliminary parliamentary assembly; the National Assembly and its constitutional objectives

The confrontation between the Little German solution and the Greater German solution to the dilemma of unification

The revolution in the Austrian empire staying in the background of the overall German search for the elaboration of a unified national path for further political development

The outbreak of the revolution in Vienna; the fall from power of Metternich marking the end of an era; the later abdication of the emperor Ferdinand I and the accession of the emperor Franz Joseph

The Hungarian revolution issuing into the proclamation of a national Hungarian state within the borders of historic Hungary, identified with the crown of St Stephen

The figure of Lajos Kossuth; the political program of the Hungarian revolutionary government; the abolition of old regime privileges and of feudal economic arrangements, with a view to integrating all the populations of the area into the constitutional framework based on equal civil rights

The revolt of the non-Hungarian populations against the design of a Hungarian national state with such a territorial format

The Romanian revolution in Transylvania, with a program resting on the demand of national autonomy;

the eventual collaboration between the Romanian revolutionary forces and the imperial forces against the Hungarian revolution, having in the background the imperial abolition of feudal economic arrangements

The final defeat of the Hungarian revolution as a result of Russian military intervention

The failure of the Frankfurt Parliament to elaborate a constitutional basis for German unification; the disbandment of the parliamentary assembly

The short-lived attempt at a German unification around Prussia taken in the footsteps of the revolutionary proceedings and in the form of the Erfurt Union; the failure of the latter

The Agreement of Olmütz and the refurbishment of the German Confederation on the basis of Austrian leadership and counter-revolutionary neo-absolutist politics

The successful processes of national unification taking place in the Italian peninsula and in the German world over the decades following the failure of the 1848 revolution

Their common pattern, resting on policies propelled top-down, by departure from revolutionary practices, moreover unfolding around core political units of the

respective contexts and under the firm leadership of dominant political figures

The Italian unification around the kingdom of Piedmont and under the leadership of Camillo di Cavour

The establishment of Cavour as prime minister of Piedmont and his policies meant to transform the latter into the pillar of Italian unification

His departure from the revolutionary Mazzinian tradition

His foreign policy meant to entrench Piedmont as a significant power on the European scene

His success in enlisting Piedmont alongside Britain and France in the coalition fighting against Russia in the Crimean War, itself taking place as a new stage in the unfolding of the Eastern Question

The victory of the coalition in the war; the Congress of Paris, the end of the Russian Protectorate in the Balkans and its replacement with a system of regional security sponsored by the western powers; the gains for Piedmont in terms of international prestige accruing from these developments

The anti-Austrian Plombières Agreement between Piedmont and France and the personal relations

between Cavour and the French ruler Napoleon III; the ensuing war with Austria

The victories of the French-Piedmontese coalition in the battles of Magenta and Solferino

The French occupation of Lombardy, held by Austria since the Congress of Vienna; the same province then ceded by France to Piedmont in exchange for the territories of Nice and Savoy, by virtue of the Treaty of Turin

The first stage of Italian national unification thus completed

The enterprise targeted at the continuation of the process of national unification and taken in the revolutionary vein by Giuseppe Garibaldi in the southern part of the peninsula

The landing of Garibaldian forces in Sicily; the rapid establishment of their control over the island, taking advantage of the apathetic reaction displayed by the local authorities of the Bourbon-led Neapolitan kingdom

The extension of the Garibaldian expedition into the continental territory of the kingdom; the threat to the Papal State and consequently to the alliance between Piedmont and France issuing from the advance of the popular movement of national unification in the South

The intervention of Cavour and of Piedmontese forces, involving parallel confrontations with the Bourbon

forces, with the Papal forces and with the Garibaldian forces; the Bourbon capitulation of Gaeta, following the siege of the city

The organization of plebiscitary consultations of the population and the subsequent decision of Garibaldi to join the Piedmontese course of action

The annexation to Piedmont of the Neapolitan Kingdom and of the provinces of Umbria, Romagna, Parma, Modena and Toscana, formerly placed under Papal or Austrian domination

The coronation of the Piedmontese king as a king of unified Italy, under the name of Victor Emmanuel II; the death of Cavour

The Papal State and Venice remaining outside the Italian state

The eventual Italian annexations of these two provinces; Venice annexed in the context of the Austrian defeat at the hands of Prussia (to be treated later); the papal State annexed in the context of the French defeat at the hands of Prussia (to be treated later)

South Tirol and the Dalmatian peninsula of Istria remaining as the Italian *Irredenta* up to the First World War and the subsequent peace arrangements

The German unification around Prussia and under the leadership of Otto von Bismarck

The accession of Bismarck as chancellor of Prussia

His dedication to the design of German unification around Prussia

His collaboration with Russia in the suppression of a new Polish uprising, meant to consolidate the Prussian system of alliances

The Austrian convocation of the Congress of German Princes at Frankfurt, meant to rejuvenate Austrian domination over the Confederation in continuation to the Agreement of Olmütz; the Congress sabotaged by the Prussian king Wilhelm I, in line with the policies of Bismarck

The common German military venture against Denmark, meant at the liberation of the Danish-held and largely German inhabited provinces of Schleswig and Holstein; the military enterprise as an occasion for a display of Prussian military effectiveness

The Gastein Convention taken in the footsteps of the German victory in the war and its provisions regarding the temporary arrangements for the administration of the two provinces, with Schleswig placed under Prussian mandate and Holstein devolved in the same fashion to Austria

The Austrian-Prussian war instigated by Prussia, first by the means of proposals regarding the reform of the

Confederation and then by the invasion of Holstein, following the Austrian refusal to comply

The Prussian victory, the disbandment of the German Confederation and the Creation of the new North German Confederation around Prussia, following a series of territorial annexations by the latter

The adoption of the North German Confederation constitutional act, devolving the function of the president to the Prussian king Wilhelm I, together with the patterning of the Federal Council and of the confederate parliamentary assembly called *Reichstag*

The Prussian instigation of a military conflict with France, in the context created by the candidature of Leopold of Hohenzollern for the Spanish throne, itself occasioned by a political crisis in the latter country

The ensuing French-German war, with the Prussian military effort supported by southern German states, staying outside the Prussian-led Confederation; the German victory and the proclamation of the German Empire in the palace of Versailles

The Prussian king as German emperor under the name of Wilhelm I; the new state patterned on the institutions of the North German Confederation

The evolutions taking place in the Balkans and within the Austrian empire at the time of the Italian and German unifications participating to the general

process of nation building in Europe; a focus upon the developments in the Habsburg realm

The neo-absolutist regime in Austria following the 1848 revolution

The end of this period by virtue of the Austrian defeat at the hands of the French-Piedmontese coalition, treated previously

The subsequent period of constitutional experimentations, involving experimentations with federalist designs taking into account both the historic identities of the various provinces and their ethno-national configurations

The Transylvanian experimentations taking place over this era, targeted at the multi-national organization of the province and centered upon the Diet of Sibiu, with a Romanian predominance

The end of this period of experimentation as a result of the new military defeat suffered by the Austrian state, at the hands of Prussia, treated previously

The subsequent design for the re-organization of the state on the basis of a compromise between the imperial government and the Hungarian political class; the arrangements of the dualist monarchy of Austria-Hungary issuing from this compromise, with the patterning of Hungary as a separate polity benefiting from a large autonomy, connected with Austria by the common monarch and in matters of foreign policy and national defense; the Hungarian national program thus

partly accomplished in a manner closely replicating the top-down evolutions leading to the Italian and the German unifications

International realignments in Europe and the world following the transformation of the balance of power system by virtue of German unification; the path to the First World War

The first system of European security structured around unified Germany, consisting in the League of the Three Emperors, itself bringing together Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia and closely resembling the Holy Alliance of the Congress of Vienna period

The failure of this arrangement as a result of the rivalry between Russia and Austria-Hungary over the Eastern Question and the Balkan affairs, once again in a manner resembling the dissolution of the previous alliance

The Balkan crisis inaugurated in the Ottoman province of Bosnia-Hertzegovina, extended to the Bulgarian province and expanded by the involvement of the Serbian principality; its evolution in a European context marked by renewed French-German tensions, with the entire constellation threatening to evolve towards a generalized war

The avoidance of such an outcome and the subsequent Russian-Ottoman war, issuing into the creation of the Bulgarian autonomous state under close Russian

protection; the Treaty of San Stefano, with the patterning of a large Bulgarian state staying as the support for a strong Russian involvement in the Balkans

The Austro-Hungarian dissatisfaction with this arrangement, the German intervention and the Congress of Berlin; the territorial truncation of the Bulgarian state and the diminution of the Russian presence in the region; the estrangement between Germany and Russia issuing from this and the dissolution of the League of the Three Emperors

The close partnership between Germany and Austria-Hungary, strengthened after a failed attempt at renewing the League of the Emperors; the creation of the Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy, upon the initiative of the Italian statesman Francesco Crispi; the extension of the Triple Alliance by virtue of a treaty with Romania

The advent of the new German emperor Wilhelm II and the more aggressive course taken by German foreign policy; the resignation of Bismarck upon the pressures exerted by the emperor

The French-Russian alliance concluded by opposition to the Triple Alliance; British foreign policy faced with two possible courses of action

The Splendid Isolation of Britain following the Crimean War, with British foreign policy largely disentangling itself from European involvements and focusing upon overseas affairs

The end of the Splendid Isolation as a result of the Fashoda Incident in Sudan, which threatened with the outbreak of a war between Britain and France over matters of colonial expansion

Britain faced with competition from the part of France, primarily in Africa; also faced with competition from the part of Russia over Asian affairs, in the contexts of Persia and China

Britain evaluating the German expansionist policies as posing a greater threat upon its interests over the long run than the rivalries with France and Russia; the conclusion of the *Entente Cordiale* between Britain and France; the British-Russian convention and the creation of the Triple Entente facing the Triple Alliance dominated by Germany

The Balkan Wars as the last stage in the development of the Eastern Question before the First World War

The truncation of the remaining Ottoman territory in Europe at the hands of the Balkan states

The subsequent truncation of Bulgaria at the hands of its Balkan neighbors

The tensions accumulated in the region and the eventual outbreak of the First World War in connection with Balkan affairs

The historical debates regarding the comparative responsibilities of the great powers for the outbreak of

the war and the particular debate regarding the special responsibilities of Germany