

HIST31281

From National Crisis to National Government British Politics, Economy and Society, 1914 – 1939

Dr Chris Godden

Outline of Module

From National Crisis to National Government explores the trajectory of Britain's political, economic, and social development during the First World War and the inter-war period. While the general expectation of the early 1920s was that pre-war conditions in Britain would be quickly re-established, the reality was very much different. Britain found herself facing severe challenges, including prolonged unemployment, industrial unrest, and the impact of a cataclysmic global slump. The aim of this module is to explore what lay behind these events, and so examine various aspects of Britain's economic and political transformation in the early decades of the twentieth century.

The focus of the module is quite broad, covering the economic and social impact of industrialised mass warfare, industrial conflicts and civil liberties, the political and financial crisis of 1931, the social and cultural impact of mass unemployment, and the rise of political extremism.

This module will appeal to students who are interested in twentieth century economic, social, and political history, as well as those who wish to explore ideas and topics connected with the broad themes of historical political economy.

Method of Assessment

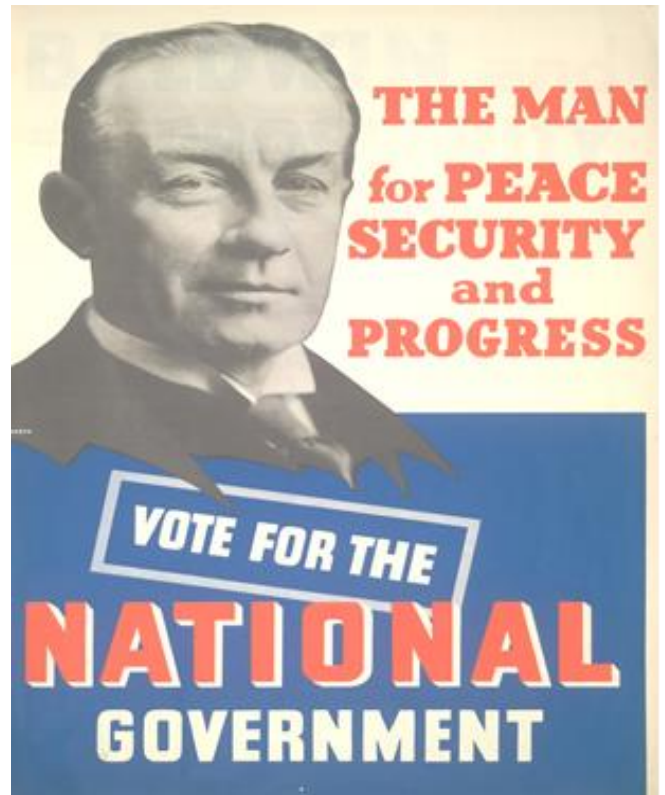
The assessment for this module is 100% course work. This is structured as follows:

- 1 x encyclopaedia entry (40% of the final mark)
- 1 x research essay (60% of the final mark)

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this module, please get in touch.

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Provisional workshop topics for the academic year 2021/22 include:

- Arming the Western Front: Business and the State in Britain during the First World War
- Walking the Fiscal Tightrope: The Political Economy of War Finance, 1914 – 1924
- The Conquest of \$4.86: Keynes, Churchill, and the Restoration of the Gold Standard
- The State, Labour Conflicts, and Civil Liberties, 1919 – 1926
- 'The Intractable Million': The Social and Cultural Dimension of Mass Unemployment
- The Death of Capitalism: Ideology and the Market in the 1930s
- Democracy and Political Extremism in Inter-War Britain



Indicative Reading

There is no one text that deals satisfactorily with all the themes covered in this module. The following will give you a good starting point in thinking about some of the topics:

Backhouse, Roger & Bradley Bateman, *Capitalist Revolutionary: John Maynard Keynes* (Harvard University Press, 2011)

Copsey, Nigel & Andrzej Olechnowicz (eds.), *Varieties of Anti-Fascism: Britain in the Inter-War Period* (Palgrave, 2010).

Howell, David, *MacDonald's Party: Labour Identities and Crisis, 1922 – 1931* (Oxford University Press, 2002).

Kent, Susan Kingsley. *Aftershocks: Politics and Trauma in Britain, 1918 – 1931* (Palgrave, 2009).

Lloyd-Jones, Roger & M.J. Lewis, *Arming the Western Front: War, Business and the State in Britain, 1900 – 1920* (Routledge, 2016).

Overy, Richard. *The Morbid Age: Britain Between the Wars* (Allen Lane, 2009).



Dissertations

The titles of some of the successful dissertations that students have attached to this module over the past few years are given below. As you will see, the module has attracted an eclectic mix of topics, covering themes in cultural history, economic history, social history, and political history.

- Economy and Strength: A Study of B.U.F. Propaganda in the 1930s
- Labour and the New Social Order: Labour's Preparations for the Post-War World, 1917-1920
- The BBC's Portrayal of Unemployment, 1931-1934
- The Treatment of Britain's Black Community during the 1919 Race Riots
- Identification, Classification and Control: The Development of the Preventative Intelligence Branch of M.I.5, 1911-1918
- The Union of Democratic Control and Hostility towards the Treaty of Versailles, 1919-1939
- Baldwin's Caution: Stanley Baldwin and Britain's Rearmament, 1935-1937
- Responses to the Defence of the Realm Act: The Question of Civil Liberties
- The Origins and Nature of Imperial Loyalty in the West Indies during the First World War
- 'Slave Camps': An Analysis of British Instructional Centres, 1929-1938
- Re-Evaluating the S-Plan: The Origins and Impact of the IRA's Forgotten Bombing Campaign, 1939 - 1940
- Problems of Reintegration: Disabled Ex-Servicemen, Unemployment, and Training Schemes in the 1920s
- Developing the War Economy: Coal, Munitions, Food and the State, 1914-1918
- Banking Crisis, Currency Crisis, Coalition Government: A Comparative Study of Political Economic Developments, 1931 and 2007/11
- The Ideology of Masculinity in the British Union of Fascists
- 'Cutting Out the Dead Wood': Reactions of the British Left to the Moscow Show Trials