

Sciences Po Strasbourg		
École	de l'Université de Strasbourg	

Britain and Europe from 1945 to Brexit

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Summary

The UK emerged from the Second World war as a great power in mind but no longer in fact. Britain's foreign policy thus had to adapt the new context of international relations dominated by great powers she was no longer part of. Britain's current foreign policy was forged throughout the second half of the 20th century by taking stock of her own relative decline in power as well as trying to find remedies to overcome it.

The abject of this module is to give students some keys to understand the tenets and ambitions of Britain's foreign policy and to reflect on the strategies British governments have displayed, and relied upon, to bolster Britain's raie in the world beyond "middle power" status.

This module will follow a chronological outline, in order to identify the continuities and changes in Britain's foreign policy choices. This course will examine a series of post-war challenges to Britain's vision of her raie and influence in the world, from the Suez crisis to the EEC application or the war in Iraq. This course will conclude with a discussion on Britain's place in the world today in the wake of Brexit.

Objectives

-To critically evaluate Britain's foreign policy since 1945

To identify the driving forces of Britain's foreign policy

-To gain a greater understanding of Britain's own conception of her raie in the world

-To get background knowledge in order to have a better grasp of Britain's current foreign policy choices, challenges and perspectives.

Evaluation / Assessment

An oral outline presentation of the documents (academic article, primary sources, etc.) that will

serve as the basis of class discussion.

A written 300- to 500-word summary of the presentation will have to be sent to the teacher prior to the class. (40%)

Participation in class discussions (10%)

A final paper at the end of the semester (800 to 1000 words) (50%)

Plan des séances / Course outline

The course will be organised around a number of topics, by chronological order.

Session 1 : Introduction

1.The post-war paradigm : the « three circles »

Session 2 : Churchill's three circles and Labour's foreign policy in the first years of the cold war (1945-55)

Session 3 : Back to reality : the Suez crisis (1956)

2.The aftermath of Suez : building Britain's foreign policy on new bases ?

Session 4 : The Macmillan years (1956-1963): Britain as the us's aider brother or junior partner ?

Session 5 : Walking a tight rope: the representation and meaning of EEC membership in British foreign policy.

Session 6 : Walking a tight rope: the representation and meaning of EEC membership in British foreign policy.

3.Great power by proxy : Consolidating Britain's role as the indispensable ally

Session 7 : The Thatcher years: consolidating the "Anglosphere"

Session 8 : Back to basics? The post-Cold war years and Britain's self-representation as a "pivotai partner"

Session 9 : Concluding remarks and discussion on Britain's place in the world today and perspectives in the wake of Brexit.

Bibliographie sélective/ Select bibliography

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Harris T., *Une certaine idée de l'Angleterre: la politique étrangère britannique ou 20^{ème} siècle*, Armand Colin, 2006

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Murphy Ph. *The Empire's new clothes: the myth of Commonwealth*, Hurst&co, 2018

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Longman, 2000
Sanders D., *Losing an Empire, finding a raie: British foreign policy since 1945*, (2nd ed) Palgrave Macmillan, 2017

Schnapper P., Avril E., *Où va le Royaume Uni? Le Brexit et après*, Odile Jacob, 2019

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