“France: 1914 Onwards”

Lecturer: Dr. M. Jesenský  
E-mail: marcel.jesensky@carleton.ca  
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Introduction

Alexis de Tocqueville described France in the mind-nineteenth century as "of all European nations … the best qualified to become, in the eyes of other people, an object of admiration, of hatred, of compassion, or alarm, never of indifference."

France holds a unique status in the world. The "Hexagone" is a driving force for European integration and enjoys, with Great Britain and Germany, the status of first among equals in the European Union. From cinema and theatre to literature and philosophy, from high fashion to luxury manufacture to some of the world's truly great cuisine, France has been a global touchstone of both the arts and the art of living (and eating) well.

The course offers a history of modern France, an extraordinary nation, with detailed analyses of politics, society, and culture.

Week 1: A "certain idea of France" (pre-1914)

It is impossible to understand the present without considering the past, but it might be argued that the impact of the past declines with time. Medieval and early modern France saw the struggle of kings to assert themselves against an unruly nobility. The Revolution and Empire brought a first stages of a transition to modern capitalism. The period from 1815 to 1914 saw the acceleration of changes and reforms.

The making of France

Sun King

_Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité_

The Empire into the Republic

Week 2: War and Peace (1914-1929)

The Great War, which lasted from August 1914 to November 1918, deeply marked the character of modern France. The great irony of World War I, is that winning the war meant losing the peace, thereby creating the conditions for new domestic and international instability and crisis.
Fight to the Bitter End

The "Big Four" at Versailles

The Deceptive Peace

Renewal

**Week 3: Stagnation (1929-1945)**

The Wall Street crash in October 1929 saw the onset of the most serious crisis ever to hit the capitalist world. During the following decade the "Hexagone" would experience a depression severe enough to shatter many illusions about its internal stability and great power status. Bitter internal disunity, economic depression, and a deteriorating international situation led to a disastrous failure in 1940; but brought de Gaulle's triumphant resurrection of France in 1944-45.

Depression and Instability

The Popular Front

The Defeat

The Liberation

**Week 4: Marrying the Country (1945-1969)**

The Liberation aroused substantial expectations of political and social reform. In the following decade, France came to be integrated into the West European and Atlantic economies. The period from 1958 to 1973 saw the most rapid economic growth in French history. With the come back of de Gaulle, strong political leadership returned.

The "glorious" years

Remaking Western Europe

Dismantling empire

The politics of *grandeur*

**Week 5: Return to "normal" (1969-1995)**

The 1970s ushered France in a painful new 30-year transitional period to a post-industrial
France was shifting from a primary economy, with wealth generated by producing heavy industrial products, to a secondary economy centered on services, finance, and high technology.

Normalization

Rupture with capitalism

Cohabitation

So far, so good

**Week 6: The Commitment to grandeur (1995-2020)**

Domestically and internationally, French identity was challenged by the transformation of the globalizing world. In 2017, France elected charismatic Emmanuel Macron to assist France in its transformation. As France looks to the future, it clearly faces challenges in preserving its prosperity, its social cohesion, and its international status. Nevertheless, most of the population seem destined to enjoy growing prosperity. Paradoxically, through the extension and strengthening of the European Union, that is, through the further loss of national sovereignty, the institutions and national identity of France can be preserved.

Leading "Old Europe"

"What is a nation?"

*Les Bleus*

Culture, Commerce and Cash
Further readings:


Key dates and milestones in French history

10,000 BC  Cave paintings at Lascaux, south-west France
58-49 BC  Julius Caesar conquers Gaul
496  Baptism of Clovis, King of the Franks
786-814  Charlemagne's Empire
1066  The Norman Conquest
1096-1270  The Crusades
1337-1453  The Hundred Years' War with England
1431  Joan of Arc burned at the stake in Rouen
1598  Edict of Nantes (revoked 1685)
1643-1715  Reign of Louis XIV at Versailles
1789  Beginning of the French Revolution on 14 July
1804  Napoleon I crowned Emperor
1805-1815  Napoleonic battles including Trafalgar, Austerlitz, Waterloo
1830-1848  France conquers Algeria
1848  Universal male suffrage
1871  France loses Franco-Prussian War
1880  National Day (14 July) established
1882  Jules Ferry laws establishing free, secular and compulsory primary school education
1901  Law providing for the freedom of association
1904  Entente cordiale between France and Britain
1905  Law separating Church and State
1914-18  World War I
1919  The Versailles Treaty
1936  Popular Front government and the Matignon agreements providing workers' rights including paid holidays
1939  World War II begins
1940  Armistice with Germany, de Gaulle calls for French resistance
1944  Allied Normandy landings in June begin the liberation of France. Women get the vote
1950  Schuman Declaration (9 May) begins la construction européenne: (West)European integration
1951  Signature of Treaty of Paris creating the European Coal and Steel Community: France one of the six founder members (France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg)
1954  Loss of French colonies in Indochina
1958  Algerian war begins
1958  Algerian war triggers return of Charles de Gaulle and founding of Fifth French Republic
1962  Constitutional amendment providing for direct election of President of the Republic by universal suffrage
1968  Student uprisings, general strike
1975  Legalization of abortion and divorce by consent
France: 1914 Onwards

Program of nuclear power generation
1981
Abolition of death penalty
1984
Liberalization of television and radio
1989-90
National Front breakthrough in European Parliament elections
1990-91
Fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany
1992
France takes part in first Gulf War
1994
Approval of the Maastricht Treaty paving the road to European Economic and Monetary Union
1998
Inauguration of the Channel Tunnel linking France and England
1999
Les Bleus football team wins World Cup
2001
End of military conscription
2002
France starts using the Euro - the European single currency
2003
France refuses to join the US-led attack on Iraq in the second Gulf War
2004
Law banning Islamic headscarves and other "conspicuous" religious signs in state schools
2010
Parliamentary debate on banning clothing that "hides the face" - notably the Islamic burqa and niqab - anywhere in public
Les Bleus football team returns in disgrace after losing in the first round of the World Cup in South Africa: President Sarkozy launches an inquiry
2013
100th edition of Tour de France
2015
Charlie Hebdo shooting (7 January)
Paris attacks (13 November)
2017
Emmanuel Macron wins the presidential election (7 May)
2018
Les Bleus football team wins World Cup
2019
France hosts G-7 summit at Biarritz

### 200-plus years of regime change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Monarch/Leader</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolute monarchy</td>
<td>Louis XVI</td>
<td>1774-1792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td>1792-1804</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Empire</td>
<td>Napoléon I</td>
<td>1804-1814</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>The Restoration</td>
<td>1815-1830</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>The July Monarchy</td>
<td>1830-1848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td>1848-1852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Empire</td>
<td>Napoléon III</td>
<td>1852-1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td>1870-1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The French State</td>
<td>The Vichy regime</td>
<td>1940-1944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisional government</td>
<td></td>
<td>1944-1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td>1947-1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td>1958-present</td>
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</tbody>
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### President of the Second Republic

Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte 1848-1851

### Presidents of the Third Republic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Years</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adolphe Thiers</td>
<td>1871-1873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrice de Mac Mahon</td>
<td>1873-1879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jules Grévy</td>
<td>1879-1887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie-François-Sadi Carnot</td>
<td>1887-1894</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jean Casimir-Perier</td>
<td>1894-1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Félix Faure</td>
<td>1895-1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Émile Loubet</td>
<td>1899-1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armand Fallières</td>
<td>1906-1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Poincaré</td>
<td>1913-1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Deschanel</td>
<td>18 Feb-20 Sept 1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandre Millerand</td>
<td>1920-1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaston Doumergue</td>
<td>1924-1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Doumer</td>
<td>1931-1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert Lebrun</td>
<td>1932-1940</td>
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</tbody>
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### The French State

Philippe Pétain 1940-44
### Presidents of the Fourth Republic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vincent Auriol</td>
<td>1947-1954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>René Coty</td>
<td>1954-1959</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Presidents of the Fifth Republic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles de Gaulle</td>
<td>1959-1969</td>
<td>Re-elected 1965 by direct election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georges Pompidou</td>
<td>1969-1974</td>
<td>Died in office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valéry Giscard d'Estaing</td>
<td>1974-1981</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>François Mitterand</td>
<td>1981-1995</td>
<td>Two seven-year terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacques Chirac</td>
<td>1995-2007</td>
<td>One seven-year term and one five-year term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicolas Sarkozy</td>
<td>2007-2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>François Hollande</td>
<td>2012-2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emmanuel Macron</td>
<td>2017-present</td>
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