

## Spring, 2024 Semester – Syllabus

**Instructor: Ted Wilks**

**BBC Drama: “Fall of Eagles”**

**Course No.: xxx**

**Day, time: Wednesdays, 9:00 am – 10:15 am**

“Fall of Eagles” is a 13-part British television drama aired by the BBC in 1974 and previously shown at OLLI in 2014. The series portrays historical events from 1848 to 1918 that deal with the ruling dynasties of Europe: the Habsburgs in Austria-Hungary, the Hohenzollerns in Germany, and the Romanovs in Russia.

<b>Episode</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Time period</b>
<b>1</b>	“Death Waltz”	1853–1860
<p>Franz Josef has been emperor since 1848 when he was 18, yet he remains unmarried. His mother Archduchess Sophie is determined to ensure the Habsburg line and favours her niece Helene as the future empress. Franz has other ideas; he prefers Helene’s 15-year-old sister Elisabeth, nicknamed Sisi. However the teenaged Bavarian princess finds herself ill-equipped to deal with both her new position as empress of Austria and her domineering mother-in-law.</p>		
<b>2</b>	“The English Princess”	1858–1871
<p>In the hope of promoting a liberal, united Germany, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert arrange for their eldest daughter Victoria (“Vicky”) to marry Prince Frederick (“Fritz”) of Prussia. However, despite her love for “Fritz,” the British princess is unprepared for her new life in Germany, where her liberal views clash with the up-and-coming “Iron Chancellor,” Otto von Bismarck, and the Prussian doctrine of iron and blood.</p>		
<b>3</b>	“The Honest Broker”	1887–1890
<p>Bismarck realizes his goal of a unified Germany and then seeks an alliance with the Austrians and Russians through the League of the Three Emperors to maintain the peace of Europe. His plans also extend to Fritz and Vicky’s son Wilhelm, who has become estranged from his parents. Unfortunately, events will prove fatal for Bismarck because first Wilhelm I and then his successor Frederick III (Fritz) die and the imperious Wilhelm—now Kaiser Wilhelm II—assumes the throne. Bismarck is forced to resign. The elderly Chancellor seeks support from Vicky but she blames him for the estrangement between mother and son.</p>		
<b>4</b>	“Requiem for a Crown Prince”	1889
<p>Tragedy strikes the House of Habsburg when Crown Prince Rudolf of Austria-Hungary and his young mistress Mary Vetsera are found dead from what initially appears to be a murder-suicide at the hunting lodge at Mayerling. In Vienna the imperial court contrives to hide the true events to cover up what may be a potential public scandal.</p>		
<b>5</b>	“The Last Tsar”	1892–1894
<p>Tsar Alexander III doubts the ability of Nicholas, his son and heir-apparent, to inherit the Russian throne. The young Tsarevich is similarly apprehensive; despite his longstanding affair with St. Petersburg ballerina Mathilde Kschessinska, and his parents’ disapproval, he is determined to marry Princess Alix of Hesse-Darmstadt. He is supported in this by his cousin Kaiser Wilhelm and Alix’s grandmother, the ageing Queen Victoria. Meanwhile, the autocratic conservatism of the Imperial Government is breeding revolutionaries.</p>		
<b>6</b>	“Absolute Beginners”	1903
<p>Nicholas II has been Tsar for nine years. In Russia the question is no longer whether there will be a revolution, but rather when will it happen and who will lead it. In London Vladimir Il’yich</p>		

Ulyanov, who now calls himself Lenin, develops his own more-radical brand of Marxism and manoeuvres to divide the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party from his rival Julius Martov.

<b>7</b>	<b>“Dearest Nicky”</b>	<b>1904–1905</b>
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While Nicholas is preoccupied by war with Japan, the birth and health of his only son Alexei, and the continual unsolicited advice of his cousin the Kaiser, a rising tide of discontent among the working class of St. Petersburg leads first to the assassination of the interior minister Vyacheslav von Plehve and then to a disastrous demonstration led by police spy and priest Georgy Gapon. Despite these events Nicholas is still convinced of his peoples’ loyalty. Wilhelm attempts to convince Nicholas to sign a friendly alliance through private correspondence; Nicholas is eager to sign and argues that Germany helped Russia during the war whereas France didn’t but his ministers insist that he cannot break his pact with France.

<b>8</b>	<b>“The Appointment”</b>	<b>1905</b>
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When Grand Duke Sergey is murdered, Nicholas dismisses his Police Chief and considers Pyotr Rachkovsky as a suitable replacement even though he is rumoured to use agent provocateurs. Both Sergey Witte and Empress Alexandra – albeit for different reasons – also have grave concerns about him and his methods.

<b>9</b>	<b>“Dress Rehearsal”</b>	<b>1908–1909</b>
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England’s King Edward VII makes a visit to Russia to consummate an alliance with Russia. Meanwhile Russia’s Foreign Minister Alexander Izvolsky, who has his sights set narrowly on the Dardanelles and the freedom of the Russian fleet rather than peace in the Balkans, finds himself outmanoeuvred by Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Lexa von Aehrenthal when Austria annexes Bosnia and Herzegovina, which precipitates a diplomatic crisis.

<b>10</b>	<b>“Indian Summer of an Emperor”</b>	<b>1914</b>
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Franz Josef fears for Austria-Hungary’s future in the hands of his nephew and heir-presumptive Franz Ferdinand, especially since he spends too much time with Kaiser Wilhelm. However he soon gets news of the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie Chotek in Sarajevo; this sets in motion a chain of events that leads to the outbreak of World War I.

<b>11</b>	<b>“Tell the King the Sky is Falling”</b>	<b>1915–1916</b>
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While the Russian army ‘drowns in its own blood’ against the German Army, Russian politicians Alexander Trepov, Alexander Protopopov, and Mikhail Rodzianko thrash about aimlessly. Nicholas decides to leave the capital to take personal command of the army; he leaves his wife Alexandra in Petrograd to act as his eyes and ears. However, Alexandra has come to rely heavily on the advice of faith healer Grigori Rasputin.

<b>12</b>	<b>“The Secret War”</b>	<b>1917</b>
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As World War I rages Kaiser Wilhelm realizes his limitations and delegates more of his decision-making to Ludendorff, Hindenburg, and Admiral von Hotzendorf, who enact various risky strategies for Germany’s ‘total victory’. Alexander Kerensky incites revolution in Russia, and Lenin and his comrades are marooned in Switzerland, but Germany may prove to be an unexpected ally in ending their exile with the help of Dr Helphand.

<b>13</b>	<b>“End Game”</b>	<b>1918</b>
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Franz Joseph of Austria has died, and the Bolsheviks execute Nicholas and his entire family. After Germany’s last 1918 spring offensive the USA enters the war and British tanks advance across France. Generals Hindenburg and Ludendorff do not share Kaiser Wilhelm’s optimism. The 1918 mutiny forces the Kaiser’s abdication and he flees into exile in the Netherlands – he is the last Eagle to fall.

**DVD release**

Fall of Eagles was released on video and DVD in 2004 in the United Kingdom, with the release including a comprehensive viewing notes booklet written by Andy Priestner that provided further details on the historical events and characters in the series and new interviews with Gayle Hunnicutt, Charles Kay, and David Cunliffe (one of the directors). The DVD without the companion booklet was released in the United States in May 2006.

### Music

The music accompanying the main title and credits is the *Trauermarsch* (Funeral March), the first movement of Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 5. The closing theme music is the central section from the first movement of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 6.

### Cast

Abbot Grunboek	Carleton Hobbs
Admiral Müller	John Robinson
Aide to Franz Joseph	Noel Fredericks
Aide to Kaiser Wilhelm II	Eric Carte
Aleksey Kuropatkin	James Mellor
Alexander Helphand	Michael Gough
Alexander Izvolsky	Peter Vaughan
Alexander Fyodorovich Kerensky (1881-1970)	Jim Norton
Alexander Protopopov	Hugh Burden
Alexander Trepov	Frank Mills
Alexandrovna (?)	Svandis Jons
Anna Vyubova	Miriam Margolyes
Archbishop	John Welsh
Archduchess Sophie	Pamela Brown
Archduchess Zita	Heather Page
Archduke Franz Ferdinand	Peter Woodthorpe
Archduke Karl	Roy McArthur
Austrian Ambassador (Count Szögyény)	Noel Davis
Baltazzi	David Neal
Baroness Vetsera	Irene Hamilton
Baumann	Peter Weston
Bentinck	Kevin Brennan
Bernhard von Bülow	Peter Dyneley
Bolshevik Soldier	Tom Kempinski
Bratfisch	Patrick Durkin
Chancellor Hertling	Erik Chitty
Clerk	Arnold Peters
Constantine	Howard Rawlinson
Count Aehrenthal	John Moffatt
Count Andrassy	Sandor Elès
Count Hoyos	James Cossins
Count Majlath	Donald Gee
Count Montenuovo	Michael McStay

Count Paar	Neville Barber
Count Pourtalès	Ed Devereaux
Count Stookau	Vernon Dobtcheff
Count Taaffe	Emrys James
Cousin Serge	John Nightingale
Crown Prince Willy of Germany (Kaiser Wilhelm II's son)	Colin Baker
Crown Princess Stephanie	Susan Tracy
Danilov	Roy Sampson
Doctor	Alan Hockey
Dr. Martin	Anthony Roye
Dr. Wegner	Antony Carrick
Ella (young)	Ann Castle
Ella (older)	Isla Blair
Emperor Franz Josef of Austria (young)	Miles Anderson
Emperor Franz Joseph (older)	Laurence Naismith
Empress Alexandra	Gayle Hunnicutt
Empress Augusta ("Dona") (young)	Valerie Phillips
Empress Augusta (older)	Eve Pearce
Empress Elisabeth of Austria ("Sisi") (young)	Diane Keen
Empress Elisabeth of Austria (older)	Rachel Gurney
Empress Maria Fyodorovna	Ursula Howells
Empress Victoria (Princess "Vicky";1840-1901)	Gemma Jones
Erich Ludendorff	Michael Bates
Father Georgy Apollonovich Gapon (1870-1906)	Kenneth Colley
Father John	Kevin Stoney
First Adjutant	Robert Tayman
Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf	Alan Cullen/T. P. McKenna
Fraulein von Ferenczy	Rosamund Greenwood
Friedrich Ebert	Peter Schofield
Friedrich von Holstein	Frederick Jaeger
Fullon	Robert Keegan
General Alexeyev	Nigel Stock
General Ruzsky	Esmond Knight
George Plekhanov (1856-1918)	Paul Eddington
Georges Clemenceau	John Bennett
Glazkov	Tom Conti
Grand Duchess Anastasia	Pippa Vickers
Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna	Rosalie Crutchley
Grand Duchess Marie	Prue Clarke
Grand Duchess Olga	Martha Nairn
Grand Duchess Tatiana (young)	Sharon Terry
Grand Duchess Tatiana (older)	Hetty Baynes
Grand Duke Nicholas	John Phillips
Grigory Rasputin	Michael Aldridge

Grigory Zinoviev	John Rhys-Davies
Helene	Ann Penfold
Heller	Jay Neill
Helmuth von Moltke the Elder	Basil Henson
Helphand's Secretary	Ann Zelda
Hesse	John Stratton
Hildegarde	Kathleen Michael
Julius Martov (né Yuli Osipovich Tsederbaum;1873-1923)	Edward Wilson
Kaiser Friedrich III ("Fritz")	Denis Lill
Kaiser Wilhelm I	Maurice Denham
Kaiser Wilhelm II (young)	Adam Cunliffe
Kaiser Wilhelm II (older)	Barry Foster
Katharina Schratt	Nora Swinburne
Ketterl	George Merrit
King Edward VII (young) ("Bertie";1841-1910)	Mike Elles
King Edward VII (older) (1841-1910)	Derek Francis
Kottwitz	Clyde Pollitt
Krasikov	Robert O'Mahoney
Leon Trotsky (né Lev Davidovich Bronshtein;1879-1940)	Michael Kitchen
Lieber	David Freeman
Losehek	Michael Sheard
Mackenzie	David McKail
Maid	Melanie Peck
Manus	Anthony Collin
Martinov	Raymond Witch
Mathilde Kschessinska	Jan Francis
Medal Sergeant	Paul Haley
Mieczysław Bronski	Malcolm Terris
Mikhail Rodzianko	Charles Gray
Mirkov	Leonard Fenton
Mme. Izvolsky	Shirley Dixon
Mother	Eileen Helsby
Mounia	Alix Crista/Jenny Till
Nadezhda Krupskaya	Lynn Farleigh
Narrator	Michael Hordern
Nikolay Chkheidze	Ronald Govey
Officer	Haydn Wood
Officer of Russian Army	John Rees
Otto Eduard Leopold, Prince of Bismarck (1815-1898)	Curt Jürgens
Paul Miliukov	David Collings
Paul von Hindenburg	Marius Goring
Paul von Hintze	Griffith Jones
Petitioner	Rio Fanning
Police Agent Bayer	Leon Lissek

Police Commissar Gorup	Frank Wylie
Police Inspector	John Beardmore
Police President Baron Krauss	Olaf Pooley
Police Sergeant	Desmond Cullum-Jones
Prince Albert	Frank Thornton
Prince Albrecht of Prussia	Roger Hammond
Prince Charles of Prussia	Geoffrey Chater
Prince Lvov	John Rae
Prince Maximilian of Baden	Laurence Hardy
Prince Mirsky	John Turner
Prince Philip of Eulenburg	John Barcroft
Prince Philipp of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha	Anthony Newlands
Printer	Colin Jeavons
Professor Widerhoffer	Kenneth Benda
Putilov	Michael Golden
Pyotr Rachkovsky (1853-1910)	Michael Bryant
Pyotr Stolypin	Frank Middlemass
Queen Victoria (young) (1819-1901)	Perlita Neilson
Queen Victoria (older) (1819-1901)	Mavis Edwards
Second Adjutant	Ian Ricketts
Secretary	Roger Nott
Secretary	John Surman
Secretary	Peter Whitaker
Sergeant	Jon Croft
Sergey Witte	Freddie Jones
Singer	Peter Pratt
Sir Arthur Nicolson	Brian Hawksley
Sir Edward Grey	Tom Criddle
Socialist Émigré	Isabelle Stanton
Spokeswoman	Glynne Thomas
Stationmaster	John Herrington
Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg	Peter Copley
Tsar Alexander III	Tony Jay
Tsar Nicholas II	Charles Kay
Tsar Nicholas's aide	Peter Jolley
Tsarevich Alexei	Piers Flint-Shipman
Tupuridze	Julian Fox
Uncle Sergey	Robert Brown
Valet de Chambre	Michael Cotterill
Vara	Barbara Keogh
Vera Zasulich	Mary Wimbush
Vladimir Kokovtsov	David Dodimead
Vladimir Lambsdorff	John Quarmby
Vladimir Lenin (né Vladimir Il'yich Ulyanov; 1870-1924)	Patrick Stewart

Voeykov	Basil Clarke
Vyacheslav von Plehve	Bruce Purchase
Wahl	Denzil Ellis
Wally	Sandra Clark
Wickham Steed	Andrew Keir
Wilhelm Groener	Geoffrey Toone
Yevno Azef	Victor Winding