

Tracing Your European Ancestors by Julie Goucher RootsTech 2016 (RT1137W) Syllabus



Researching in Europe can be incredibly frustrating. In this session we will be exploring some sources for variety of countries, looking at, and considering some of the key events that have occurred across Europe in particular those that have defined how the Continent has been shaped since the second world war. We too will look at the challenges that researchers face when undertaking research in Europe.

Europe is made up of more than 50 countries. Some have been established for centuries and have a phenomenal history whilst others have formed in the last twenty years or so as they battled to establish their identity.

There are many significant events that have shaped Europe too and they must be considered as you begin to research in Europe.

Significant Events

- ❖ First World War
- ❖ Second World War
- ❖ Border Changes
- ❖ European Empires
- ❖ Political Unrest

Things to consider

- ❖ Countries that are geographically close to your country of research
- ❖ Know your geography!
- ❖ Know your enemy! – was the neighbouring country always an ally?
- ❖ Established religion in your country?
- ❖ Language of your research country? Regional dialects?
- ❖ Political Influence
- ❖ Lack of information available – Is that a negative piece of research?
- ❖ Europeans write the date in the format of date, month & year!

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Major European Resources

- ❖ Family Search – www.familysearch.org
- ❖ Ancestry (worldwide subscription) – www.ancestry.com
- ❖ Naturalisation Records – www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
- ❖ Cyndi's List – www.cyndislist.com
- ❖ Italian Gen – www.Italiangen.org
- ❖ German Gen – www.germangenealogygroup.com
- ❖ Genealogy on Facebook – <http://socialmediagenealogy.com/genealogy-on-facebook-list>
- ❖ Wikipedia – use this as a stepping stone to give a sense of information

United Kingdom & Republic of Ireland

- ❖ GENUKI – www.genuki.org
- ❖ The National Archives - www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
- ❖ The National Archives of Ireland - <http://www.nationalarchives.ie/>
- ❖ The Public Records Office of Northern Ireland - www.proni.gov.uk/
- ❖ The National Archives of Wales - <http://www.archiveswales.org.uk>
- ❖ The National Archives of Scotland - <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk>

France

- ❖ Gallica Library - <http://gallica.bnf.fr>
- ❖ Huguenot's Society - <http://www.huguenotsociety.org.uk/history.html>
- ❖ Mapping Surnames in France - <http://www.geopatronyme.com>
- ❖ Geneanet - <http://en.geneanet.org/explore/french-ancestors/>

Iberia, Italy & Switzerland

- ❖ National Library of Portugal - <http://www.bnportugal.pt>
- ❖ Map your Italian Surname - <http://www.gens.info/>
- ❖ Anglo Italian Family History Society - <http://www.anglo-italianfhs.org.uk/>
- ❖ Swiss Roots Genealogy - <http://www.theswisscenter.org/swissroots/genealogy/>
- ❖ World Names - <http://worldnames.publicprofiler.org>

Germany & Austria

- ❖ Anglo German Family History Society - www.anglo-german.fhs.org
- ❖ Surname Distribution 1942 & 1998 - <http://www.gen-evolu.de/>
- ❖ Surname Distribution - <http://www.verwandtd.de>
- ❖ Austrian GenWeb - <http://www.austriagenweb.org>
- ❖ Austrian State Archives - <http://www.oesta.gv.at>

Scandinavia

- ❖ Finding Your Swedish Roots - <http://www.genealogi.se/finding-your-swedish-roots>
- ❖ Swedish Archives online 1600's – 1894 - <http://www.arkivdigital.net/swedish-genealogy>
- ❖ Genealogical Society of Finland - <http://hiski.genealogia.fi/historia/indexe.htm>
- ❖ Norway Naming Patten's – <http://www.norwaydna.no/gedcoms-and-genealogy/norwegian-names-en>

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Russia, Poland & Ukraine

- ❖ Genealogical research in Ukraine - <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Eng/genealogia.php>
- ❖ Lost Russian & Ukrainian Family - <https://lostrussianfamily.wordpress.com>
- ❖ The Russian Revolution - <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/sessions/russian>
- ❖ Russiapedia - <http://russiapeda.rt.com>
- ❖ Genealogy in Poland - <http://www.polishroots.org>
- ❖ West Prussian Land Records - <http://www.odessa3.org/collections/land/wprussia>

The Low Countries (The Netherlands, Belgium & Luxembourg)

- ❖ Trace Your Dutch Roots - <http://www.traceyourdutchroots.com>
- ❖ Dutch Genealogy - <http://www.dutchgenealogy.nl/>
- ❖ State Archives in Belgium - <http://www.arch.be>
- ❖ Researching in Luxembourg - <http://libguides.stthomas.edu/luxgen>

Surnames

The chances are that if you are researching a European surname you are recording that name wherever you find it. If you are, then you are already building a database of a One-Name Study.

The Guild of One-Name Studies is an excellent resources for those thinking about or actually undertaking a One-Name Study. The Guild's website can be explored and once a member you can access the data contained within the various indexes. To find out more visit the website – www.one-name.org or stop by the Guild booth in the Expo Hall.



- ❖ The Art of One-Name Studies by the Guild of One-Name Studies - <http://one-name.org/taoons.html>
- ❖ The Surname Handbook by Debbie Kennett - http://one-name.org/sales/Book_SurnamesHandbook.html

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DNA Studies

- ❖ DNA Projects at Family Tree DNA - <http://www.familytreedna.com>
 - ❖ Surnames
 - ❖ Geographical
 - ❖ Religious
- And testing & results
- ❖ <http://dna.ancestry.com/>
 - ❖ International Society of Genetic Genealogy <http://www.isogg.org/>

Final Words

To research Europe in an hour presentation or even in a 4 page syllabus is quite a challenge; there is a great deal of research possible for researching in Europe and indeed there are many countries to consider and include. Not all research is online and for those of you researching in the area that fell under the remit of the USSR may find it especially hard, but preserve and remember that you need to be resourceful. You may need to research other families and areas in order to establish links to your family or to flesh out their lives.

Perhaps focus on the surname, the town or place where your family hailed from. Connect with others, as they may have already encountered the hurdles and problems you face.

For those of you attending the presentation, I hope that you enjoy it and gain some information and ideas to assist you in your research. There is more information on the website (www.european-ancestors.info) and I will be uploading more material there. If you have a question or require any assistance please do get in touch with me via the email address provided at the foot of the page.

- ❖ Begin, the rest is easy!
- ❖ Leave no stone unturned
- ❖ Look to areas outside of Europe
- ❖ Don't reinvent the wheel! Connect with others
- ❖ Focus on the surname
- ❖ Migration
- ❖ Explore the history

To be successful at researching your European ancestors you will need to put your European ancestors into the context of their country during their time.

To Get in touch with me

- ❖ **Email** – europeanancestors2013@gmail.com
- ❖ **Twitter** - @juliegoucher
- ❖ **Website** – www.european-ancestors.info

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