

**THE BRITISH EMPIRE AND GLOBAL INTEGRATION, 1815-1960**  
**A GRADUATE SEMINAR**

**History 757**  
**January-April 2015**

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**Seminar Meetings: Wednesday 9:30-12:30**

**Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 to 11:30**

I  
**THEMES**

The British Empire - metropolitan centre, settlement colonies, plantation-exploitation colonies, and strategic maritime enclaves - was a trans-national economic, political, and cultural agglomeration. This course considers how *assorted types of colonizers* working within this loosely-managed empire co-opted, dispersed, and displaced subject populations and cultures, attempted to restructure established civilizations, pursued economic and strategic opportunities, moved and managed people in conjunction with plans for *improvement*, diffused a language and an array of ideas about law, justice and government, and distributed flora and fauna around the world. In many locations, the *colonizers* encountered and negotiated with or coerced pre-established peoples. In Africa and India, there was a shift from "a Britain that *asked* to one that *demand*ed and at last to one that *commanded* [T.C. McCaskie]." Those who encountered the agents and institutions of the British displayed a multitude of responses: resistance, participation, manipulation, and cooperation.

British imperial history thrives amidst contentious arguments about world order and empire, new discoveries, and seemingly continuous formulation of new topics. This course provides a "sampler" of the old and new arguments and topics. Historians in former colonies are reassessing the empire, noting its role in globalization, and emphasizing the significance of the so-called "periphery" to Britain. A new imperial history accents the multi-directional movements of people and ideas within the empire, the presence of "poor whites" and their ambiguous status, and the *centrality* of the *periphery*. This course introduces several of the classic issues of imperial history (the imperialism of free trade, indirect rule, informal empire, the impact of utilitarian ideas) not for their intrinsic interest alone but on account of their pertinence for the study global integration, and for an appreciation of shifts in themes and values in historical writing. This course offers readings in several issues - law and empire, indentured labour, the movement of biota - for the same reason.

Historians of the settlement colonies and plantation-exploitation colonies have been reassessing the relations among imperial officials, colonists, and indigenous peoples; often this relatively new wave of research has arisen from unresolved political issues stemming from campaigns of indigenous peoples to secure restitution and apologies. In their most stunning form, these present-day actions, which engage the descendants of the colonizers and the colonized, have led to the "history wars" in Australia. The clash over the meaning of the past among politicians and historians in Australia has produced an intense debate over whether colonizers committed genocide. Disputes over the intensity and consequences of subjugation have also arisen in the national histories of other former settlement colonies; as well, there is an extensive literature on resource and labour expropriation, export displacement, and the role of imperial "reformers" as factors in distorting the economies and societies of colonies, especially India.

The British Empire never achieved the breadth and depth of impact that one associates with what Jan Aart Scholte has called *globality*. The Empire brought people together geographically, but built barriers of race and class. Additionally, tension between the impact of the agents of empire and the resilience and adaptability of subject peoples is a theme in course readings. Whether it was organized settlement, legal reform, social engineering, economic development schemes, or concepts of global government and international law, the empire's agents of change set in motion innovations that they could neither control nor fulfil as planned. *Hubris* and *hybridization* are prevalent in British imperial history. Time and again, you may be struck by gaps between generalizations and carefully documented analysis. Time and again, the influences of the metropolis did not flow evenly like water. Yet, this frugal, inconsistent, and jury-rigged empire was both a significant precursor of global integration and an agent of globalization. *It* (we should be careful not to think of the empire as a coherent *it* with agency) did draw places and people together; *it* did effect changes. Students interested in contemporary issues such as the global movement of capital, global governance, the ecological impact of industrialized economies, the fate of indigenous people, an emergent world culture, risk and security, communications and the binding of space and shrinking of time, and a host of similar matters can gain perspective from a study of the British Empire and the legacies, contradictions, and unresolved initiatives established by *its* assorted agents.

Keep in mind the temporal and local complexities of the empire, because the circumstances of time and place are inadequately represented in the readings. There are also thematic omissions. Religion - formal church governance, missionary activity, evangelicals and anti-slavery, Diasporas and non-Christian religions, and syncretism - are not covered directly. Nor is education considered. These topics merit discussion. Ireland is not discussed; by some standards this was the oldest colony. It presented a field for experimentation and oppression, and was the source for a Diaspora to settlement colonies. Essays on these topics are feasible. The American colonies that became the United States of America are excluded. Nevertheless, the United States figures in several readings as an imperial offspring and heir.

The reading load is heavy. It ranges from a weekly low of roughly 75 pages to a maximum of 400. You will be reading the equivalent of one hefty book each week. Plan accordingly. In several sections, some readings will be assigned to distribute the load.

## II

### **REQUIRED WEEKLY READINGS**

#### **1) 7 January: Concepts: Globalization, Empire, and Colonialism**

##### **Globalization**

"Introduction: An Agenda for Historians," in Anthony Hopkins ed., *Globalization in World History* (London: Pimlico, 2002), 1-9; "The History of Globalization - and the Globalization of History?" in *ibid.*, 11-36.

##### **Empire**

Richard Drayton, "Where Does the World Historian Write From? Objectivity, Moral Conscience and the Past and Present of Imperialism," *Journal of Contemporary History*, volume 46 (2011), number 3, pp.671-85.

Deepak Lal, "From a British to an American Imperium," chapter 2 in *In Praise of Empires: Globalization and Order* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 45-66.

##### **Colonialism**

"Colonialism and Colonies," chapter 1 in Jurgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1997), 1-10; "Colonialism and Colonial Empires," in *ibid.*, 13-22; "Epochs of Colonialism," in *ibid.*, 25-38.

"Concepts: Empires and Perspectives on Land," chapter 1 in John Weaver, *The Great Land Rush and the Making of the Modern World, 1650-1900* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 11-46.

## **2) 14 January: Trade, Capital, Industry, and Empire**

### **a) Trade**

J. de Vries and A. van der Woude, "Postlude," chapter 14 in *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and the Perseverance of the Dutch Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 711-722.

Ronald Findlay and Kevin O'Rourke, "World Trade, 1650-1780" in *Power and Plenty: Trade, War, and the World Economy in the Second Millennium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 227-310.

C.A. Bayly, "'Archaic' and 'Modern' Globalization in the Eurasian and African Arena, c.1750-1850," in Hopkins ed. *Globalization*, 47-68.

### **b) Land**

"Property Rights," chapter 2 in *The Great Land Rush*, 46-87.

### **c) Industry**

Robert C. Allen, "Inventors, Enlightenment, and Human Capital," and "From Industrial Revolution to Modern Economic Growth," in Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution*.

## **3) 21 January: Power and Force:**

### **a) Military Advantages**

Geoffrey Parker, "Europe and the Wider World: The Military Balance," chapter 3 in J.D. Tracey ed., *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 161-195.

N.A.M. Rodger, "The Great Wheels of Commerce and War, Administration 1715-1763," chapter 19 in *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815* (London: Allen Lane, 2004), 291-311; Conclusion, *ibid.*, 575-83.

### **b) Military Exertions**

Daniel Headrick, "Secret Gunboats of the East India Company," chapter 1 in *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford, 1981), 17-37; "The Nemesis in China," chapter 2 in *ibid.*, 43-54.

Byron Farwell, "Forward," "Opening Shots of the Reign," "Appendix II: The Little Wars" in Farwell, *Queen Victoria's Little Wars* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972), xvii-xx, 1-11, 364-71.

## **4) 29 January: Survey Histories: Selecting Scope and Organizing Themes**

Philippa Levine, *The British Empire: Sunrise to Sunset* (London: Pearson Longman, 2007 or most recent edition);

Timothy Parsons, *The British Imperial Century: A World History Perspective* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999). No assignment but come prepared to discuss the books' differences and relative merits, as you see them.

### **5) 28 January: Ignorance and Chaos behind the Port Enclaves**

"Africa" chapter 4 in Parsons, *The British Imperial Century*, 59-89.

"The Great Trek," chapter 9 in John Galbraith, *Reluctant Empire: British Policy on the South African Frontier, 1834-1854* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 176-209.

"Parameters: Places, Shapes, Scale, and Velocity," chapter 3 in *The Great Land Rush*, 88-125; "Allocation by Initiative: Landhunters, Squatters, Grazers," chapter 7 in *The Great Land Rush*, 264-308.

C.A. Bayly, "Introduction" and "Conclusion" in *Empire and Information*, 1-9; 365-76.

### **6) 4 February: The Biotic Diffusion by Design**

Daniel Headrick, "Malaria, Quinine, and the Penetration of Africa," chapter 3 in *The Tools of Empire*, 59-76.

Headrick, "Hydraulic Imperialism in India and Egypt," chapter 6 in *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of imperialism, 1850-1940* (New York: Oxford, 1988), 171-205; "Economic Botany and Tropical Plantations," chapter 7 in *ibid.*, 209-250.

"Allocation by Rank," chapter 5 in *The Great Land Rush*, 178-215; "Allocation by Market," chapter 6, in *ibid.*, 217-256; "Allocation by Initiative," chapter 7 in *ibid.*, 264-308.

### **7) 11 February: Designs on/onto India**

Francis G. Hutchins "Evangelicalism, Utilitarianism, and the Origin of the Idea of Just Rule," chapter 1 in *The Illusion of Permanence: British Imperialism in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 1-19.

Thomas Metcalf, "The Shaping of an Agrarian Policy," chapter 3 in *Land, Landlords, and the British Raj: Northern India in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 47-73; "The Fall of the Taluqdars," chapter 4 in *ibid.*, 74-104; "Debt, Default, and Dispossession," chapter 5 in *ibid.*, 105-135. These chapters provide an exceptionally detailed account of land reform and taxation. Read them with the objective of finding the patterns in the narrative.

Thomas Metcalf, "The Legacy of the Mutiny," *The Aftermath of Revolt: India, 1857-1870* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964), 289-327.

### **18 February: Mid-term Study Break**

### **8) 25 February: Mapping, Building, and State Creation**

John Weaver, "Exploitation by Design: The Dismal Science, Land Reform, and the Cape Boers," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.29, number 3, September 2001, 1-32.

M.H. Edney, "Scientific Practice: Incorporating the Rationality of Empire," chapter 9 and "Cartographic Practice: Inscribing an Imperial Space," chapter 10 in *Mapping the Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765-1843* (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1997), 294-318, 320-40.

Jane Samson, "The Triumph of Tradition," chapter 9, and "Epilogue," in *Imperial Benevolence: Making British Authority in the Pacific Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998), 148-75.

#### **9) 4 March: Control: Police, Order, Law, and Justice**

"Conquest and Resistance," in Osterhammel, *Colonialism*, 41-7; "The Colonial State," in *ibid.*, 51-68.

David Anderson and David Killingray, "Consent, coercion and colonial control: policing the empire, 1830-1940" in Anderson and Killingray eds., *Policing the Empire: Government, Authority, and Control, 1830-1940* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1991), 1-13.

"Patterns of policing in the post-emancipation British Caribbean, 1835-95," by Howard Johnson, chapter 5 in Anderson and Killingray eds., *Policing the Empire*, 71-87.

Thomas Metcalf, "Sikh Recruitment for Colonial Military and Police Forces, 1874-1914," *Forging the Raj: Essays in British India in the Heyday of Empire* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), 250-277.

John Weaver, "Litigating for Freedom in the British Empire," in Stephen Streever, John Weaver, and William Coleman, "Introduction," in *Empires and Autonomy* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 41-60.

Martin J. Wiener, "Introduction" and "Conclusion" in *An Empire on Trial* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

#### **10) 11 March: The Empire's Marginalized and Marginal Subjects (Several readings to be assigned to reduce individual loads.)**

##### **a) Slavery and Indentured Labour:**

"The Collaboration of Slaves: Slaves, Empires, and Globalization in the Atlantic World," by Richard Drayton in Hopkins ed., *Globalization*, 98-111. Assign to several students.

Doug Munro, "Patterns of Resistance and Accommodation" in Brij V. Lal, Doug Munro, and Edward D. Beechert, *Plantation Workers: Resistance and Accommodation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 1-32.

Douglas Hay and Paul Craven, "Introduction" in Hay and Craven eds., *Masters, Servants, and Magistrates in Britain and Empire, 1562-1955* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 1-58. Skim the discussion of method and focus on the findings and argument. All students.

##### **b) Law as Instrument**

"Acquisition: Uprooting Native Title," chapter 4 in *The Great Land Rush*, 134-177. All students.

Julie Evans, Patricia Grimshaw, and David Philips, *Equal Subjects, Unequal Rights: Indigenous People in British Settler Colonies, 1830-1910* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2003), 1-272 (whole book). Assign chapters to students to report.

### c) Non-elite Colonists and the Law

Will Jackson, "No Ordinary Chaps': Class, Gender and the Licensing of Transgression" in Jackson, *Madness and Marginality: The Lives of Kenya's White Insane* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 45-73. All students.

Robert Bickers, "The Empire World," "Adrift in the Empire World," *Empire Made Me: An Englishman Adrift in Shanghai* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 1-17, 223-250.

#### 11) 18 March: Informal Empire and Indirect Rule

##### MAJOR ESSAY DUE.

Timothy Parsons, "British Imperial Influence in China and the Ottoman Empire," chapter 5 in *The British Imperial Century*, 91-117.

"The Imperialism of Free Trade" in Anil Seal ed., *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 1-18.

Timothy Parsons, "African Participation in the British Empire," chapter 10 in Philip Morgan and Sean Hawkins eds., *Black Experience and the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 257-85.

#### 12) 25 March: Schemes for Imperial Unity; Victorian Visions of a Law of Nations

Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860-1900*. No assignment, but come prepared to identify advocates and critics of imperial unity and to describe their respective arguments.

#### 13) 1 or 8 April: Decolonization and Legacies: the Costs of Empire (Several readings to be assigned to reduce individual loads.)

##### a) Legacies

"The Consequences of Empire," chapter 6 in Parsons, *The British Imperial Century*, 119-47. All students.

Thomas Metcalf, "Epilogue: Raj, Empire, Nation," in *Ideologies of the Raj* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 215-34. All students.

Tony Ballantyne, "Empire, Knowledge and Culture: From Proto-Globalization to Modern Culture," in Hopkins ed., *Globalization*, 115-134. Assign.

"Colonial Societies," in *Colonialism*, 84-91; "Colonialism and Indigenous Culture," in *Colonialism*, 95-104. All students.

Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005), "Pax Britannic," "Epilogue," in *Imperial Reckoning*, 1-30, 354-75. All students.

Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame: Britain's Dirty Wars and the End of Empire* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), "Prologue," "Epilogue: The Imperial Endgame after Eden," 1-4, 351-77. All students.

John Darwin, "Orphans of Empire" in Robert Bickers ed., *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 329-46. Available as an e-book through Mills Library. Assign.

## b) Costs

"Colonial Economic Forms," in *Colonialism*, 72-9. All students.

"The Costs of Defending an Empire: The British and Colonial Taxpayer," chapter 5 in Lance Davis and Robert Huttenback, *Mammon and the Pursuit of Empire: The Political Economy of British Imperialism, 1860-1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 145-65; "British Subsidies to the Empire: The Non-defence Component," chapter 6 in *Mammon*, 166-191. Assign each chapter to several.

**15 April (approximate date) Take-home five-hour final exam.**

## III

### **BOOKS AND COURSEWARE**

Courseware packages contain all readings except for the required books. Items were not placed on reserve/limited term borrowing.

The following required books - except for the first - have been ordered by the bookstore:

Julie Evans, Patricia Grimshaw, and David Philips, *Equal Subjects, Unequal Rights: Indigenous people in British Settler Colonies, 1830-1910* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2003). This is an expensive book; a copy has been placed on 2 hour reserve. Please start to read your assigned chapters early in the course.

Anthony Hopkins ed., *Globalization in World History* (London: Pimlico, 2002).

Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

Jurgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1997).

Philippa Levine, *The British Empire: Sunrise to Sunset* (London: Pearson Longman, 2007 or most recent edition).

Timothy Parsons, *The British Imperial Century: A World History Perspective* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999).

John Weaver, *The Great Land Rush and the Making of the Modern World, 1650-1900* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003).

## IV

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

#### **a) Weekly Assignments**

For each week's group of readings, prepare two questions that you would use to open a seminar discussion on the topics for that week. Then, in **no more than 100 words** for each question, provide an explanation of their significance. Submit this one page assignment at the beginning of each class. Questions will be used in the seminar; the questions and the explanations will be marked and returned.

The will be no weekly assignments for weeks 4 and 12.

The required readings average 200 pages a week.

### b) Essay

An essay of 6-7000 words based on a literature search must be submitted on **18 March**. Clear your selection by the second class. The following are **examples**; other topics may be proposed by students.

Use Trove (the Australian National Library's digitized newspaper search facility) and/or Pages Past (the New Zealand National Library's equivalent) to write an original paper. The following is a short sample of topics: Reports of Banditry and Uprisings in India before 1857; The Development of Botanic Gardens and Tropical Crop Development; Late Victorian Advertisements that Represent the Empire and Its Peoples; Race and Labour on British Ships and in Imperial Ports: The Lascar Question before WWI; British Colonial (Australasia) Perceptions of Japanese Military Development and Modernization, 1870-1914; British Colonial (Australasia) Perceptions of German Colonial Ambitions in the Pacific, 1870-1914.

Explain the British abolition of slavery in a global context (compare with the Dutch or American or Brazilian cases).

Evaluate the impact of the utilitarian reformers on nineteenth-century India, 1820-1890.

The Irish diaspora: scope and influence.

Discuss the content and impact of formal and informal ethnography on British imperial policies, 1820-1890.

Discuss imperial communications before and during the electronic telegraph.

Discuss British policy and practice respecting indentured labour from India, 1880s-1900.

Discuss the varieties of policing in the British Empire with special attention to *native troopers*."

Identify and discuss trends in nature conservation in the empire, 1890s-1950s.

Write an account of "the history wars" in Australia, 2000-5.

Write an account of the international resurgence of indigenous peoples, 1980-present. Or some aspect of the global collaboration of first peoples.

Discuss the critical reception of the Oxford History of the British Empire.

Identify and discuss the changing features of British colonial rule in West Africa, 1800-1950.

Write an essay that reviews the literature on sport and the British Empire.

Discuss the role of the Royal Navy in formation of a Pacific Ocean empire.

Evaluate the contributions of the African and Asian empire to the British war effort in World War I.

Evaluate the contributions of the African and Asian empire to the British war effort in World War II.

Discuss the debate over the decline of indigenous populations focusing on the South Pacific, 1870-1950 (Use



the Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New Zealand: [rsnz.natlib.govt.nz](http://rsnz.natlib.govt.nz)).

How did New Zealand natural scientists situate indigenous biota in relation to British scientific theories, 1868-1900 (Use the Transactions and Proceedings of Royal Society of New Zealand).

### **DETERMINATION OF FINAL GRADE**

Weekly assignments: 20%

Seminar participation: 20%

Major Essay: 40%

Final Exam: 20% (A five hour take-home exam, to be held around 15 April)

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or other fraudulent means. It will result in serious consequences: a grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. Graduate Students are expected to know what constitutes plagiarism, and are not given any leniency on a first offense.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy located at:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrate only three of the various forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism: the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.