



Study abroad.

**SYLLABUS**

**Spring Semester  
2012**

**EMPIRE: THE BRITISH EXPERIENCE**

**Instructor: Dr Keith Surridge**

**Contact Hrs: 45**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The British Empire was the largest the world has ever seen encompassing, at its height, about one quarter of the globe and a fifth of the world's population. This global supremacy lasted for about a century and a half. Yet in a period of about twenty years after the Second World War the British Empire was broken up and only small fragments remain today. These remarkable events have left an enormous impression on the modern world and, to some extent, on Britain itself.

In general, the course will follow a chronological thread and will look at certain imperial themes and events. In the first part of the course, we will establish the main outlines of the growth of a remarkably diverse empire from the wreckage left by the American Revolution. The British extended and then consolidated their rule over the Indian sub-continent; established numerous colonies throughout the world; ended slavery throughout the empire; and then joined a European scramble to acquire territories in Africa. While examining how all this came about we shall also take time to consider broader aspects of British imperialism, such as how the British justified their imperial mission; how this affected ideas on race; and how British settlers dealt with native peoples.

The two world wars of the twentieth-century not only saw the British Empire reach its zenith, but also ensured its decline. The process of decolonisation began immediately the Second World War finished and we shall look at some of its aspects. We will discuss whether there was a pattern to the decolonisation process; and whether the end of empire had any great impact on the British people. We shall conclude by examining one of Britain's major contributions to the empire (and the world) – sport, and follow this by examining the counter movement of colonial peoples to Britain. Finally, we will attempt to evaluate the 'balance-sheet' of empire and try to assess the negative and positive impacts

To help illustrate the course will make several visits to museums. The visit to Lords' cricket ground will hopefully encompass a game as well. You must arrive promptly for these visits, so please make sure you know where we are to meet.

ILACA LONDON SPRING – 2012

Dr. Keith Surridge

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Wednesday – 2.00 – 4.00pm

Thursday – 2.30 – 3.30pm

### **EMPIRE: THE BRITISH EXPERIENCE, 1760-1965**

Course Texts: N. Ferguson, *Empire*

See also: D. Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: how the British saw their Empire*

D. Judd, *Empire: the British Imperial Experience*

J. Walvin, *Black Ivory: Slavery in the British Empire*

Jane Samson (ed.), *The British Empire*

**HANDOUTS WILL ALSO BE GIVEN OUT AT VARIOUS TIMES.**

#### **Course Requirements:**

**End of Term Quiz – 20%**

**Three Short Essays (5 Pages minimum) – 30%**

**Presentation – 15%**

**Exam – 30%**

**Contribution – 5%**

**CONTRIBUTION TO DISCUSSION & PUNCTUALITY – 5%** Tutor allocated. **THIS IS NOT AN ATTENDANCE MARK – THAT IS ASSUMED. UNEXPLAINED ABSENCES ARE NOT PERMITTED.** This mark reflects the contribution you have made to class discussion. The highest grades will go to those who volunteer contributions, who help the discussions to progress fruitfully and who raise critical questions and issues. Poor punctuality will also be taken into account when assigning this grade.

**PRESENTATIONS [You may develop this into one of your essays]** Date - by arrangement - 15%  
You should give a 10-15 minute presentation on a topic agreed with the tutor. These should be on a topic of your choice that is relevant to the course. Please agree the topic and date with me in advance. Presentation choice WILL be agreed during the introductory class ... - it is in your interest to offer earlier dates so as to spread your workload. However, the topic and date are flexible and I will not hold you to your original choice. Just make sure you discuss any changes with me as soon as possible.

Marking criteria: The following are considered in awarding marks:

1. Suitability and originality of choice of topic.
2. Engagement with topic. I want to see that you have really become involved with the subject, researching its context as well as the topic itself.

3. Quality of academic content and argument. Clarity of argument is important- I recognise that you do not have much time and therefore you will have to be selective, but it what you select that matters.
4. Liveliness of presentation- informing but also engaging the audience- A style that directly communicates with your audience (eye contact) is preferred rather than something read from notes.
5. Appropriate use of visual aids and supporting material. For example, if you are talking about a geographical area that will not be familiar to people, you should try to give a map- single handouts can be passed around the group, if necessary. This supporting material should be relevant and necessary to what you are doing- for instance a film clip you choose should illustrate your argument not just be chosen randomly.

**Please do not simply read off bullet points on your power point presentations!!**

**THREE SHORT ESSAYS: 30%.** For these you should choose a prominent figure; a major event; and a particular area/country and write 5 or more pages about their importance and significance. With regard to the last category you should discuss how British rule impacted that area, and you may focus on a particular time period. These essays can be done in any order. Students will find **The New Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (New Oxford DNB)** very useful. This can be accessed on-line.

Unfortunately, I do not want to read about George Washington and his colleagues!

The essay must be at least 5 sides in length and I don't mind if you go over that limit to about 7.

**The sooner you can decide your essay topic the better and I will endeavour to help you with sources from my own collection. The secret is to give me plenty of notice so that I can bring in books for you.**

**Also, sites such as JSTOR will give you access to journal articles.**

Essays based totally on websites are unacceptable. **DO NOT USE WEBSITES UNLESS YOU FIND ONE THAT HAS PRIMARY DOCUMENTS. YOU MUST THEN INFORM ME TO MAKE SURE IT IS ACCEPTABLE.**

**THE ESSAY DEADLINES ARE WEEK 6; WEEK 10, WEEK 12.**

**END OF TERM QUIZ – 20%** This will be based on notes taken in class from the lectures and presentations during the second half of the course.

**FINAL EXAMINATION. – 20%**

This is a seen exam- you have the questions in advance and should be able to prepare more thoughtful and well-evidenced answers. You may not use notes in the exam. The questions are below. You must answer two questions within the one and a half hour period. The same essay criteria apply but you do not need to give a bibliography. **ANSWER TWO QUESTIONS.**

### **Determination of final grade**

**A (100-94%). Consistently excellent performance.**

**A- (93-89%). First rate but not quite the top mark.**

**B+ (88-84%). Good performance, well above normal expectations.**

**B (83-79%). Perfectly solid performance.**

**B- (78-74%). An acceptable performance, but only just.**

**C+ (73-69%). Reasonably acceptable.**

**C (68-64%). Acceptable, but rather poor.**

**C- (63-59%). Barely acceptable, but poor work.**

**D+ (58-54%). Inadequate work. Enough to obtain a grade.**

**D. (53-50%). Totally inadequate, but enough to scrape a grade.**

**F. 49%. Fail. And words fail me.**

### **EVIL THINGS THAT MUST NOT BE DONE IN CLASS**

**FALLING ASLEEP**

**CHIT-CHAT WHEN I'M TALKING**

**RINGING OF MOBILE PHONES**

**SENDING TEXT MESSAGES (AND RECEIVING THEREOF)**

**CROSSWORD PUZZLES; JOIN THE DOTS; SUDUKO {sic}**

**LUNCH MUST ALSO BE CONSUMED BEFORE CLASS**

**COURSE TOPICS & VISITS:****WEEK 1:**

**Wednesday, 8 February: Introduction to the British Empire 1760-1965.**

**Thursday, 9 February: Topic: The Abolition of the Slave Trade and of Slavery.**

**Reading: Ferguson, pp. 73-84; 116-119.**

**WEEK 2:**

**Wednesday, 15 February:**

**VISIT: MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH – Meet at AHA CENTRE, GREAT JAMES STREET, 1.45 pm.**

**Thursday, 16 February: The Abolition of the Slave Trade and of Slavery continued.**

**WEEK 3:**

**Wednesday, 22 February: VISIT: Victoria & Albert Museum – Meet in ticket office area at SOUTH KENSINGTON UNDERGROUND STATION – 2pm.**

**Thursday, 23 February: Britain & India – From Trade to empire, 1756-1815.**

**Reading: Ferguson, pp. 17-52.**

**WEEK 4**

**Wednesday, 29 February & Thursday, 01 March:**

**NO CLASSES OWING TO TRIP TO SCOTLAND.**

**WEEK 5:**

**Wednesday, 7 March:**

**Topic: The Victorian Raj; Britain & India during the nineteenth-century.**

**Reading: Ferguson – pp. 133-153; 164-192; 197-220.**

**Judd, Ch.7.**

**Thursday, 8 March:**

**VISIT: Enlightenment Gallery at the British Museum. MEET ON THE FRONT STEPS OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM – 2PM.**

**WEEK 6:****Wednesday, 14 March & Thursday, 15 March.****Topic: The colonies of settlement – 1760-1914.****Reading: Ferguson, pp.53-73; 102-112; 240-262;****Judd, Chs. 3; 5; 6; 15; 17.****WEEK 7:****Wednesday, 21 March,****VISIT: DOCKLANDS MUSEUM – Meet at AHA CENTRE, GREAT JAMES STREET, 1.45pm.****Thursday, 22 March.****NO CLASS OWING TO THEATRE TRIP.****SPRING BREAK****28 & 29 MARCH****WEEK 8:****Wednesday, 4 April: VISIT: NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM – Meet in SLOANE SQUARE, TUBE STATION AT 2pm.****Thursday, 5 April: Class topic - Britain and the scramble for Africa.****Reading: Ferguson, pp. 222-240; 267-284; Judd, Chs 9-11; 13****WEEK 9:****Wednesday, 11 April: The Empire and World War One.****Reading: Ferguson, pp.288-293; 298-317.****Judd, Ch.19.****Thursday, 12 April: VISIT: LORDS CRICKET GROUND****WEEK 10:****Wednesday, 18 April, The Empire and the Second World War.****Reading: Fergusson, pp. 334-354.****Judd, Ch.24.****Thursday, 19 April: NO CLASS OWING TO STRATFORD TRIP.**

**WEEK 11:**

**Wednesday, 25 April: DECOLONISATION**

**Thursday, 26 April: END OF TERM QUIZ.**

**DECOLONISATION**

**Reading: Ferguson, pp. 331-334; 346-347; 356-363.**

**Judd, Chs 19 & 25 – 27.**

**WEEK 12:**

**Wednesday, 2 May, ALL DAY VISIT TO PORTSMOUTH.**

**Thursday, 3 May, NO CLASS.**

**WEEK 13:**

**Wednesday, 9 May**

**Topic: Commonwealth Immigration to the UK.**

**Reading, Ferguson, Conclusion.**

**Judd, Ch.31.**

**Thursday, 10 May – FINAL EXAM – 90 MINUTES.**

**FINAL EXAM****ANSWER TWO QUESTIONS.**

1. EITHER: Why did it take so long to abolish the slave trade?  
OR: Why was slavery abolished in 1833?
2. In what ways did British rule over India change between 1815 & 1899?
3. Choose one from the following: Canada; Australia; New Zealand. Explain how settler government and society developed through the nineteenth-century.
4. Explain why Britain acquired an African empire between 1870 and 1899.
5. EITHER: Choose a military campaign from EITHER World War One OR World War Two.  
OR: Choose a part of the empire and explain that territory's contribution to the imperial war effort during World War Two.
6. How relevant has cricket been to promoting good race relations within the empire and commonwealth? (You may take your answer up to the present day).
7. Is it possible to see Britain's withdrawal from India in 1947 as a success?
8. Was the decolonisation process between 1945 and 1965 a pattern or a puzzle?
9. Did the Suez Crisis of 1956 really mark the end of the British Empire?

Selecting one immigrant group (e.g. Afro-Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Gujarati, Sikh etc.) from the ex-British empire, discuss how they have fared in Britain. You may choose to focus on particular aspects such as employment, education, housing, race relations, religion etc. or discuss more broadly but you should make this clear in your title.