

SYLLABUS

History 105: The British Empire through Film
Rhodes College, Fall Semester 2012
Professor Lynn Zastoupil

Office: 203 Buckman; Office Hours: MW 1:00-2:30 (and by appointment)
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COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will introduce students to some of the main historical developments involving the British Empire from the Elizabethan age to the present. During this period Britain gained, and lost, an empire unrivalled in human history. It is the objective of this course to understand some of the main reasons for British imperial expansion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the retreat from empire in the twentieth century. The impact of empire on British political, social and economic life will be considered, as will be the influence of British culture and institutions on the colonies. Imperial ideas, the growth of racial attitudes, and other intellectual issues and social problems associated with the empire will also be addressed. The many enemies that empire created, both at home and in the colonies, will also be a major theme of this course. Their role in ending the empire, and in creating post-colonial societies in the aftermath of empire, will also be explored. Many of these themes have been explored in film and this course will examine key examples of how the empire has been portrayed in movies.

This course is linked to English 215, "The Imperial Idea in British Literature: Promoters, Doubters, and Enemies," which is being offered by Professor Mike Leslie. There will be several common meetings outside the normal class times for the students enrolled in these two courses. One of these meetings will involve a guest expert on British imperialism; for others we will view famous films about the empire. In addition, each student will write a research essay on a topic that is appropriate for both courses. This essay must be approved in advance by Professor Leslie and me; it will also be graded by both of us and count toward the final grade in both of our courses.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This is a seminar-style course with substantial reading. Students will be expected to attend class regularly, to pay close attention to lecture materials, and to be prepared to discuss all assigned readings in an informed and intelligent manner. Those who find it difficult to participate in class discussions may also periodically submit summaries of the assigned readings, which, if thoroughly done, will help raise class participation grades. There will be three analytical essays, as well as the research essay already mentioned. Final grades will be determined as follows: class participation - 25%; first essay - 10%; second and third essays – 20% each; research essay - 25%. All assignments must be handed in by class time on the date specified. All late papers will be penalized. There are no exceptions to this rule.

There will also be required film viewings during the course of the semester. These will be held on Thursday evenings. Attendance is required for all screenings.

BOOKS TO PURCHASE

Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*
Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions*
Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince*
Mohandas Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, ed. A. Parel

COURSE OUTLINE

Week I Introduction

- August 22 Introduction
- August 24 Expansion of Europe

Week II Slavery and Empire

- August 27 North America
- August 29 Sugar and Slavery I (Mintz, Chps. 1-2)
- August 31 Sugar and Slavery II (Mintz, Chp. 3)

Week III Slavery and Britain

- Sept. 3 Labor Day recess
- Sept. 5 **First essay due: discussion**
- Sept. 7 Blacks in Britain I (P. Fryer, *Staying Power*, Chps. 1-3) **[available on Moodle]**

Week IV Slavery and Britain (cont.)

- Sept. 10 Blacks in Britain II (Fryer, Chps. 4-5)
- Sept. 12 Slavery and the Law (Fryer, Chp. 6)
- Sept. 14 Emergence of Racism (Fryer, pp. 133-65)

MOVIE: *Amazing Grace*

Week V Anglo-Indian Empire

- Sept. 17 India after the Mughals
- Sept. 19 Early British Raj
- Sept. 21 Orientalists, Missionaries and Anglicists

Week VI Humanitarianism I: Abolition of Sati

- Sept. 24 Official Tolerance (Mani, Chp. 1)
- Sept. 26 Missionary Outrage (Mani, Chp. 4)
- Sept. 28 Eyewitness Accounts (Mani, Chp. 5)

Week VII Humanitarianism II: Abolition of Slavery

- October 1 Abolition and British National Identity
- October 3 Mobilizing the Public I (Prince, all)
- October 5 Mobilizing the Public II (R. Wedderburn, *Horrors of Slavery*, pp. 1-40)
[available on Moodle]

MOVIE: *Mangal Pandey: The Rising*

Week VIII Analyzing Humanitarianism

- October 8 Wedderburn discussion continued (*Horrors of Slavery*, pp. 43-61, 81-88, 113-17)
- October 10 Jamaica and Gov. Eyre (C. Hall, "The Economy of Intellectual Prestige," *Cultural Critique* 12 (Spring 1989): 167-96 **[available on JSTOR]**)
- October 12 **Group project: defining second essay topics (in class)**

Week IX Nineteenth-Century South Africa

- October 15 Fall Recess
- October 17 Early colonial South Africa
- October 19 Late colonial South Africa (James Chapman, "Men of Harlech: *Zulu* (1964)"
[available on Moodle])

MOVIE: *Zulu*

Week X Nineteenth-Century India

- October 22 **Second essay due: discussion**
October 24 The Jewel in the Crown
October 26 Kipling's India (Kipling, "The Man Who Would Be King" and "Without Benefit of Clergy" found at <http://www.readbookonline.net/stories/Kipling/68/>)

Week XI Late Victorian Enthusiasm for Empire

- October 29 Popular Imperialism
October 31 Lady Butler (Matthew Lalumia, "Lady Elizabeth Thompson Butler in the 1870s," *Women's Art Journal* 4, 1 (1983): 9-14 [available on JSTOR]; John Springhall, "'Up Guards and At Them!': British Imperialism and Popular Art, 1880-1914" [available on Moodle])
November 2 Robert Rabel, "The Imitation of Alexander the Great in Afghanistan" [on Moodle]

MOVIE: *The Man Who Would Be King*

Week XII New Imperialism and Hobson's Critique

- November 5 The New Imperialism
November 7 Hobson (J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism* [Part I, Chps. 1-6, available on-line at: <http://www.econlib.org/library/YPDBooks/Hobson/hbsnlmp.html>]
November 9 James Kirschke, "Say Who Made Her So: *Breaker Morant* and British Empire," [available on Moodle]

MOVIE: *Breaker Morant*

Week XIII Gandhi and Indian Nationalism

- November 12 Indian Nationalism
November 14 Gandhi (Gandhi, pp. 5-65)
November 16 Gandhi (Gandhi, pp. 66-125, 164-70)

Week XIV Orwell's Critique of Empire

- November 19 George Orwell ("Shooting an Elephant" and *Road to Wigan Pier* [selection], both available on Moodle)
Nov. 21, 23 **Thanksgiving Recess**

Week XV Postcolonial Predicaments

- November 26 Postcolonial Britain (I)
November 28 Postcolonial Britain (II)
November 30 Lucia Krämer, "Neither united nor separated'," in M. Meyer, *Word & Image in Colonial and Postcolonial Literatures and Cultures* [available on Moodle]

MOVIE: *Lagaan*

Week XVI Review

- December 3 **Group project: defining third essay topics**
December 5 Review

RESEARCH ESSAY DUE AT CLASS TIME DECEMBER 3

THIRD ESSAY DUE BY END OF FINAL EXAM PERIOD