

HISTORY 330/430
British Imperialism
Fall 2017



This upper-level research seminar explores the history of the British Empire from its founding in the 16th and 17th centuries to its dissolution after the Second World War. Given so vast a subject—the British Empire at its height controlled a quarter of the world’s population and almost a quarter of its landmass—we obviously cannot aspire to anything like comprehensiveness. Together we will read about and discuss a few selected moments, places, and themes that loom particularly large in the British imperial story. Individually, each of you will also undertake an independent research project on a topic of your own choice and design. The syllabus consists of a mix of scholarship, literature, and primary documents supplemented by the occasional documentary film.

Instructor: Stewart Weaver, Department of History. Rush Rhees 461. 275-9348.
stewart.weaver@rochester.edu. Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00-4:00 and by appointment.

Books: The following books are required and available for purchase at the River Campus bookstore. You may also order them on line if you prefer:

Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2013)
Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World* (Anchor, 2004)

Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire* (Oxford, 1981)
E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India* (Harcourt Brace, 1965)
Jane Samson, *The British Empire* (Oxford, 2001)

Most of the additional readings for the course I have drawn from the definitive, five-volume *Oxford History of the British Empire* (1998-1999). These will be scanned and posted to Blackboard week by week as we proceed. But for those (like myself) who prefer to read the old-fashioned way, I have also placed all five volumes on two-hour reserve in Rush Rhees Library.

Course Requirements:

1. consistent reading, attendance, and class participation (30%)
2. formal research proposal, due October 25 (10%)
3. rough draft of research paper, due November 22 (10%)
4. one 15-20 page final research paper (50%)

A Note on the Papers: All papers for this class must be written in stylistic and editorial conformity with *The Chicago Manual of Style*. For an excellent writing manual that is consistent with Chicago style, see Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. For a guide that is particular to writing history papers, see William Kelleher Storey, *Writing History: A Guide for Students*. For two timeless guides to written English, see William Strunk and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style* and Christopher Lasch, *Plain Style*. I will expect all papers in this class to adhere to the principles of composition laid down in these books. I am of course available myself at all times for help with writing, as are the consultants at the College Writing and Speaking Center in Rush Rhees Library. See <http://writing.rochester.edu/help/index.html>

Internet Resources: The number of online archives and databases devoted to the British Empire is vast and growing annually. For an orientation to those available through Voyager, the UR Libraries online catalogue, I recommend meeting with Alan Unsworth, the British and World History reference librarian in Rush Rhees Library.

Academic Honesty: All students in this class will be expected to be familiar with and abide by the principles of academic honesty as laid down by the College of Arts and Sciences academic honesty policy. For the full articulation of this policy (including the consequences of its violation), see <http://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/>

Class Schedule

This is a *tentative* class schedule as of the start of the semester. I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule and to add to the reading assignments as needed as we go along. The only way to stay on top of the schedule is to come to class regularly and to pay attention to any e-mails and announcements coming from me.

September 11: Introduction and Orientation

- * Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction*

September 18: The Origins of the British Empire

- * Nicholas Canny, "The Origins of Empire," in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, Vol. I, pp. 1-33.
- * Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World*, Introduction and Part I (pp. 1-134).
- * Selected documents from Jane Samson, ed. *The British Empire*, Part I.1

September 25: Slavery and Revolution

- * Linda Colley, *Captives*, Part II (pp. 137-238)
- * David Richardson, "The British Empire and the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1660-1807," *OHBE*: II, 440-64.
- * Philip D. Morgan, "The Black Experience in the British Empire, 1680-1810," *OHBE*: II, 465-86.
- * Selected documents from Jane Samson, ed., *The British Empire*, Part 1.2 & 2.2

October 2: The "Conquest" of India

- * Linda Colley, *Captives*, Part III (pp. 241-379)
- * Rajat Kanta Ray, "Indian Society and the Establishment of British Supremacy, 1765-1818," *OHBE*: II, 508-529.
- * Selected documents from Jane Samson, ed., *The British Empire*, Part 2.4

October 9: No Class—Fall Break

October 16 Technology and Empire

- * Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century*.

October 23: Reform, Rebellion, and *Raj*

- * D. A. Washbrook, "India, 1818-1860: The Two Faces of Colonialism," *OHBE*: III, 394-420.
- * Bernard S. Cohn, "Representing Authority in Victorian India," in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Rangers, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, 165-209
- * Selected documents from Samson, ed. *The British Empire*, Part 3.2 & 3.4

*** Wednesday, October 25: Research Proposals Due ***

October 30: Individual Meetings on Research Proposals

November 6: The "New" Imperialism

- * John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," *Economic History Review* VI (1953), 1-18.
- * John Mackenzie, "The Popular Culture of Empire in Britain," *OHBE*: IV, 212-31.
- * Rosalind O'Hanlon, "Gender in the British Empire," *OHBE*: IV, 379-99
- * Selected documents from Samson, ed., *The British Empire*, Part 3.5

November 13: War, Dominions, and Mandates

- * Robert Holland, "The British Empire and the Great War, 1914-1918," *OHBE*: IV, 114-37.
- * John Darwin, "A Third British Empire? The Dominion Idea in Imperial Politics," *OHBE*: IV, 64-87
- * Francis Robinson, "The British Empire and the Muslim World," *OHBE*: IV, 398-420
- * Glen Balfour-Paul, "Britain's Informal Empire of the Middle East," *OBHE*: IV, 490-514.

- * Selected documents from Samson, ed. *The British Empire*, Part 4

November 20: Interlude: Passages to India

- * E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India* (1924)
- * George Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant" (1936)

*** Wednesday, November 22: Rough Drafts Due ***

November 27 Individual Meetings on Rough Drafts—Rush Rhees 461

December 4 The Crisis of Empire

- * Wm Roger Lewis, "The Dissolution of the British Empire," *OHBE* IV, 329-56.
- * A. J. Stockwell, "Imperialism and Nationalism in South-East Asia," *OHBE: IV*, 465-489.
- * Selected documents from Samson, ed. *The British Empire*, Part 4

December 11 Legacies and Lessons

- * Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction*, ch. 6, "Legacies" (pp. 108-28)
- * Edward Said, "Knowing the Oriental," from *Orientalism* (1978)
- * "Brexit and the Lessons of Empire," from *The Economist* (February 2017)

Monday, December 18: Final Research Papers Due