RACE GENDER EMPIRE

University of Melbourne
Ph.D. Elective
Faculty of Arts

Coordinators

Professor Catherine Hall
University College London
Dr. Samia Khatun
University of Melbourne

Class Times & Location

13 Apr 2015, 9am – 1.30pm
Alan Gilbert, 121 Theatre 3
14 Apr 2015, 9am – 1.30pm
Alan Gilbert, 121 Theatre 3
15 Apr 2015, 9am – 1.30pm
Alan Gilbert, 120 Theatre 4

Rajkamal Kahlon, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, 2012
Ink, gouache and acrylic on watercolor paper
84 x 51 inches
From photographic essay “Double Vision/Doppelbilder”
Wilhelm Hack Museum, Ludwigshafen, Germany
www.rajkamalkahlon.com
The image in *A Brief History of Afghanistan* is sourced from 2 different images. One, an engraving of a British general serving in the British Empire, the other of a seated Afghan man, is quoted from an ethnographic portrait of a group of men from Afghanistan posed with guns in an arid mountain landscape. I chose the juxtaposition of the massive militarised western male body as being saddled and controlled by the elegant yet diminutively sized Afghan man as a kind of visual emblem of the centuries of failed attempts by foreign powers to subdue the people from this region of the world.

Rajkamal Kahlon, 2012
Empires give rise to terrains of global mobility. Analysing racial hierarchies and gendered domination is crucial for making sense of unequal colonial encounters between people, ideas, governments, goods and gods. Focusing on the British Empire, this elective will move between metropole and periphery, the national and the domestic, whilst examining geographical imaginations that framed non-white routes to modernity. Students will interrogate the interconnected architectures of empire, race and gender whilst reflecting on the role of historical production in the colonial present.

**Writing Histories of Empire in the Present**
Consisting of a total of six sessions, this intensive course is structured around three themes organising the production of history: texts, place/space and moments. All our sessions will be concerned with thinking about the histories of the coloniser and of the colonised across the C18 & C19 and across the British Empire. These raced and gendered imperial identities can help us to gain a critical perspective on imperial pasts/presents. How were they constituted? We will focus each session on a particular way of approaching the understanding of histories – paying attention to sources, concepts and historiographies – and making use of interdisciplinary work.

**Class Blog and Group work**
Prior to the start of the intensive, students are required to upload a short bio (100 words max) and description of their doctoral projects (200 words max) onto the class blog through the LMS (lms.unimelb.edu.au). To encourage you to work collaboratively with your fellow Ph.D. travellers, we have structured some group work into this intensive. At the preliminary gathering one-month prior to the intensive, students will be placed into groups based on disciplinary backgrounds. Meeting as a group at least once outside the intensive hours, you are required to peer-workshop your 500-word essay proposals before the end of the intensive. At the closing session on Wednesday 15 April 2015, a representative from each group will present a short 10-minute summary of the key points arising from peer work-shopping and group discussion.

**Assessment**
**Task A:** 500-word essay proposal. To be presented to your group and work shopped with your peers outside intensive hours. Due: 15th April 2015.
**Task B:** 2500-word essay on a topic of your choice using one of the methodologies we have examined during this intensive. Choose a text, a place/space or a moment as an entry point into exploring the themes, sources and questions that animate your own research. We will be marking you for innovative use of any of the examined concepts in relation to your own research – and we invite you to be creative in your approach! Due: 29th May 2015.

**Essential Readings and Further Readings**
You are required to prepare for class by reading all the listed essential readings. We have provided some questions to guide your preparatory reading for each session and we encourage you think through the relevance of the readings to your own research. We also suggest that you dip into some of the further readings – remember the better
prepared you are for discussions the more you will get out of this intensive! Essential readings can be found on the CULS90006 website through LMS. Or alternatively, you can access essential readings at: http://goo.gl/xWRKfM

Resources for British Imperial history and Primary Source Exercises
Rather like the British Empire, this scope of this course is both geographically wide and temporally expansive. To familiarise yourself with some fundamentals of British imperial history, we suggest you read:


Discussions during each session will begin with analyses of a set primary text listed under ‘Essential Readings.’ We will grapple with the methodological challenges presented by diverse sources produced at the colonial encounter. In preparation for the primary source exercises, we suggest you read:


All three of these articles can be found online along with the other essential readings.

RUNNING ORDER & READING LIST

DAY 1: Taking a Text as a Central lens

Joint introduction – what is this course about?

SESSION 1 of 6: Catherine Hall

Lecture: In 1848, a momentous year of revolutions in Europe, Macaulay published his History of England. It became an overnight best seller in Britain and was soon published in many other European languages. It told the story of the making of a great nation – the progress from barbarism to civilisation – and it became the iconic story of the nation. A story of progress which other nations (including Australia) aspired to. The C19 was a period in European history dominated by the idea of the nation-state, and by empires. The British Empire had expanded hugely in the late C18 and early C19 and after the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars it was clear that Britain was the dominant global power. In 1848 when many European nations were convulsed by revolutions Britain was not – the tensions and contradictions of an industrialising class society were contained. Macaulay’s History appears to be only about England – but the ways in which it contains ideas of civilisation, race and empire provide insights into how such assumptions are constitutive of Englishness. Macaulay was writing a history for the colonisers – so this seems a good point from which to start our discussions.

Discussion Questions:

What are the advantages and disadvantages of working out from a particular text?
What story of the nation did Macaulay tell in his History of England?
Why did his History become an iconic text across both nation and empire?
In what ways it is helpful to think of Macaulay as a ‘coloniser’?
Essential reading:
Catherine Hall, *Macaulay and Son. Architects of Imperial Britain* (2012)
Chaps 3 and 6.

Further Readings…

SESSION 2 of 6: Samia Khatun

Lecture: In this session we will explore both the histories and historiographical traditions of colonised people, focusing on travellers from South Asia. While European East India companies were operating in India from C17, a decisive British victory at the Battle of Plassey in 1757 established British East India Company rule in Bengal. As British rule transformed the sub-continent, South Asian travellers both free and otherwise, established communities not only in Britain but also in various other British colonies. In the Australian region, by the close of the C19, South Asians comprised one of the largest non-European populations, leaving in their trail archives in their own tongues – a rich source base from which we can construct their histories. In preparation for this session, examine the first chapter of Kazi Sofiuddin’s *Kisas-ul-Ambiya* that remains today in a C19 mosque in Broken Hill, New South Wales. (Hint: it is a text that appears in Stevens’ *Tin Mosques & Ghantowns* on p. 84b, 100a)

Discussion Questions:
What techniques for reading non-English language sources did Empire give rise to?
What story did British orientalists tell when reading South Asian historiography?
What challenges do we face today when reading texts belonging to colonised epistemological traditions?

Essential Reading:
Henry Miers Elliot, *Bibliographical Index to the Historians of Muhammedan India* (1848), Preface pp. v–xxx.

**Further Readings…**

Creative Pieces on Libraries, Encyclopaedias, Knowledge !
Jorge Luis Borges, “John Wilkins’ Analytical Language,” *Borges: Selected Non-Fictions* (2000) pp. 229–32. (This is the piece referenced in Foucault’s preface to *OOT*).

**Post-colonial Novels**

**DAY 2: Place/Space and the Politics of Rule**

SESSION 3 of 6: Catherine Hall

**Lecture 3:** In this session we will be expanding our spatial and temporal frame and stepping back in time to look at some of the imagined geographies of empire that were in the making in the C18 and which informed metropolitan and imperial conceptions of place for decades, if not centuries, to come. Britons in the metropole and colonisers across the globe wrote extensively about the peoples and places that they encountered, either in reality or in the mind — in the process they were mapping the empire and racial hierarchies for their readers at home and beyond. The C18 was the period when Britain was *en route* to establishing itself as a leading global power, the nation that Macaulay celebrated.

**Discussion Questions:**
How might we think about the significance of place in the politics of empire?
What were the markers of the ‘mother country’ and how different were these from both Jamaica and Africa?

**Essential Reading:**

**Further Readings…**
Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (1994).

SESSION 4 of 6: Samia Khatun

**Lecture:**
In this session we will explore some imagined geographies beyond the British categories of ‘colony’ and ‘nation’ that diverse colonised peoples brought to gendered encounters. From the founding of a penal colony at Botany Bay in 1788, the establishment of each of Australian colony was accompanied by declarations of British dominion stating that vast swathes of Aboriginal geography were ‘waste and unoccupied lands.’ Strategies of imperial rule over settler colonies such as the Americas, Australia, New Zealand were buttressed by myths of emptiness and by the late C19, Australia featured in European spatial imaginations as a ‘blank space of delightful mystery’ in the words of novelist Joseph Conrad. Looking beyond this ‘blank space’ paradigm, in this session we will examine Aboriginal women’s encounters with South Asian men in Australian Deserts in search of alternative geographical imaginations.

In preparation for this session, contrast the ideas of place underpinning an Aboriginal-language story about Alberrie Creek with an English language account of the same site published in the *Register* in 1907.

**Discussion Questions:**
What is the relationship between texts and space/place?
How might we understand the relationship between mobility and history?

**Essential Readings:**
“North and by North. Alberris Creek.” *The Register*. March 20, 1907, p.5.

Further Readings…
Minoru Hokari, Gurindji Journey (2011), Ch.3.
Tracy Banivanua-Mar and Penelope Edmonds, Making Settler Colonial Space (2010), Introduction pp. 1–24.
Derek Gregory, Geographical Imaginations (1994).

DAY 3: Taking a Moment as the Lens

SESSION 5 of 6: Catherine Hall

Lecture: In these final two sessions we will focus in different ways on key moments in imperial history and the ways in which they have been remembered. 1834 was the moment of the abolition of slavery by the imperial parliament in the British West Indies, the Caribbean and the Cape. The movement against the slave trade and slavery had begun in the 1780s – it took 50 years to win emancipation. The causes for that final victory have been extensively discussed – it is probably widely agreed that the scale of the humanitarian movement and shifts in metropolitan popular consciousness, the scale of black resistance, especially marked in the rebellion of 1831 in Jamaica, and the relative economic decline of the sugar islands and rise of new forms of industrial capitalism were all important factors. So too, as our project at UCL, Legacies of British Slave-ownership, has shown was the deal made with the slave-owners. They received twenty million pounds in compensation for ‘their’ property in enslaved people, and the emancipated had to work for their former masters, without pay, for 4-6 years – this was described as their apprenticeship.

Discussion Questions:
What are the advantages and disadvantages of using a particular moment as a way in to historical understanding?
To what extent did emancipation mark a fundamental break in imperial society and culture?
What has been remembered?
Essential reading:
Spend some time exploring the database made by the legacies project – [www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs) - you could, for example, look for Australian connections, or for family names or places that you are interested in…

Further reading…
Any of the other essays in *Legacies of British Slave-ownership.*
Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944)

SESSION 6 of 6: Samia Khatun

Lecture: In 1857, the soldiers of the Bengal army known as ‘sepoys’ led a popular rebellion against East India Company rule across North India. After the British regained control, they dismantled the last vestiges of the Mughal court in Delhi - the centuries old center of Muslim rule in North India. In the aftermath of rebellion, East India Company rule was replaced by a regime of direct rule by the British Government with the establishment of the British Raj in 1858. The sepoy mutiny/rebellion marked the beginning of a decade of uprisings across the British empire: the Maori Wars in New Zealand, the Morant Bay rebellion in Jamaica, the Fenian Rising in Ireland - ushering in deep changes in imperial ideologies. During the final discussion we will explore the diversity of perspectives from which South Asians continue to remember the 1857 moment today.

Discussion Questions:
What are the challenges of examining a moment in multi-temporal societies?
How has 1857 been remembered in South Asia from various perspectives? What is at stake?
How do temporal and spatial imaginations shape how people remember moments of crisis?

Essential Readings:


**Further Reading…**

On 1857


**Methodological Readings on Moments**


**Closing Session** – Group Presentations of Essay Proposals.