

Cultures and Empires, 1850-1914

Fall 2019, online
Online office hours (phone or skype):
By appointment

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In this class we will explore the intersection of empires and cultures in world history between 1850 to the 1940s. We will read texts that describe the cultural encounter between imperial regimes and colonial cultures. Although we will try to understand the global dimensions of cultures and empires during this period, we will focus on stories that emerged from the British imperial zones of India (South Asia) and Hong Kong/Shanghai.

Required Books:

Rudyard Kipling, *Plain Tales from the Hills* (first published in 1886)

Rabindranath Tagore, *Selected Short Stories* (stories first published in the 1890s, this Penguin Classics edition first published in 1991)

Eileen Chang, *Love in a Fallen City* (stories first published in Chinese in Shanghai in the 1940s; this translation published in 2007)

Students with Disabilities:

Your success in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have a documented disability (or need to have a disability documented), and need an accommodation, please contact me privately as soon as possible, so that we can discuss with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) how to meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. The DRC offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process among you, your instructor(s) and the DRC. Thus, if you have a disability, please contact me and/or the DRC, at 501-569-3143 (V/TTY) or 501-683-7629 (VP). For more information, please visit the DRC website at www.ualr.edu/disability.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this class, students will be able to:

- Explain the major themes of imperial history, 1850-1914
- Use primary sources to test the argument in a secondary article or book
- Write an analytical essay using primary sources

Assignments, Attendance, and Grades:

You need to log on to Blackboard and contribute something to our discussion at least three times during each three-week period listed on the schedule. If you miss contributing to a three-week period, your grade can be lowered one full grade (for example, A to B). If you miss contributing during more than one three-week period, you might be dropped from the class or given a failing grade.

You will receive a grade for your comments on the discussion board for each section of the class. We have four sections, so you can earn up to 10 points for your comments in each class section (for a total of 40 points overall).

Undergraduate students:

You will write two papers, one in the middle of the class and one at the end of the class. Both papers will be 3-5 double-spaced pages. You will also contribute to our online discussion three times during every three-week period. Your final grade will consist of

The first paper (30%, or 30 points)

The second paper (30%, or 30 points)

Online discussion participation

(10% or 10 points for each section; 40% and 40 points total)

Graduate students:

You will read the assigned readings and some additional secondary articles, and you will write one paper at the end of the class. The paper will be 12-15 pages. You will also contribute to our online discussion once a week. Your final grade will consist of

Paper (60%)

Online discussion participation (40%)

Schedule

Introduction: Aug 19 to 25

Section 1: Nations and Empires, 1850-1950

Aug 26 to Sept 15

Readings:

Tignor, others, *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: A History of the Modern World from the Mongol Empire to the Present* (2002), selections from chapters 8 and 9

Selections from chapter 8: Introduction, "Nation-Building and Expansion," "Imperialism," "India and the Imperial Model," "Imperialism and Culture," "China Under Pressure," and "Conclusion"

Selections from chapter 9: "The 'Woman Question'" and "Nationalism and Invented Traditions in India"

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (1983), 3-5

Additional reading for graduate students (and interested undergraduates):

Sanjay Joshi, "India's Middle Class" (2017)

Danielle Kinsey, "Assessing Imperialism" (2015)

Aviel Roshwald, "On Nationalism" (2015)

Catherine Hall, "Of Gender and Empire: Reflections on the Nineteenth Century" (2007)

Section 2: Kipling and the Problem of Culture

Sept 16-Oct 7

We will focus on eleven stories in Kipling's *Plain Tales from the Hills*: "Lisbeth," "Miss Youghal's Sais," "Yoked with an Unbeliever," "His Chance in Life," "The Conversion of Aurelian McGoggin," "Kidnapped," "In the House of Suddho," "Beyond the Pale," "The Bronckhorst Divorce-Case," "Wressley of the Foreign Office," and "To Be Filed For Reference."

Additional reading for graduate students (and interested undergraduates):

Barbara Metcalf, Thomas Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India* (Second Edition, 2006), chapters four and five.

First essay due on email Monday, October 7, at noon

Mid Term Week for Catching Up: October 8-11

Except for the essay due Monday, we do not have any assignments this week.

Section 3: Culture and Fate in Tagore's Bengal

Oct 14-Nov 3

We will focus on these ten stories from Tagore's *Selected Short Stories*: "The Living and the Dead," "The Postmaster," "Little Master's Return," "The Divide," "Taraprasanna's Fame," "A Single Night," "The Editor," "A Problem Solved," "Exercise Book," and "False Hope."

Additional reading for graduate students (and interested undergraduates):

Sugata Bose, Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy* (Third Edition, 2011), chapter eleven

Susan Bayly, "The Evolution of Colonial Cultures: Nineteenth Century Asia" (1999)

Section 4: Eileen Chang's Stories in Shanghai and Hong Kong

Nov 4-Nov 24

Par Casel, "Treaty Ports and the Foreign Community in Modern China" (2018)

Chang's stories: we will focus on "Aloeswood Incense," "Love in a Fallen City," and "Sealed Off."

Additional reading for graduate students (and interested undergraduates):

Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945* (1999), chapters four, eight, and nine

Mark Hampton and James Fichter, "The Cultural British World: Asia in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" (2012)

Second essay due on email Monday, December 9, at noon

Graduate student papers due on email Monday, December 9, at noon