

## HIST 329Q: The British Empire in Film

Winter Term 2010

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**Office Hours:**  
MW 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
(+ most mornings)  
**and by appointment**

**ELMS Course Site:** <http://elms.umd.edu>

### Course Description

This course will examine depictions of the British Empire in motion pictures, from Hollywood blockbusters to films made by South Asian, African, and Pacific filmmakers. The class will engage students with the major themes in the history of the British Empire, from the origins of the Atlantic empire in the 17th century to the decline of the British Empire during the 20th century. In the course, we ask how films can be used as historical sources, critically appraising their representations of the past and carefully considering the role of present politics and historical memory in these representations.

### Course Objectives

- To explore the major themes in the history of the British Empire
- To think about historical films as products of history, myth, and politics
- To develop our critical viewing and reading skills
- To practice evaluating historical sources and arguments
- To formulate our own interpretations of the past and historically informed perspectives on the present

### Required Texts

Philippa Levine, *The British Empire: Sunrise to Sunset* (Longman, 2007). ISBN: 978-0582472815.

### Grade Distribution

| ASSIGNMENT              | VALUE | DUE DATE   |
|-------------------------|-------|------------|
| Participation           | 30%   | n/a        |
| Quizzes and Assignments | 10%   |            |
| Mid-Term Examination    | 15%   | January 13 |
| Final Examination       | 20%   | January 22 |
| Film Analysis Paper     | 25%   | January 22 |

## Expectations

- Mobile phones must be switched to silent mode during class time (see me if you have some compelling reason to keep your mobile phone on). Text messaging will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- Notebook computers should only be used for instructor-approved activities and **must** be closed during class discussions.
- Be prompt to class. If you must be late, please quietly enter the classroom and find a seat.

## Participation

The study of history is not simply a passive process of remembering names and dates or of uncovering obscure or unknown facts (though these things are part of it). It is an active process – a contact sport, some say – of debates, disagreements, and argumentation. Your instructor is present to facilitate a **conversation** about the past. All students will be expected to offer informed and thoughtful participation. Be sure to carefully complete course readings and assignments before class.

## Late Penalties

Assignments should be submitted in a timely manner. Students will be penalized one-half letter grade (5%) per school day for any assignment submitted late.

## Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. The instructor will immediately refer any student suspected of academic dishonesty to the university's Honor Council. We will discuss academic dishonesty several times over the course of the semester, but you alone are responsible for understanding what academic dishonesty means and asking questions if you do not understand. The University of Maryland defines the following acts as academic dishonesty:

- **Cheating:** “Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise.”
- **Fabrication:** “Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.”
- **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** “Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.”
- **Plagiarism:** “Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.”

“**Academic dishonesty is a serious offense which may result in suspension or expulsion from the University.** The normal sanction for academic dishonesty is a grade of ‘XF,’ denoting ‘failure due to academic dishonesty.’ That grade will normally be recorded on the transcripts of students found responsible for acts of academic dishonesty in addition to any other action taken (e.g., suspension or expulsion).”

Please familiarize yourself with the university regulations regarding academic dishonesty, available at the following websites:

<http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/dishonesty.html>

<http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html>

### Religious Observances

“The University of Maryland policy ‘Assignments and Attendance on Dates of Religious Observance’ states that students should not be penalized in any way for participation in religious observances and that, whenever feasible, they be allowed to makeup academic assignments that are missed due to such absences. However, the student must personally hand the instructor a written notification of the projected absence within two weeks of the start of the semester.” Please inform me **in writing** by **January 5** (the second class meeting) if you are going to miss any assignments due to religious observances so that alternative arrangements can be made.

### Academic Support

If you require any special accommodations due to a disability, please present a copy of the documentation provided to you by Disability Support Services by **January 5** (the second class meeting). I also recommend that you schedule time to meet with me so that I can better understand the accommodations you need. If you do not have documentation from DSS but think you need accommodations, please make an appointment with the Disability Support Services.

### Inclement Weather

Class will not meet if the university is closed for inclement weather or any other reason. Closure announcements are made on the UMD website (URL: <http://www.umd.edu/emergencypreparedness>) and through local media outlets.

[ER] = Electronic Reserve; check both **Electronic Reserves** and **Course Documents** folders on our ELMS course site (URL: <http://elms.umd.edu>)

| Date   | Films   | Readings  | Assignments   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Monday, January 4<br><br>Overview. The early empire and the colonization of the New World. | <i>The New World (2005)</i> , dir. Terrence Malick, 135 min.  |   |   |
| Tuesday, January 5<br><br>The Atlantic Slave Trade   | <i>Adanggaman (2000)</i> , dir. Roger Gnoan M'Bala, 85 min., scenes from <i>Amazing Grace (2007)</i> , dir. Michael Apted, 118 min. | Levine, 13-42 (1-12 optional; skim after 36); Excerpts from <i>The Complete Works of Captain John Smith</i> [ER]; Entries for “Pocahontas” and “John Smith” in <i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> [ER]. | <b>QUIZ #1</b><br><br>Watch 11-minute film on Adanggaman. Search <a href="https://www.google.com">videos.google.com</a> for “adanggaman.” |
| Wednesday, January 6<br><br>Mutiny and the Raj, part I                                     |   | Levine, 61-81; Accounts of the mutiny [ER].   |   |
| Thursday, January 7<br><br>Mutiny and the Raj, part II                                     | <i>The Rising: The Ballad of Mangal Pandey (2005)</i> , dir. Ketan Mehta, 150 min.  | Levine, 43-60; Excerpts from Rudrangshu Mukherjee, <i>Mangal Pandey: Brave Martyr or Accidental Hero?</i> [ER];   |   |

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| <p>Friday, January 8</p> <p>Research Day</p>   |   | <p>“Mangal Pandel: A hero or zero?” <i>Times of India</i>, July 28, 2005 [ER].</p>  | <p>Begin film analysis paper research. See handout for instructions.</p>  |
| <p>Monday, January 11</p> <p>Colonial warfare in South Africa</p>                                  | <p><i>Zulu (1964)</i>, dir. Cy Raker Endfield, 139 min., scenes from <i>Breaker Morant (1980)</i>, dir. Bruce Beresford, 107 min.</p>     | <p>Levine, 82-102; “Men of Herlech: <i>Zulu</i>,” from <i>Past and Present: National Identity and the British Historical Film</i> [ER].</p>                 | <p><b>Film Analysis Title and Bibliography due (see handout)</b></p> <p><b>Study Guide for Mid-Term Examination distributed</b></p> |
| <p>Tuesday, January 12</p> <p>World War I</p>  | <p>Scenes from <i>Gallipoli (1981)</i>, dir. Peter Weir, 110 min., and <i>Lawrence of Arabia (1962)</i>, dir. David Lean, 216 min.</p>    | <p>Levine 103-122; Excerpts from T.E. Lawrence, <i>Seven Pillars of Wisdom</i> [ER]; Lucy Ladikoff, “T.E. Lawrence: True and False (An Arab View)” [ER]</p> |   |
| <p>Wednesday, January 13</p> <p>The colonial encounter and the limits of imperial rule, part I</p> | <p><i>Mister Johnson (1991)</i>, dir. Bruce Beresford, 105 min.</p>   |   | <p><b>MID-TERM EXAMINATION</b></p>  |
| <p>Thursday, January 14</p> <p>The colonial encounter and the limits of imperial rule, part II</p> |   | <p>Levine, 123-141; others to be announced.</p>   |   |
| <p>Friday, January 15</p> <p>The colonial encounter and the limits of imperial rule, part III</p>  | <p><i>A Passage to India (1984)</i>, dir. David Lean, 163 min., scenes from <i>Ghare Baire (1984)</i>, dir. Satyajit Raj</p>              | <p>Levine, 142-165; others to be announced.</p>   | <p><b>QUIZ #2</b></p> <p>Last opportunity to submit draft of your film analysis paper for review (midnight)</p>                     |
| <p>Monday, January 18</p> <p>NO CLASS, MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY</p>                              |   |   |   |
| <p>Tuesday, January 19</p> <p>The plight of local peoples</p>                                      | <p><i>Rabbit-proof Fence (2002)</i>, dir. Phillip Noyce, 94 min., scenes from <i>The Wind that Shakes the Barley (2006)</i>, dir. Ken</p> | <p>Levine, 166-190; Excerpts from Doris Pilkington, <i>Rabbit-Proof Fence</i> [ER].</p>   | <p><b>QUIZ #3</b></p>   |

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| <p><b>Wednesday, January 20</b><br/><b>Nationalism and the end of empire</b></p>                                   | <p><i>Loach, 126 min.</i><br/><i>Scenes from Gandhi (1982), dir. Richard Attenborough, 195 min.</i></p> | <p>Levine, 191-208; M.K. Gandhi, "Playing the English Gentleman," "Civilization," "To Every Briton" [ER]</p> | <p><b>Study Guide for Final Examination distributed</b></p> |
| <p><b>Thursday, January 21</b><br/><b>The empire strikes back and multi-cultural Britain (time permitting)</b></p> | <p><i>My Beautiful Laundrette (1985), dir. Stephen Frears, 93 min.</i></p>                              | <p>To be announced.</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Friday, January 22</b><br/><b>Conclusions</b></p>  |   | <p><b>FINAL EXAMINATION</b><br/><b>Film analysis paper due</b></p>   |   |

## HIST 329Q: The British Empire in Film Film Analysis Paper

### Project summary:

Craft a 5-7 page paper that evaluates a particular film's (chosen from the list below or in consultation with your instructor) representations of the past and historical accuracy. Research how scholars have interpreted your film's topic, or **the historiography**, to evaluate the film and its usefulness for understanding history. **Your paper analysis paper must apply a minimum of two (2) historical monographs and one (1) scholarly article. While you must demonstrate that you understand what scholars have said about your topic, it must be clear that your conclusions are your own** (even if you agree with a particular interpretation or combination of theories).

### Requirements:

1. Your paper must use scholarly sources, research and analysis written by professional historians. Generally speaking, "scholarly" works are published by university presses (e.g. Cambridge or Yale) and/or in peer-reviewed academic journals (e.g. *Journal of British Studies*). Consult your instructor if you have questions or if think that a "popular" work of history may be of particular use to your project.
2. Encyclopedias and reference sources of any kind may not be used as sources in your paper. You are welcome to consult them for background information.
3. Cite your sources using footnotes and provide a complete bibliography. Use **Chicago Manual Style**. An electronic handout will be posted on ELMS.
4. Craft a **thesis statement** in your introduction paragraph that articulates **your interpretation of the film and its representation of the past**. Use **topic sentences** as "sub-arguments" of each paragraph.
5. Use 11- or 12-point Times New Roman with 1" margins all around. Double space your work. Number the pages. **Provide an original title. You do not need a title page.**

### Project Timeline:

**Friday 8 January:** Research day

Spend our normal class time (or equivalent) sampling films and/or watching your film in the Hornbake media library and/or locating relevant books and articles in McKeldin and on the Research Portal. Copies of films may also be available at your local video store or library and through by-mail DVD rental services such as Netflix.

**Monday 11 January, class time:** Film title and initial bibliography due

Submit film title for your film analysis paper and correct Chicago style bibliographic citations for 2-3 books and 1-2 articles relevant to your paper.

**Friday 15 January, midnight:** Last opportunity to submit paper draft for review (*optional*)

I will read and review drafts of your paper received up until midnight on January 15. I will try my best to return an annotated copy to you by or before Monday.

**Friday 22 January, class time:** Final deadline to submit your paper

**Films** (adapted from David Campion's list).

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>THE FIRST BRITISH EMPIRE</b><br/> <i>The Bounty</i> (1984)<br/> <i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> (1992)<br/> <i>Amistad</i> (1997)<br/> <i>The Patriot</i> (2000)<br/> <i>Master and Commander</i> (2003)<br/> <i>Amazing Grace</i> (2006)<br/> <i>The War that Made America</i> (2006)</p>                  | <p><b>THE MIDDLE EAST</b><br/> <i>Exodus</i> (1960)<br/> <i>The Lighthorsemen</i> (1987)<br/> <i>O Jerusalem</i> (2006)</p>  |
| <p><b>INDIA: COMPANY RAJ &amp; MUTINY</b><br/> <i>Jhansi ki Rani</i> (1952)<br/> <i>Shatranj ke Khilari</i> (1977)<br/> <i>The Deceivers</i> (1988)</p>   | <p><b>IRELAND</b><br/> <i>Barry Lyndon</i> (1975)<br/> <i>Michael Collins</i> (1996)<br/> <i>The Last September</i> (1999)</p>   |
| <p><b>INDIA: THE GREAT GAME</b><br/> <i>The Lives of a Bengal Lancer</i> (1935)<br/> <i>Gunga Din</i> (1939)<br/> <i>Kim</i> (1950)<br/> <i>Northwest Frontier</i> (1959)<br/> <i>The Man Who Would be King</i> (1975)<br/> <i>The Far Pavilions</i> (1984)</p>   | <p><b>SOUTH AFRICA</b><br/> <i>Zulu Dawn</i> (1979)<br/> <i>Breaker Morant</i> (1980)<br/> <i>The Making of the Mahatma</i> (1996)<br/> <i>Rhodes</i> (1996)<br/> <i>Wah Wah</i> (2005)</p>  |
| <p><b>INDIA: THE BRITISH RAJ</b><br/> <i>Bhowani Junction</i> (1956)<br/> <i>The Long Duel</i> (1967)<br/> <i>Conduct Unbecoming</i> (1975)<br/> <i>Staying On</i> (1979)<br/> <i>Heat and Dust</i> (1982)<br/> <i>The Home and the World</i> (1984)<br/> <i>Cotton Mary</i> (1999)<br/> <i>Lagaan</i> (2001)</p> | <p><b>NORTH &amp; WEST AFRICA</b><br/> <i>The Four Feathers</i> (1939)<br/> <i>Khartoum</i> (1966)</p>   |
| <p><b>INDIA: INDEPENDENCE &amp; PARTITION</b><br/> <i>The Jewel in the Crown</i> (1984)<br/> <i>Mountbatten, The Last Viceroy</i> (1986)<br/> <i>Earth</i> (1998)<br/> <i>Jinnah</i> (1998)<br/> <i>Train to Pakistan</i> (1998)<br/> <i>The Legend of Bhagat Singh</i> (2002)<br/> <i>Pinjar</i> (2003)</p>      | <p><b>EAST AFRICA</b><br/> <i>Something of Value</i> (1957)<br/> <i>The Flame Trees of Thika</i> (1982)<br/> <i>Out of Africa</i> (1985)<br/> <i>The Kitchen Toto</i> (1988)<br/> <i>A Shadow on the Sun</i> (1988)<br/> <i>White Mischief</i> (1988)<br/> <i>Mountains of the Moon</i> (1990)<br/> <i>Nowhere in Africa</i> (2001)<br/> <i>The Last King of Scotland</i> (2006)</p> |
| <p><b>EAST ASIA</b><br/> <i>The Bridge on the River Kwai</i> (1957)<br/> <i>Tai Pan</i> (1986)<br/> <i>Empire of the Sun</i> (1987)<br/> <i>Chinese Box</i> (1997)</p>  | <p><b>AUSTRALIA &amp; NEW ZEALAND</b><br/> <i>We of the Never Never</i> (1982)<br/> <i>Burke &amp; Wills</i> (1986)<br/> <i>Ned Kelly</i> (2004)<br/> <i>Mary Bryant</i> (2005)<br/> <i>River Queen</i> (2005)<br/> <i>Her Majesty</i> (2005)</p>  |
| <p><b>WEST INDIES</b><br/> <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> (1993)</p>  | <p><b>THE MEDITERRANEAN</b><br/> <i>Malta Story</i> (1953)</p>   |
|   | <p><b>EMPIRE STRIKES BACK</b><br/> <i>East is East</i> (1998)<br/> <i>White Teeth</i> (2002)<br/> <i>This is England</i> (2006)</p>  |
|   | <p><b>POLAR REGIONS</b><br/> <i>Shackleton</i> (2002)</p>  |