

## HIST 317: Britain, 1850-1918

Dr. Alexander Howlett

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Winter 2020, Monday & Wednesday

### Course Subject

This course examines the history of Great Britain from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the conclusion of the First World War. This was a transformative period in British history during which the British Empire reached its greatest extent. Simultaneously, Britain's position as the preeminent global power was eroded by the rise of Germany and the United States. The expansion of industrialization, economic capitalization, and financial power centered in the City of London, resulted in revolutions in production and consumption that began to transform British society.

Reforms to the franchise, education, worker's rights, and the Home Rule debate in Ireland fragmented the traditional social fabric of Britain while exposing uncertainties about the future. New technologies, ranging from electricity to the telephone, steam power to the turbine, the internal combustion engine and airplane, dramatically reduced communication time and costs, producing a period of proto-globalization, driven by Britain's free-trade policies, democratic government, and Anglican missionaries. The rise of the Labour party and the collapse of the Conservative party transformed British politics, while great statesmen led Britain's foreign policy, established the principles of Imperial Defence, and maintained relative peace in Europe while expanding the Empire around the globe. The Edwardian certainties of Social Darwinism, gender roles, and aristocratic leadership were devastated by the social revolution resulting from the First World War, revealing new threats to Britain's position in the world at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Learning Outcomes

Students will develop an appreciation for the Victorian and Edwardian periods of British culture, and an understanding of domestic and foreign policy during the zenith of the British Empire. Students will explore the complex national, social, class, gender, and racial dynamics that comprised the modern British state, and gain an appreciation for the historiographical and philosophical assumptions that underpinned Victorian society. Students will become familiar with the narrative history of conflicts, economics, political and technological developments that shaped the period.



Reflections on the Thames, Westminster, 1880, by John Atkinson Grimshaw

## Course Structure

The class meets on Monday and Wednesday. Lectures are delivered on Monday, developing the course themes chronologically, and based on the textbook readings. The course is divided into five units, each unit examines the various components of a two-decade period of British history: domestic politics and economics, class, nationalism, race and gender, foreign policy, conflict and culture. Discussion seminars are held on Wednesday and focus on journal article readings. Students are expected to arrive prepared to engage, with readings completed.

## Assignments

### Participation: 25%

Students are expected to complete preparatory readings and arrive to seminars ready to discuss course material and readings. Students will be graded based on attendance, punctuation and involvement in class discussions.

### Presentation: 25%

Students will prepare for one presentation during the course, based on the weekly readings. Ideally presentations will not take more than fifteen minutes, and will prepare the class for discussion by 1) briefly summarizing the reading material 2) highlighting important areas of interest 3) preparing questions for group discussion.

### Literature review: 20%

Students will complete a short 1,500 midterm literature review, utilizing secondary and primary sources. Students will be graded based on engagement with the material and depth of analysis.

### Final paper: 30%

Students will prepare a 2,500 word final research paper based on selected topics, or topics of their choosing. Make sure to clear topics in advance with the professor. Students will be graded based on 1) clarity of thesis, 2) coherency of argument, 3) depth of research, and 4) engagement with the material and primary sources.

All assignments should be printed, double spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman, and include page numbers and the students' name and student number.

## Grading Assessment

%	0-49	50-54	55-59	60-63	64-67	68-71	72-75	76-79	80-84	85-89	90-100
Letter	F	D	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+

## Reading Materials

### Required:

K. Theodore Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation, 1846-1886* (New Oxford History of England), 2000

G. R. Searle, *A New England? Peace and War 1886 – 1918* (New Oxford History of England), 2005

### Suggested:

Colin Matthew, ed. *The Nineteenth Century* (Short Oxford History of the British Isles), 2000

David Cannadine, *Victorious Century, The United Kingdom, 1800 – 1906*, 2017

Eric Midwinter, *Salisbury* (20 British Prime Ministers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century), 2006

Dominic Hughes & Benedict Phillips, *The Oxford Union Guide to Successful Public Speaking*, 2000

A. N. Wilson, *The Victorians*, 2003

Richard Symonds, *Oxford and Empire: The Last Lost Cause?* 1986

G. R. Searle, *The Liberal Party: Triumph and Disintegration, 1886-1929*, 1992

Andrew Porter, ed. *The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford History of the British Empire), 2001

J. A. S. Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy, the Close of the Nineteenth Century*, 1964



Print from *Dickinson's Comprehensive Pictures of the Great Exhibition of 1851*



## Unit One, The Zenith of Power, 1850 – 1870

Week 1, January 8: Introduction

No reading this week

Week 2, January 13: Economic transformation, British socio-economy in the 1850s

Lecture: Economic Transformation, Agrarianism, Industrialization, Mill, Brunel, Railways & Transport

K. Theodore Hoppen, Chapter 1-2

Week 2, January 15

Seminar: Agrarianism and the impact of industrialization on British society at mid century.

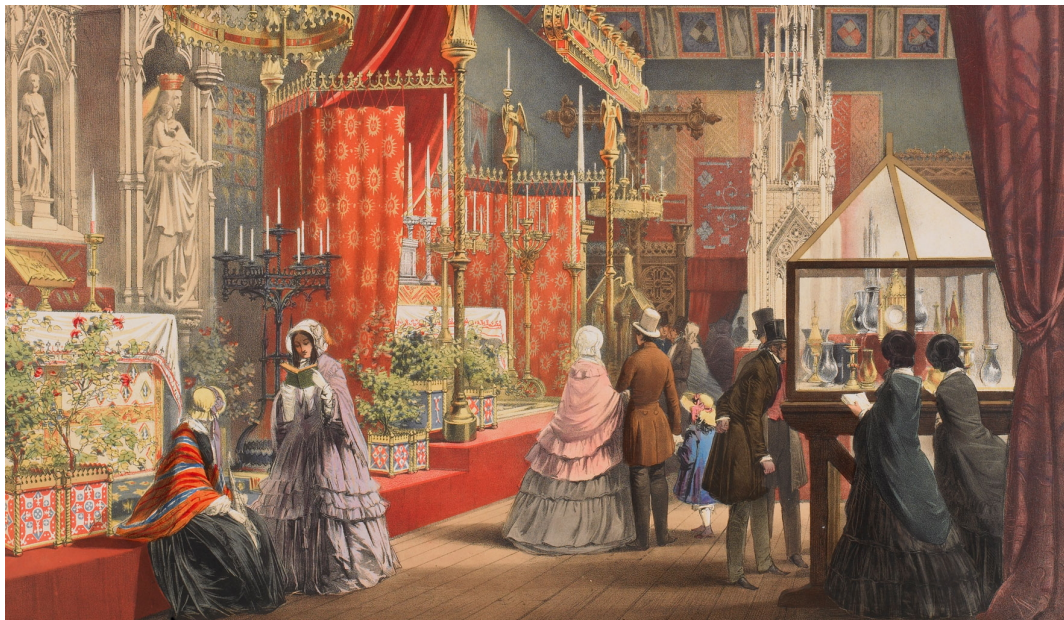
Roberto Romani, "Political economy and other idioms: French views on English development, 1815-48", *European Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 2002, 359-383

Liu Jinghua, "Regional Specialization and Urban Development in England during the Industrial Revolution", *Social Sciences in China*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 2018, 199-216

Week 3, January 20, Victorian Culture mid-century, Science and progress

Lecture: Albert, Victoria, and the Great Exhibition, Darwin, Evolution, Positivism, Spencer.

K. Theodore Hoppen, Chapter 10 & 13



Print from *Dickinson's Comprehensive Pictures of the Great Exhibition of 1851*

Week 3, January 22

Seminar: Significance of the Great Exhibition, Britain's place in the world

Geoffrey Cantor, "Science, Providence, and Progress at the Great Exhibition," *Isis*, Vol. 103, No. 3, September 2012, 439-459

Sylvi Johansen, "The Great Exhibition of 1851: A Precipice in Time?", *Victorian Review*, Vol. 22, No. 1, Summer 1996, 59-64

Week 4, January 27: Foreign & Domestic policy, Reform and Warfare

Lecture: From Peel to Palmerston, British foreign policy and mid-century crisis: The Indian Mutiny, Crimean War

K. Theodore Hoppen, Chapter 5-6

Norman Gash, "Peel and the Party System, 1830-50" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 1, 1951, 47-69

Gavin Hughes & Jonathan Trigg, "Remembering the Charge of the Light Brigade: Its Commemoration, War Memorials and Memory", *Journal of Conflict Archaeology*, Vole. 4, No. 2, 39-58

Week 4, January 29

Seminar: Domestic politics and foreign policy, the American Civil War & Disraeli, Gladstone and the Reform Acts

K. Theodore Hoppen, Chapter 7-8

Niels Eichhorn, "The Intervention Crisis of 1862: A British Diplomatic Dilemma?", *American Nineteenth Century History*, Vol. 15, No. 3, September 2014, 287-310



William Simpson's painting of the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava, 25 October 1854

## Unit Two, Imperial Entanglements, 1870 – 1890

### Week 5, February 3: Domestic politics and British culture from 1870 to the 1880s

Lecture: Gladstone versus Disraeli, Tory and Whig political reform, Home Rule

K. Theodore Hoppen, Chapters 16 & 17

G. R. Searle, Chapter 5

### Week 5, February 5

Seminar: Home Rule and Domestic Politics, Britain & the Empire, Class consciousness and Socialism

R. E. Quinault, "Lord Randolph Churchill and Home Rule", *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 84, September 1979, 377-403

Jan Ruger, "Britain, Empire, Europe: Re-reading Eric Hobsbawm", *Journal of Modern European History*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2013, 417-423

### Week 6, February 10: Economic challenges, Rise of British Financial power, Nationalism & Race

Lecture: The British Isles, socio-economic progress, Colonial business & the City of London

K. Theodore Hoppen, Chapters 9 & 14

### Week 6, February 12

Seminar: Victorian socio-economic gender roles

Ellen Jordan, "The Exclusion of Women from Industry in Nineteenth-Century Britain" *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 31, No. 2, April 1989, 273-296

Sascha Auerbach, "'A Right Sort of Man': Gender, Class Identity, and Social Reform in Late-Victorian Britain" *Journal of Policy History*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2010, 64-94



Vanity Fair caricatures of Benjamin Disraeli and William Gladstone



Week 7, February 17: Foreign Policy, War, Imperial engagements, Jingoism

Lecture: Wolseley, Gordon, African Wars, Russian Crisis, Berlin Conference

Douglas H. Johnson, "The death of Gordon: A Victorian myth" *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1982, 285-310

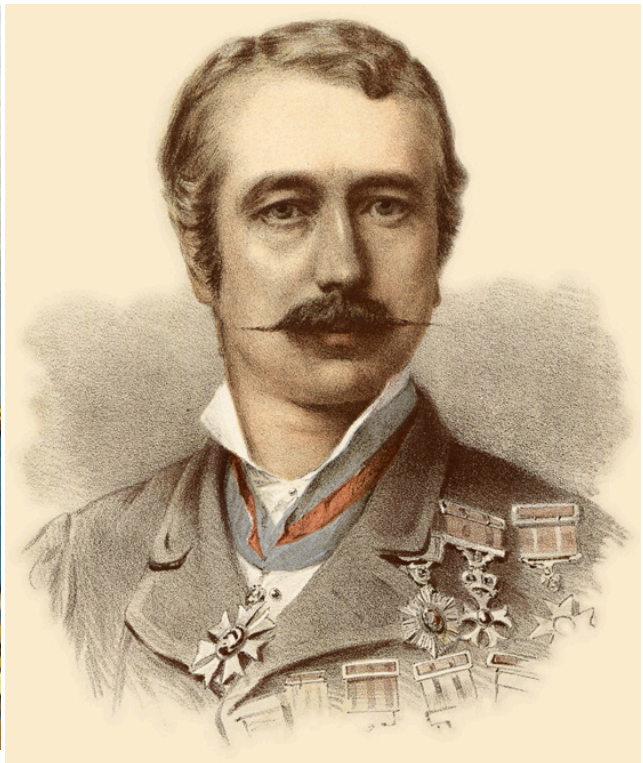
John D. Hargreaves, "The Berlin West Africa Conference: A Timely Centenary", *History Today*, Vol. 34, No. 11, November 1984, 16-23

Week 7, February 19

Seminar: British commerce, government finance, and high-imperial foreign policy

"Disraeli, Derby and the Suez Canal, 1875: Some Myths Reassessed" Geoffrey Hicks, *History*, Vol. 97, No. 2 (2012), p. 182-203

W. Ashworth, "The Late Victorian Economy" *Economica*, Vol. 33, No. 126, February 1966, 17-33



Charles George Gordon and Sir Garnet Wolseley

### Unit Three, Rise of Labour, 1890 – 1910

#### Week 8, February 24: Britain in the late Victorian era

Lecture: Nationalism and socio-economy, Gladstone's third ministry, Irish Home Rule

G. R. Searle, Chapter 1 & 2

#### Week 8, February 26

Seminar: Conservatives to Unionists, the Navy at the height of empire

G. R. Searle, Chapter 5 & 6

Peter Burroughs, "The Mid-Victorian navy and Imperial Defence", *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2002, 102-114

#### Week 9, March 2: Imperial Defence and Unionist Foreign Policy

Lecture: Salisbury, Milner and Chamberlain

G. R. Searle, 7 & 8

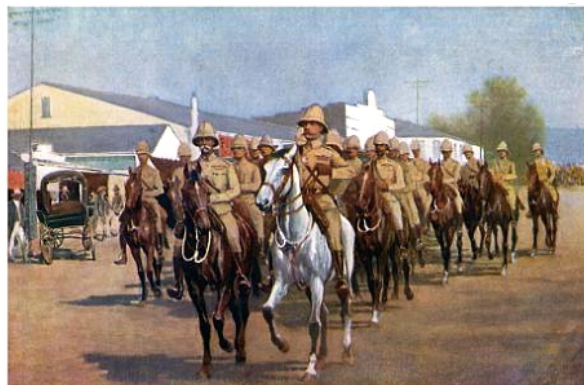
Eliza Riedi, "Imperialist Women and Conservative Activism in Early-Twentieth-Century Britain: The political world of Violet Milner", *Women's History Review*, Vol. 22, No. 6, 2013, 930-953

#### Week 9, March 4

Seminar: The Boer War, Boxer Rebellion, Omdurman, and "savage warfare" in the Empire

G. R. Searle, 9, 10

Kim Wagner, "Savage Warfare: Violence and the Rule of Colonial Difference in Early British Counterinsurgency" *History Workshop Journal*, Vol. 85, Spring 2018, 217-237



Lord Roberts Entering Pretoria by Sidney Paget



Week 10, March 9, Liberal domestic politics & Asquith's foreign policy

Lecture: Labour, economization, Home Rule, the women's movement, education reform

G. R. Searle, 11 & 12

Declan McHugh, "Labour, The Liberals, and the Progressive Alliance in Manchester, 1900-1914", *Northern History*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 2002, 93-108

Week 10, March 11

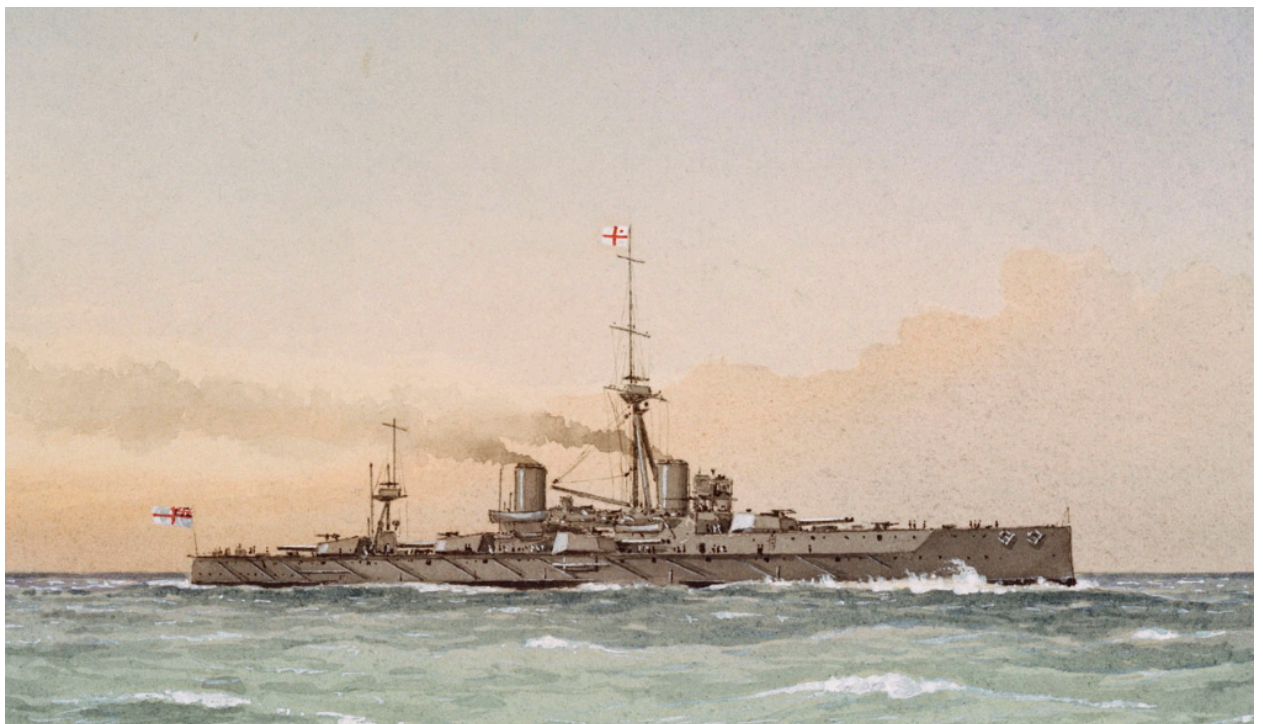
Seminar: Fisher and the Royal Navy

Jon Sumida, "Geography, Technology, and British Naval Strategy in the Dreadnought Era", *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 59, No. 3, Summer 2006, 89-102

Nicholas Lambert, "Admiral Sir John Fisher and the concept of Flotilla defence, 1904-1909", *Journal of Military History*, Vol. 59, No. 4, October 1995, 639-660

Matthew Johnson, "The Liberal Party and the Navy League in Britain before the Great War", *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 2, June 2011, 137-163

Nicholas J. D'ombrain, "Churchill at the Admiralty and the Committee of Imperial Defence, 1911-14", *Royal United Services Institution Journal*, Vol. 115, No. 657, 1970, 38-41



HMS Dreadnought, by William Mitchell

## Unit Four, The Great War, 1910-1920

### Week 11, March 16: The Deepening Crisis, prelude to war

Lecture: Liberal Foreign Policy and the Road to War

G. R. Searle, Chapter 13

T. G. Otte, "'Postponing the Evil Day': Sir Edward Grey and British Foreign Policy", *The International History Review*, Vol. 38, No. 2, March 2016, 250-263

Matthew Seligmann, "A Service Ready for Total War? The State of the Royal Navy in July 1914", *English Historical Review*, Vol. 133, No. 560, February 2018, 98-122

### Week 11, March 18

Seminar: Edwardian Culture, Social Darwinism, Class, Women's suffrage

G. R. Searle, Chapter 14 & 16

Laura E. Nym Mayhall, "Defining Militancy: Radical Protest, the Constitutional Idiom, and Women's Suffrage in Britain, 1908-1909," *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 3, July 2000, 340-371

### Week 12, March 23: The War

Lecture: Home Front, Social Change, Ministry of Munitions, Blockade, Air Power

G. R. Searle, 17

Christopher Clark, "Sir Edward Grey and the July Crisis", *The International History Review*, Vol. 38, No. 2, March 2016, 326-338

John Young, "Conservative Leaders, Coalition, and Britain's Decision for War in 1914", *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 2014, 214-239

### Week 12, March 25

Seminar: Dardanelles Campaign, BEF, the May Crisis, Kitchener's New Aries

Warren Dockter, "'A Great Turkish Policy': Winston Churchill, The Ottoman Empire and the Origins of the Dardanelles Campaign", *History*, Vol. 102, No. 349, January 2017, 68-91

Tom Curran, "Who was Responsible for the Dardanelles Naval Fiasco?", *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, Vol. 57, No. 1, March 2011, 17-33

Week 13, March 30: The Coalition government

Lecture: The Somme, Zeppelins, Jutland, Submarine Warfare, Ypres III & Cambrai

G. R. Searle, Chapter 18

Week 13, April 1

Seminar: The transformation on the Home Front, regulation, the Ministry of Munitions

Arthur Marwick, "The Impact of the First World War on British Society", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 3, No. 1, January 1968, 51-63

Krisztina Robert, "Gender, Class, and Patriotism: Women's Paramilitary Units in First World War Britain", *The International History Review*, Vol. 19, No. 1 February 1997, 52-65

Week 14, April 6: The Aftermath

Lecture: the loss of Ireland, Britain after the Versailles treaty

G. R. Searle, Chapter 19 & 20

Martin O'Donoghue, "'Ireland's Independence Day': the 1918 election campaign in Ireland and the Wilsonian moment", *European Review of History*, Vol. 26, No. 5, 2019, 834-854

Week 14, April 8

Seminar: The Victorian and Edwardian eras in retrospective



Munitions worker, and Women's Army Auxiliary Corps recruitment march