Specified subject: Overseas expansion and British identities 1585-1714
The seventeenth-century brought the possibility of attaining an empire outside Europe into British domestic politics. Through this period, over 300,000 subjects of the realm advanced across the Atlantic, seating themselves within uncharted American spaces and among unfamiliar native peoples. The creation of trading depots, forts and encampments in parts of India and the Guinea Coast offered further glimmerings of global ambition. Strategic and commercial interests similarly ushered the crown into the occupation of Mediterranean cities, islands and peninsula.

This paper will look at how the British kingdoms were themselves transformed by overseas expansion. It will explore the political and intellectual influences that drove colonisation in the New World, will examine the spheres of interest created in India and Africa, and place conquest and plantation in the context of wider patterns of British travel outside Europe. The emphasis of the paper will not be on the histories of particular colonial territories. Rather, it will focus on the contested place of empire within the domestic realm: the impact that ventures outside Europe wrought over the politics, religion, material culture and imaginative literature of Britain and Ireland. Seminars will show how encounters with unfamiliar lands, commodities and peoples were dramatised and circulated for public consumption, and will look at how territorial enlargement contributed to the political and religious discontents internal to the Stuart kingdoms. A particular theme will be the effect of overseas expansion upon national identities at home, exploring the way in which the creation of ‘Greater Britain’ changed relations between the different component parts of the Stuarts’ monarchy.

The course will comprise twelve lectures and ten seminars, with each student given four supervisions. The lectures will follow a chronological framework; the seminars will cover underpinning themes, and will be centred on the study of primary sources. Students will be encouraged to familiarise themselves with the rich historiography centred on the Early Modern Atlantic world, the intellectual history of empire and the meaning of ethnicity and identity in seventeenth-century Britain and Ireland.

Course convenor: Gabriel Glickman
Supervisions: four per student.

Examination
- Three-hour unseen; answer 3 questions; undivided paper.
- 16 questions

Framework:
12 lectures - weeks 1-6, Michaelmas and Lent term.
8 Seminars - weeks 2-8 (fortnightly), Michaelmas and Lent term
Easter term – 2 revision seminars.

Lecture programme:
Michaelmas term.
Week one- Introduction
Week two - Conquest, union and the meaning of ‘empire’ in seventeenth-century Britain.
Week three – Travel, migration and global encounters
Week four – Empire and the Churches.
Week five Colonisation and British politics 1624-1649
Week six - Corporations, empire and the English government
Lent term.
**Week one** – Empire, literature and utopian possibilities
**Week two** - A Christian Empire? England and the Islamic world (Gabriel Glickman).
**Week three** - ‘No more meer merchants’? The East India Company 1600-1690.
**Week four** - The making and unmaking of the Restoration Empire 1660-1689 (Gabriel Glickman)
**Week five** - Ireland and the English overseas empire (Gabriel Glickman)
**Week six** - Scotland and the English overseas empire (Gabriel Glickman)

Seminar programme

**Michaelmas term.**
**Week two**: Political and ideological origins of empire.
**Week four**: Non-Europeans and the English empire – conquest, conversion, captivity
**Week six**: Conquest or commerce? The political economy of empire
**Week eight**: Proprietaries and the organisation of empire

Lent term:
**Week two**: Colonists, slaves and the imaginative literature of the English empire.
**Week four**: An empire of goods? Visual and material culture
**Week six**: Empire and instability in English politics 1660-1689
**Week eight**: A British empire?

Essay questions:
Students should select FOUR essays.
1. Is Ireland better seen as an imperial partner or as a laboratory for colonisation?
2. Has the importance of Scottish exclusion from the English Atlantic been overstated?
3. ‘Planted by the hands of Our most deare Father of blessed memory, for the propagation of Christian Religion the increase of Trade, and the enlarging of his Royall Empire … to the end that there may be one uniforme course of Government, in, and, through, our whole Monarchie’ (Charles I, 1625). How far did this comment define the approach of Stuart governments towards America?
4. ‘I told them, I knew not of any that could be pleaded but from a Popish Principle, that Christians have a right to the Lands of Heathen… but this was disowned by all Protestants… They replied and insisted much upon that, that the King had a right by his Subjects coming and taking possession of this Land’. Samuel Sewall and Edward Rawson, The Revolution in New England Justified (1691). Discuss.
5. To what extent did companies and proprietors present obstacles towards royal power?
6. Was the political economy of empire governed by a mercantilist consensus?
7. How far did slavery become subject to political and moral contention?
8. ‘Whites conquered the [Early Modern] world without any overt ideology of white superiority’ [Colin Kidd]. Discuss in relation to British overseas expansion in this period.
9. How central was Protestantism to the expansion of English state authority outside Europe?
OR
How significant was Calvinist theology as an obstacle to the development of an English Protestant mission outside Europe?
10. How seriously did English governments and colonists take indigenous peoples as potential subjects of the crown?
11. Did the inflow of material commodities increase enthusiasm for English overseas expansion?
12. To what extent was there a political and cultural estrangement between the colonists and their compatriots in the British Isles?
13. Did party politics give rise to ‘competing visions of empire’ (Abigail Swingen)?
14. How far did English activities in Asia and the Islamic world influence or reflect approaches towards North America?
15. ‘Ancient histories of the Greeks and Lattines… onely can render a man fit for government and politicall Science, Martiall prudence and other requisites to rule over a great city’. (Company directors to Fort St George 1687). How far did this comment reflect the approach of the English East India Company through the seventeenth century?
16. Were events in England more important than developments in Asia in raising domestic opposition to the East India Company?
17. Was Europe more important in English politics than the affairs of the overseas dominions?
18. How far did English governments succeed in establishing an alternative model of empire to those of their European rivals?

Select primary sources:
Edmund Spenser, View of the Present State of Ireland (1596).
Richard Hakluyt, ‘Discourse concerning Western planting’ (1584).
Sir Thomas Roe, letters from India, in Purchas his pilgrimes. In five books (1625).
Thomas Hariot Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia (1588)
The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina (1669).
Sir Hugh Cholmley, ‘Account of Tangier’ (c. 1684), in The Memoirs of Sir Hugh Cholmley (1787 edn.).
Henry Neville, The Isle of Pines (1667).
Aphra Behn, Oroonoko (1688).
Robert Ferguson, A just and modest vindication of the Scots Design, For the having Established a Colony at Darien (1699).

Secondary sources – key texts:
Axtell, James, The Invasion Within: the contest of cultures in colonial North America (Oxford, 1985).
Bailyn, Bernard and Morgan, Philip D. Strangers within the Realm: cultural margins of the first British Empire (Chapel Hill, 1991).
Gregory, Jeremy ‘The later Stuart Church and America’. In Tapsell, Grant, ed., The Later Stuart Church 1660-1714 (Manchester, 2012), pp. 150-172.
Hardman Moore, Susan, Pilgrims: New World Settlers and the Call of Home (New Haven, 2010).
Kupperman, Karen Ordahl, ‘Errand to the Indies: Puritan colonization from Providence Island through to the western design’, William & Mary Quarterly, xlv (1988), pp.70-98
Kupperman, Karen Ordahl, ed. America in European Consciousness, 1450-1750 (Chapel Hill, 1995).
Lenman, Bruce, England’s Colonial Wars 1550-1688: Conflicts, Empire and National Identity (Harlow, 2001)
MacInnes, Allan I. Union and Empire: The making of the United Kingdom in 1707 (Cambridge, 2007).
McGrath, Charles Ivar, Ireland and Empire, 1692-1770 (London, 2012).
Pincus, Steve, Rethinking Mercantilism: Political Economy, the British Empire, and the Atlantic World in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, William and Mary Quarterly 69 (2012), pp. 3-34.
Robertson, John, ed. A Union for Empire: political thought and the British Union of 1707 (1996).
Walvin, James, Fruits of empire: exotic produce and British taste, 1660-1800 (1997).
Wilson, Kathleen, ed. A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840 (Cambridge, 2004).