EMPIRE and POWER: British Foreign Policy, 1782-present.

Boston University

Department of International Relations

CAS IR 514 / HI 533

Spring Semester 2012

Tuesday / Thursday: 11.00 – 12.30

Classroom: IRC 220

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Office Hours:
Tu/Th 2-3
Weds, 10-11
and by appointment

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description

Objectives
To provide an understanding of the nature of Great Power rivalry and to gain insight into the underlying factors affecting international relations, as well as to consider how governments develop and implement policy. The focus of the course will be the development of British policy overseas, and given the history of British policy it will involve considerations of events in all regions of the world, illustrating the evolving inter-locking nature of British foreign policy. Key themes running through the course are the formulation of national diplomatic strategies, policy co-ordination, the relationship of diplomatic and military considerations, alliance politics, and policy over-stretch.

Requirements
Mid-term examination 25% (19 March)
Research Paper 25% (4 April)
Comprehensive final examination 50% (8 May, 12.30-2.30 p.m.)
Research Paper

A research paper (10-15 pages) on a topic supportive of course objectives. Topics should be discussed in advance with the instructor.

Final manuscript will be submitted no later than the beginning of class on the dates indicated.

Late turn-in of assignments, without prior written permission will be penalized with a failing grade. There will be no opportunity for work for extra credit. Make-up examinations will be administered only for excused absence.

Academic Conduct

All class members are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Dean’s Office. A copy of the Academic Code of conduct is available at http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/. This should be read by all students.

Students are reminded that attendance is required, and reasons for non-attendance should be notified to the instructor.

Core Texts:


R.K. Webb, *Modern England: From the 18th Century to the Present*

All journal articles are available electronically through JSTOR from Boston University Libraries e-resources.

Lecture 1: Introduction: The British Tradition in Foreign Policy – Balance of Powers


Lecture 2: The French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars: The Creation of the Concert of Europe

Lecture 3: Britain and the Concert: The Congress and the Conference Systems
Webb, Chap. 7. ‘Palmerston’, pp. 301-16
David Steele, ‘Lord Palmerston’ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Lecture 4: The Crimean War
J. L. Herkless ‘Stratford, the Cabinet and the Outbreak of the Crimean War’
*The Historical Journal* Vol. 18, No. 3 (Sep., 1975), pp. 497-523

Lecture 5 & 6: Victorian Heyday: The Apogee of Empire
Webb, chap. 8, Britain Overseas, 1870-1886, pp. 352-372.


Lecture 7 & 8: Britain and the Eastern Question

Erik Goldstein, ‘Religion and British Policy Towards the Ottoman Empire, 1875-1923’ in John Fisher and Keith Robbins, eds. *Religion and Diplomacy: Religion and British Foreign Policy, 1815 to 1941* (Dordrecht: Republic of Letters, 2010), pp. 85-102

Lecture 9: The Boer War and Diplomatic Isolation
Lecture 10: Origins of the Anglo-American Diplomatic Alignment


Lecture 11 & 12: The Road to the First World War: Anglo-German Naval Rivalry, Imperial Rivalry


David French, ‘Spy Fever in Britain, 1900-1915’ *The Historical Journal*, vol. 21, No. 2 (Jun., 1978), pp. 355-370

Samuel R. Williamson Jr., The Reign of Sir Edward Grey as British Foreign Secretary *The International History Review* Vol. 1, No. 3 (Jul., 1979), pp. 426-438


Lecture 13: Britain at War, the Diplomacy of the Great War


Bartlett, *British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century*, Chap 1. ‘Partial Commitment and Total War’


Chap. 4 ‘Debates and Policies’
Lecture 14: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919


Session 15: MID-TERM EXAMINATION

Lecture 16 & 17 & 18: The Interwar Period: the Constraints on British Power

Bartlett, *British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century,* Chap 2. ‘Too many challenges’


**Lecture 19: The Second World War: The Diplomacy of the Grand Alliance**

Bartlett, *British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century*, Chap 3. ‘From World War to Cold War’

Winston Churchill, *The Gathering Storm*

**Lecture 20 & 21 The Cold War**


**Lecture 22: The End of Empire: Decolonisation and Retrenchment**


**Lecture 23: The Suez Crisis, 1956**


W. Scott Lucas, Redefining the Suez 'Collusion' *Middle Eastern Studies* vol. 26, No. 1 (Jan., 1990), pp. 88-112


**Lecture 24 & 25: Britain’s Diplomacy post-Suez**

Lecture 26: Britain, the United States and the First Gulf War, 1990-91


Lecture 27: Retrospective and Review Session.

SUPPLEMENTAL READING

Use the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB)*. This is available electronically through the Boston University library.