

## WOH 4264: Empires and Imperialism

Instructor: James Gerien-Chen

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T: 11:45 AM–1:40 PM (5-6), Th: 12:50–1:40 PM (6)

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 4:30-6:30, by appointment and via Zoom

### Course Description

Although we now live in a world structured by nation-states, for most of history, people have lived in and under political units that described themselves as “empires.” To what degree are empires and imperialism useful structures and concepts to understand not only modern history, but also the global present? Are empires and imperialism strictly European phenomena? How did historical actors describe the experience of living under imperial rule, and how did individuals champion and critique those empires? This course begins by exploring the conventional narrative of “European discovery and expansion” in the sixteenth century and viewing it from the vantage point of Asia, asking how early modern empires can be understood in comparative and global contexts. To what degree does the study of empires across Eurasia in this period suggest a pattern of convergence, rather than divergence? We then explore the centrality of indigenous dispossession and slavery to the development of empires, and analyze how empires shaped regimes of migration and patterns of climate change. We then investigate the period of “high imperialism” (1870–1945) from the comparative vantage point of two lesser-studied empires, the American and Japanese, and analyze links between and across these two Pacific-based imperial formations. Finally, we will ask whether empires and imperialism continue to have relevance in a decolonizing, post-imperial world. Have empires and imperialism disappeared, or have they reconstituted themselves? The class will conclude by evaluating the implications of thinking with empires and imperialism for contemporary debates over history writing, historical memory, capitalism and slavery, and migration and ethnicity. While no history class can provide an exhaustive account of “what happened?” this is especially true of a course on empires. Rather, this course aims to be an invitation to explore what it means to think about history “with” empires and imperialism.

### Course Objectives

This upper-level course will pursue several inter-related objectives. You will:

- Think historically and analytically about empires and imperialism, identifying key theories, themes, events, figures, and narrating change and continuity over time.
- Engage in historical research and analysis, evaluating secondary scholarship and primary sources in a variety of contexts.
- Craft historical questions and arguments, developing skills in written and oral communication.

### Course Format

Our class will meet synchronously (live) during the assigned time. If you will have technical or personal difficulties attending class, please let me know. Because our class will cover a great deal of geographic, temporal, and theoretical ground, both Tuesday and Thursday sessions will usually consist of a mini-lecture to contextualize a class discussion of a reading. On Tuesday, we will make use of the longer session to analyze secondary scholarship and examine primary sources in greater depth in small groups and as a class.

This is an unusual semester, and may be very unlike any that you (or I) have experienced in the past. These are unusual, unpredictable, and often very stressful times. History classes are built around a classroom community, and this semester more than ever relies on our collective willingness to teach and learn from each other. I also recognize that you may be encountering, or may throughout the semester encounter, challenges beyond the classroom. I encourage you to reach out to me at any time to discuss concerns or questions you might have about the class or otherwise.

History classes thrive on discussion, critique, and learning from one another. The class' success, and what we each get out of it, depend on our collective efforts to complete all reading assignments and come to meetings prepared to engage course materials and each other's ideas. That said, I recognize that personal, institutional, and societal circumstances are unusual and may continue to change throughout the semester. Please understand that I will make adjustments to the syllabus and assignments as necessary.

### **Required Texts**

Hazel Carby, *Imperial Intimacies: A Tale of Two Islands*. London, New York: Verso, 2020.

All other readings will be made available on Canvas or through the UF Libraries.

## Assignments and Grading

**Full assignment guidelines will be provided in advance and posted on Canvas. You must complete all assignments to pass the course.**

### Attendance and Participation (10%)

**Discussion Board Postings (20%):** Monday (4 times, once per unit, by 12 pm) and Friday (4 times, once per unit, by 11:59pm).

We will make use of the discussion board to facilitate discussion before and after our weekly class meetings. Postings should be between one and two paragraphs. I will post prompts for the Wednesday postings. For Friday postings, please continue and extend the discussion we had in class. The purpose of the postings is not to summarize the readings, but to offer your opinions, critiques, and questions on the material. Please always end your posting with an analytical question, and please do not post twice during the same week. Since contributions must be timely to be useful for class discussion and out of respect for that week's class discussion leaders, late Wednesday postings will not receive credit.

### Class Discussion Leaders (10%)

Starting in Week 3, you will be responsible for leading our class discussion during one Thursday session. As a group, you should prepare a short (~5 minute) presentation on:

- Identifying common themes and observations in your classmates' postings
- Identifying 2-3 short passages (1-3 sentences) from the readings that deserve closer analysis
- Formulating 2-3 questions for discussion

### Comparative Essay (15%)

In an essay of about three pages, compare two readings, secondary or primary, along a common theme or approach related to the study of empires. Possible themes include: the environment; indigenous peoples; resistance and/or accommodation; commodities; race and racism; or one of your own choosing. Due **Friday, October 9, 12pm**.

### Short Paper (15%)

By the end of Week 12, you should identify one Friday/post-class posting to extend into a longer analytical piece of writing, of around 4-5 pages. Submit this short paper for feedback by **Friday, November 13, 12pm**.

### Final Digital Portfolio (30%)

Compile a digital portfolio that consists of:

1. A summative analytical essay, reflecting on your experience this semester of thinking "with" empire and imperialism. This can be a conventional analytical essay, or it can also take the form of a letter to me; a letter to a family member or a friend; an op-ed; or otherwise.

2. A summary of your participation in class and online discussions, detailing your experience leading discussion, progress and struggles this semester, memorable moments of insight, particular takeaways, and ongoing questions.
3. A revised version of the “short paper” you submitted in Week 11, with a short paragraph detailing how and why you incorporated feedback.
4. Copies of your 8 discussion board postings.
5. A final self-evaluation of two paragraphs, evaluating your work and progress over the semester, skills and analytical tools you learned, challenges you faced, and takeaways for the future.

**Due: December 17, 5pm.**

### Grading Scale

93.3-100%	A	73.3-76.6%	C
90-93.2%	A-	*70-73.2%	C-
86.7-89.9%	B+	66.7-69.9%	D+
83.3-86.6%	B	63.3-66.6%	D
80-83.2%	B-	60-63.2%	D-
76.7-79.9%	C+	Below 60	E

\*A grade of C- does not count as a passing grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule, or basic distribution requirements.

For more information in UF’s grading systems and policies, please see the [UF Undergraduate Catalog](#).

## Policies and Expectations

### Attendance and Makeup Policy

Attendance is mandatory, and unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade. Requirements for class attendance and make-up assignments in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at Attendance Policies.

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

### Academic Honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code." On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The [Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/> or 352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available from the [Gatorevals website](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via the evaluation system. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at the [public results website](#).

### Statement Regarding Course Recording

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back to and for use of enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate verbally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live.

WOH 4264: Empires and Imperialism Syllabus  
Gerien-Chen, Fall 2020

The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

## Course Schedule

Date	Readings and Assignments	Deadlines and Reminders
<b>UNIT I: EXPANSIONS AND GLOBAL CONVERGENCES IN EARLY MODERN EMPIRES</b>		
<b>Week 1: "Discovery"</b>		
Sept 1 (T)	Introduction	
Sept 3 (Th)	Read: Timothy Brook, <i>Vermeer's Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World</i> , Chapters 1 and 2.  Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "Good Day Columbus," in <i>Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History</i> .	
<b>Week 2: Imperial Expansion and Global Circulation</b>		
Sept 8 (T)	Read: <i>Vermeer's Hat</i> , Chapters 3 and 4. Tonio Andrade, "Asian States and Overseas Expansion, 1500–1700: An Approach to the Problem of European Exceptionalism"	<b>Begin contributing weekly postings to Canvas Discussion Board</b>
Sept 10 (Th)	Read: <i>Vermeer's Hat</i> , Chapters 5 and 6. Heather Streets-Salter and Trevor Getz, <i>Empires and Colonies in the Modern World</i> , Chapter 4 ("The Rise of the Slave-Plantation Complex")	
<b>Weeks 3 and 4: The Qing in as Early Modern Empire in Global History</b>		
Sept 15 (T)	Read: <i>Vermeer's Hat</i> , Chapters 7 and 8.	
Sept 17 (Th)	Peter Perdue, "Why Do Empires Expand?" John Richards, <i>The Unending Frontier: An Environmental History of the Early Modern World</i> , 89–120, 131–137 (on Guizhou and Taiwan)	
Sept 22 (T)	Read: Emma Teng, <i>Taiwan's Imagined Geography: Chinese Colonial Travel Writing and Pictures, 1683–1895</i> , Chapters 6 and 7 Laura Hostetler, "Qing Connections to the Early Modern World: Ethnography and Cartography in Eighteenth-Century China"  <i>Primary sources</i> : Qing gazetteer depictions of women and Miao album	<b>Make sure you have completed Discussion Board postings for Unit I.</b>
<b>UNIT II: LABOR, LAND, RACE</b>		
<b>Weeks 4 and 5: Indigenous Dispossession, Slavery, and Racism</b>		
Sept 24 (Th)	Read: Aziz Rana, <i>The Two Faces of American Freedom</i> , 24–37. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, <i>An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States</i> , Introduction ("This Land")	

	<i>Primary Source: Locke, Second Treatise of Government, Chapter V, "Of Property, excerpts"</i>	
Sept 29 (T)	Read: Barbara Fields, "Slavery, Race, and Ideology in the United States of America," in <i>Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life</i> . Stephanie Smallwood, <i>Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora</i> , Chapter 3 For background, Streets-Salter and Getz, Chapter 7, "Revolutions in the Atlantic World"	
Oct 1 (Th)	<b>Visit by Professor Fernanda Bretones-Lane to class</b>  Read: Jane Landers, <i>Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions</i> , Chapters 1 and 5. <i>Primary Source: "Felipe Edimboro Sues for Manumission, Don Francisco Xavier Sánchez Contests"</i>	
<b>Week 6: Liberalism and Labor</b>		
Oct 6 (T)	Read: Gaiutra Bahadur, <i>Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture</i> , Chapters 3 ("The Woman's Quarters") and 5 ("Her Middle Passage") For background, Streets-Salter and Getz, Chapter 8, "The Industrial Revolution and the Era of Informal Imperialism"	
Oct 8 (Th)	Read: Mike Davis, <i>Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World</i> , 25–60.	<b>Comparative Essay due October 9, 12pm.</b>

**UNIT III: COMPARING THE JAPANESE AND US EMPIRES**

<b>Week 7: Nineteenth Century Settler Colonialism</b>		
Oct 13 (T)	Read: Manu Karuka, <i>Empire's Tracks: Indigenous Nations, Chinese Workers, and the Transcontinental Railroad</i> , Chapters 1, 3, and 4, and 5.	
Oct 15 (Th)	Read: Katsuya Hirano, "Settler Colonialism in the Making of Japan's Hokkaido" <i>Primary source: Kunikida Doppo, "On the Shores of the Sorachi River"</i>	
<b>Week 8: Globalizing Yellow Peril and the Color Line</b>		
Oct 20 (T)	Read: Nayan Shah, "Public Health and the Mapping of Chinatown" Manu Karuka, <i>Empire's Tracks</i> , Chapter 5 Ari Heinrich, "The Pathological Body: Lam Qua's Medical Portraiture," in <i>The Afterlife of Images</i>	

	<i>Primary sources:</i> Activity with Peter Parker’s Lam Qua Paintings Collection, Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library, Yale University	
Oct 22 (Th)	Paul Kramer, “Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule between the British and United States Empires, 1880–1910	
<b>Week 9: Civilization and Race, War and Health</b>		
Oct 27 (T)	Read: Robert Eskildsen, “Of Civilization and Savages: The Mimetic Imperialism of Japan’s 1874 Expedition to Taiwan”  Paul Kramer, “The Philippine-American War as Race War,” <a href="#">article</a> in Asia Pacific Japan Focus  <i>Primary sources:</i> Activity comparing war reportage from the Taiwan Expedition, the Sino-Japanese War, and the Philippine-American War	
Oct 29 (Th)	Read: Ruth Rogaski, <i>Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China</i> , Chapters 6 and 7. Warwick Anderson, “Pacific Crossings: Imperial Logics in United States’ Public Health Programs,” in <i>Colonial Crucible</i> .	<b>Primary source analysis due Friday, October 30, 12pm.</b>

<b>UNIT IV: CHALLENGING AND RESHAPING EMPIRE</b>		
<b>Week 10: Interwar Anticolonialism and Nationalism</b>		
Nov 3 (T)	Read: Kyung Moon Hwang, “The Birth of Korean Nationhood,” <i>New York Times</i> Jun Uchida, “Brokers of Empire: Japanese and Korean Business Elites in Colonial Korea”  <i>Primary sources:</i> Korean Declaration of Independence; Manuel Quezon calls for Filipino Independence	
Nov 5 (Th)	Read: Adom Getachew, “The Counterrevolutionary Moment,” from <i>Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination</i> .	
<b>Week 11: “New Imperialism” Meets Total War</b>		
Nov 10 (T)	Read: Prasenjit Duara, “The New Imperialism and the Post-Colonial Development State: Manchukuo in Comparative Perspective,” <i>Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus</i> Louise Young, “Colonizing Manchuria: The Making of an Imperial Myth,” in <i>Mirror of Modernity</i>	

	<i>Primary source: Koizumi Kikue, "Manchu Girl"</i>	
Nov 12 (Th)	Read: Sayaka Chatani, "Between 'Rural Youth' and Empire: Social Emotional Dynamics of Youth Mobilization in the Countryside of Colonial Taiwan under Japan's Total War" Takashi Fujitani, "Right to Kill, Right to Make Live: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans During WWII"	<b>Short paper due Friday, November 13, 12pm.</b>
<b>Weeks 12–15: Imperialism, Identity, and Intimacies</b>		
Nov 17 (T)	Read: Hazel Carby, <i>Imperial Intimacies</i> , Part One	
Nov 19 (Th)	<i>Imperial Intimacies</i> , Part Two	
Nov 24 (T)	<i>Imperial Intimacies</i> , Part Three	
Nov 26 (Th)	<b>Thanksgiving (no class)</b>	
Dec 1 (T)	<i>Imperial Intimacies</i> , Part Four	
Dec 3 (Th)	<i>Imperial Intimacies</i> , Part Five	
<b>Week 15</b>		
Dec 8 (T)	Final class discussion	

<b>FINAL PORTFOLIO</b>
<b>Due Thursday, December 16, 1 pm</b>