

# HI275-30 The British Problem: Empire, Conflict and National Identities, 1588-1714

**22/23**

**Department**

History

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 2

**Module leader**

Naomi Pullin

**Credit value**

30

**Module duration**

21 weeks

**Assessment**

60% coursework, 40% exam

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

This second-year early modern option module will explore the attempts of early modern monarchs and governments to gain hegemony over the British Isles and establish an imperial dominion beyond the Atlantic. It will focus on the connections between the kingdoms, and show how relations across the British Isles were affected by conflicts over the powers of crown and church, and challenged by splits between rival religious communities. These tensions, as the module will highlight, were grafted onto ancient national, cultural and ethnic fault lines. The module will look at how the experience of civil war, unrest and revolution took place within a larger international setting, studying the impact of civil and religious divisions on the development of the overseas empire, and highlighting the competing European affinities that impinged upon subjects of the three kingdoms.

[Module web page](#)

### Module aims

The module will focus on the experiences of the different religious, national and ethnic groupings within the British Isles and British America, and will encompass the history of culture and ideas, as well as religion and politics. While following a chronological structure, it will examine the longer underlying themes of religious and national consciousness, and consider how the question of British, English, Irish, Scottish or Welsh identity was explored by poets, scholars and artists within the period. The aim will be to fix the events under consideration within wide horizons, with students encouraged to assess the British kingdoms and empire in a comparative framework, alongside the experiences of other European states. Students will explore accessible primary sources, while entering into critical examinations of the rich historiography underlying the module.

## **Outline syllabus**

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. Introductions: A New British History
2. Elizabeth, Mary and the Politics of Religion in the British Isles
3. 'A Perfect Union'? James VI and I and his three kingdoms 1567-1625
4. The Gaelic world 1558-1625
5. The Creation of British America
6. Wales and the Making of the British Nation
7. Charles I and the road to Civil War
8. Radicalism, rebellion, revolution and regicide 1642-1649
9. Protestantism and National Identity, 1558-1649
10. Catholicism in the British Isles
11. One Nation, One Republic? 1649-1660
12. Charles II and the tensions of the Restoration Monarchy, 1660-1685
13. The Restoration and the bid for empire
14. James II and the 1688 Revolutions in Britain and America
15. Crown, Parliament, and the 'Revolutionary' Settlement
16. Race and the British empire
17. The Darien Design and the Context of Scottish Imperialism
18. The Act of Union and the Birth of the British State
19. Courts, Capitals and Cities
20. Conclusions: A British Nation?
21. Revision

## **Learning outcomes**

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the historical dynamics that connected the three British kingdoms and the emergent empire in America.
- Communicate ideas and findings, adapting to a range of situations, audiences and degrees of complexity.
- Generate ideas through the analysis of a broad range of primary source material exploring the relationship between religion, politics and national identity.
- Analyse and evaluate the contributions made by existing scholarship, drawing upon studies

from the 'New British History' and theories of nationhood and national identity.

- Act with limited supervision and direction to explore topics and themes of interest within defined guidelines, accepting responsibility for achieving deadlines.

### **Indicative reading list**

- David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (2000) (e-book)
- Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill, *The British Problem 1504-1707: State formation in the Atlantic Archipelago* (1996)
- B. Bradshaw and P. Roberts (eds.) *British Consciousness and Identity: the making of Britain* (1998) (ebook).
- S. Ellis & S. Barber (eds.) *Conquest and Union: Fashioning a British State, 1485–1725* (1995) (ebook)
- Glenn Burgess, *The new British history: founding a modern state 1603-1715* (1999)
- Nicholas Canny, *Making Ireland British 1580-1650* (2001)
- Nicholas Canny, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire: I, The Origins of Empire* (1998)
- Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity: Britain and Ireland c. 1650-c.1850* (1998) (e-book)
- Barry Coward, *The Stuart Age* (2014) (ebook)
- Barry Coward, *A Companion to Stuart Britain* (2007) (ebook)
- T.M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire 1660-1815* (2003)
- J.H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492-1830* (2007)
- J. H. Elliott, 'A Europe of Composite Monarchies', *Past & Present*, 137 (1992) (JSTOR)
- Colin Kidd, *British Identities before nationalism: ethnicity and nationhood in the Atlantic World 1600-1800* (1999) (e-book)
- M. Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain 1603-1714* (1996)
- Bruce Lenman, *England's Colonial Wars 1550-1688: Conflicts, Empire and National Identity* (2001)
- J.G.A. Pocock, ed., *Three British Revolutions: 1641, 1688, 1776* (1980)
- John Robertson, ed., *A Union for Empire: Political Thought and the Union of 1707* (Cambridge, 1995)
- Laura Sangha and Jonathan Willis, *Understanding Early Modern Primary Sources* (2016)

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

### **Subject specific skills**

See learning outcomes.

### **Transferable skills**

See learning outcomes.

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## **Study**

## Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	20 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Seminars	20 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Tutorials	2 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Other activity	2 hours (1%)
Private study	256 hours (85%)
Total	300 hours

## Private study description

History modules require students to undertake extensive independent research and reading to prepare for seminars and assessments. As a rough guide, students will be expected to read and prepare to comment on three substantial texts (articles or book chapters) for each seminar taking approximately 3 hours. Each assessment requires independent research, reading around 6-10 texts and writing and presenting the outcomes of this preparation in an essay, review, presentation or other related task.

## Other activity description

Revision seminar

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

## Assessment group D2

	Weighting	Study time
Seminar contribution	10%	
1500 word essay	10%	
3000 word essay	40%	
7 day take-home Examination	40%	

## Feedback on assessment

- written feedback on essay and exam cover sheets\r\n- student/tutor dialogues in one-to-one

## Availability

### Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
  - Year 2 of V100 History
  - Year 2 of V100 History
- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)
- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
- UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
  - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
  - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
  - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)

This module is Option list A for:

- UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
  - Year 2 of V100 History
  - Year 2 of V100 History
- UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
  - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
  - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
  - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)

This module is Option list B for:

- UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
  - Year 2 of V100 History
  - Year 2 of V100 History
- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)
- Year 3 of UITA-R3V2 Undergraduate History and Italian

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology

This module is Option list G for:

- USX2-Y202 Undergraduate Social Studies [2 + 2]
  - Year 3 of Y202 Social Studies [2 + 2]
  - Year 3 of Y202 Social Studies [2 + 2]