

HI2D2-30 Corruption in Britain and its Empire 1600-1850

24/25

Department

History

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Mark Knights

Credit value

30

Module duration

22 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The module investigates the concept, practice and representation of corruption in Britain and its empire during the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It considers corruption in theoretical and interdisciplinary terms (using research from political science, law, anthropology, economics, literature and art history) and explores a series of different types of corruption (political, economic, sexual and moral, linguistic, imperial) as well as the language and visual depiction of corruption. The module considers anti-corruption (proposals, reforms, campaigns) alongside corruption, investigating the motives behind campaigns and why solutions took so long to achieve. There will normally be a field trip to Blenheim Palace, if entrance fees are not prohibitive.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This 30 CATS undergraduate second-year option module will introduce students to the concept and practice of corruption, and 'anti-corruption', in the British state during a key stage in its evolution. Students will be encouraged to use some key databases of primary material (Early

English Books Online, Eighteenth Century Collections Online, Burney Collection of 17th-century and 18th-century Newspapers, Nineteenth Century Pamphlets, Nineteenth Century Periodicals) and also draw on visual material wherever possible, including the British Museum's extensive on-line database of prints and satires. Discussions will also be informed by contemporary issues, relating pre-modern corruption to current affairs.

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.

Term 1.

1. Introduction: Approaches to the study of corruption

Types of Corruption

2. Religious conceptions of corruption
3. Judicial Corruption
4. Social corruption
5. Political Corruption and the Politics of Corruption

Imperial Corruption

1. Empire I: The Early East India Company and Siam
2. Empire 2: The Caribbean
3. Empire 3: Fiscal-Military State
4. Empire 4: India in the era of Clive and Hastings
5. Empire 4: India after Hastings

Term 2

10. Fiscal-Military State

The State and the Evolution of 'Public Office'

11. State 1: Office-holding
12. State 3: The Sale of Office
13. State 4: Local Officeholding
14. State 5: The state and economics

Hunting Corruption

15. Sexual and moral corruption
16. Breach and Abuse of Trust
17. Accountability
18. The Press and Corruption

Term 3

Turning Points?

19. When was the 'Age of Reform'?
20. How much was reformed and how had it been achieved?
21. Revision session

Learning outcomes

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

- Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the methodological problems associated with defining and examining corruption.
- Act with limited supervision and direction within defined guidelines, accepting responsibility for achieving deadlines.
- 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, including online databases.
- Analyse and evaluate the contributions made by existing multidisciplinary scholarship.

Indicative reading list

- Ilana Ben Amos, *The culture of giving: informal support and gift-exchange in early modern England* (2008)
- Gerald Aylmer, 'From Office-holding to Civil Service: The Genesis of Modern Bureaucracy', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 5th series* 30 (1980), 91-108
- Patricia Bonomi, *The Lord Cornbury scandal : the politics of reputation in British America* (1998) John Breihan, 'William Pitt and the Commission on Fees 1785-1801', *HJ* 27 (1984), 59-81
- John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State 1688-1783* (1989) Arthur Burns and Joanna Innes (ed), *Rethinking the Age of Reform: Britain 1780-1850* (2007) Anna Clark, *Scandal: The Sexual Politics of the British Constitution* (2005)
- Pauline Croft, 'Patronage and corruption, parliament and liberty in seventeenth-century England', *HJ* 36 (1993) 415-21
- Faramerz Dabhoiwala, "Sex and the Societies for Moral Reform, 1688–1800," *Journal of British Studies*, 46, (2007), 290–319
- Nicholas Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire: India and the Creation of Imperial Britain* (2006)
- J A Downie, 'The Commission of Public Accounts and the formation of the Country Party', *EHR* (1976)
- P. Euben, 'Corruption' In: Ball, T et al, *Political innovation and conceptual change*. (Cambridge, 1989), Ch.11, pp.220-246
- Andrew Fitzmaurice, 'American Corruption' in John F McDiarmid (ed), *The Monarchical republic of early modern England* (2007)
- Diego Gambetta, 'Corruption: An Analytical Map' in *Corrupt Histories* ed Kreike and Jordan
- Aaron Graham, *Corruption, Party, and Government in Britain, 1702-1713* (2015) Philip Harling, *The Waning of Old Corruption* (1996)
- Philip Harling, 'Rethinking Old Corruption', *Past and Present* (1995)
- Philip Harling and Peter Mandler, 'From Fiscal-Military state to Laissez-faire state 1760-1850', *JBS* 32 (1993), 44-70
- David Hayton, 'Moral reform and country politics in the late seventeenth-century House of Commons', *Past & Present* 128 (1990), 48-91.
- David Hebb, 'Profiting from misfortune : corruption and the Admiralty under the early Stuarts'

- in Cogswell, Cust and Lake, *Politics, Religion and Popularity in Early Stuart England* (2002)
- Eckhart Hellmuth, 'Why does corruption matter? Reforms and reform movements in Britain and Germany in the second half of the eighteenth century', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 100 (1999) 5-24
 - Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought 1795-1865* (1988)
 - Albert Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before its Triumph* (Princeton, 1977).
 - Thomas Horne, 'Politics in a Corrupt Society: William Arnall's Defense of Robert Walpole', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 41.4 (1980), 601-14
 - Joel Hurstfield, *Freedom, Corruption and Government in Elizabethan England* (1973)
 - Joanna Innes, *Inferior Politics: social problems and social policies in eighteenth-century Britain* (2009) Isaac Kramnick, "Corruption in Eighteenth-Century English and American Political Discourse," in *Virtue, Corruption and Self-Interest* (Lehigh University, 1994) ed Richard Matthews
 - Ronald Kroeze, Andre Vitoria and Guy Geltner (eds.), *Anticorruption in History: From Antiquity to the Modern Era* (Oxford, 2017)
 - Philip Lawson and John Phillips, 'Our Execrable Banditti' : Perceptions of Nabobs in Mid-Eighteenth- Century Britain', *Albion*, 1984
 - Peter Marshall, *East India Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth century* (1976)
 - Nieves Mathews, *Francis Bacon: The History of a Character Assassination* (1996) John Noonan, *Bribes*
 - Martin Paldam, 'Corruption and Religion Adding to the Economic Model', *Kyklos* 54, issue 2-3 (2001), pp.383-414
 - Linda Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in early Stuart England* (1990)
 - Mark Philp, 'Defining Political Corruption' *Political Studies* (1997), XLV, 436-62 (available electronically) Wilfred Prest, 'Judicial corruption in early modern England', *P&P* 133 (1991) 67-95
 - Brian Smith, 'Edmund Burke, The Warren Hastings Trial and the Moral Dimension of Corruption', *Polity* (2008)
 - Alan Stewart, 'Bribery, buggery, and the fall of Lord Chancellor Bacon' in Victoria Kahn and Lorna Hutson (eds) *Rhetoric and law in Early modern Europe* (2001)
 - Simon Targett, 'Government and Ideology during the Age of Whig Supremacy: the Political Argument of Sir
 - Robert Walpole's Newspaper Propagandists', *HJ* 37 (1994),
 - Philip Woodfine, 'Tempters or Tempted? The Rhetoric and Practice of Corruption in Walpolean Politics' in
 - Kreike and Jordan, *Corrupt Histories*

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

See learning outcomes.

Transferable skills

See learning outcomes.

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.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time
Seminar contribution	10%	
1500 word essay	10%	
3000 word essay	40%	

7 day take-home essay with citations and a bibliography

40%

Feedback on assessment

- written feedback via Tabula
 - student/tutor dialogues in one-to-one tutorials
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Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- Year 2 of UFRA-R1VA Undergraduate French and History
- Year 2 of UGEA-R2V1 Undergraduate German and History
- Year 2 of ULNA-R4V1 Undergraduate Hispanic Studies and History
- UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
 - Year 2 of V100 History
 - Year 2 of V100 History
- UPDA-Y306 Undergraduate History (Part-Time)
 - Year 2 of Y306 History (Part Time)
 - Year 2 of Y306 History (Part Time)
- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)
- Year 2 of UIPA-V1L8 Undergraduate History and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 3 of UITA-R3V2 Undergraduate History and Italian
- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V7 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with a term in Venice)
- 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)
- UVCA-LA99 Undergraduate Liberal Arts
 - Year 2 of LA99 Liberal Arts
 - Year 2 of LA92 Liberal Arts with Classics
 - Year 2 of LA73 Liberal Arts with Design Studies
 - Year 2 of LA83 Liberal Arts with Economics
 - Year 2 of LA82 Liberal Arts with Education
 - Year 2 of LA95 Liberal Arts with English
 - Year 2 of LA81 Liberal Arts with Film and Television Studies
 - Year 2 of LA80 Liberal Arts with Global Sustainable Development

- Year 2 of LA93 Liberal Arts with Global Sustainable Development
- Year 2 of LA97 Liberal Arts with History
- Year 2 of LA91 Liberal Arts with Life Sciences
- Year 2 of LA75 Liberal Arts with Modern Languages and Cultures
- Year 2 of LA96 Liberal Arts with Philosophy
- Year 2 of LA94 Liberal Arts with Theatre and Performance Studies