

Cultural Encounters in The Global Eighteenth Century

Short Title: Global Eighteenth Century (10 ECTS)

Semester Taught: MT **Year:** SS

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Description and learning aims:

Transcultural exchanges evidenced in the encounters between Europe and the wider world in the eighteenth century provoked a variety of questions and differing perspectives. Those who chose to travel and explore new worlds existed alongside those forced to leave home and emigrate for socio-economic reasons, as well as those men and women forced into the horrors of slavery. Many who remained in their country of birth learned of other lands and cultures through literature, following the exploits of adventurous protagonists or reading the life writings generated by those forced into exile or servitude. This global world brought into focus the fragility of local social norms and attitudes as the extent of cultural relativity was revealed.

The module incorporates a variety of genres, from Gothic and picaresque novels, to poetry, letters, travel writing, and a play. It also prioritises a focus on primary material, and includes a class in Early Printed Books to engage with original eighteenth-century material, including maps and visual material. *Global Eighteenth Century* brings to the fore a variety of voices and perspectives - from the fictional daughter of a Native American princess narrating her own story, to a former slave recounting his path to freedom, to naive travellers and troubled colonists. It explores the power dynamics at play within this global century, at both the political level as well as the domestic one, analysing imperial quests, native uprisings, and patriarchal rule. As different cultures come together, the module considers both the blossoming of interracial relationships and the literal demonization of difference. Anxieties regarding class, gender, and race, are joined by those of religion too, as the module consistently considers the construction of 'the other'; patterns of emulation, assimilation, and rejection; and the creation of a global self.

Module Content:

- 1. Introducing the Global Eighteenth Century**
- 2. Slavery and Race:** Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko or The Royal Slave* (1688)
- 3. Gender and The Orient:** Montesquieu, *Persian Letters* (1721); Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Turkish Embassy Letters
- 4. Enlightened Travel:** Voltaire, *Candide* (1759)
- 5. Exploring the Archives:** Travel journals, guides, maps and reports in EPB
- 6. Emigration:** Incl. Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*; James Orr, 'Song composed on the Banks of Newfoundland' (1798); 'The Passengers' (1804)
7. Reading week
- 8. Colonialism and Commodification:** George Colman, *Inkle & Yarico* (1787)
- 9. Castaways and Conversion:** Anon., *The Female American* (1767)
- 10. The Global Self:** *Letters of the Late Ignatius Sancho, An African* (1782)
- 11. Gothic Anxieties:** Charlotte Dacre, *Zofloya, or, The Moor* (1806)
- 12. Conclusions**

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Analyse critically the set texts while also relating them to each other and their social, cultural, and political contexts.
- Engage confidently with primary archival material from Early Printed Books.
- Appreciate and engage in existing debates regarding the global eighteenth century.
- Demonstrate the capacity to perform close reading across a range of genres, employing key transferable skills of analysis and advanced writing techniques.
- Undertake independent research, identifying topics of interest and employing appropriate research methods.
- Employ appropriate critical vocabulary to discuss the primary texts, and understand key concepts that underpin a full understanding of literature from the period.

Assessment Details:

This module will be assessed by one essay (5,000 words, 100%). The essay topic can be of the student's own choice, reached upon consultation with the module convenor.

Please note:

- *Curricular information is subject to change.*
- **Information is displayed only for guidance purposes, relates to the current academic year only and is subject to change.**