A. COURSE LEADER

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B. MODULE AIMS AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

For almost exactly half the period between 1688 and 1815, Britain was a nation at war. The ‘Second Hundred Years War’ was fought out against France and Spain in Europe and the wider world, ending with victory over Napoleon in 1815. This module aims to examine the extent to which war was an agent of economic, social, and cultural change in Britain during the later part of the early modern period. In passing, and where appropriate, a comparative perspective will be offered on other European states. The course examines, firstly, Britain’s strategy, the ‘British way in war’, and military performance before going on to consider how the nation and state coped with the heavy burdens imposed by extended and recurrent warfare. Particular emphasis is placed upon the war-driven growth of the state, the reform of government, and the establishment of effective public finance mechanisms. War-related social costs, stresses, and strains are examined, together with government responses. Attitudes and popular reactions to war are considered, as is the part played by international conflict in helping to forge a new ‘British’ identity during the course of the eighteenth century. Finally, the relationship between war and industrialisation is assessed in the context of discussion about the performance of Britain’s wartime economy.

By the end of the module, students should have:

1. acquired a sound knowledge of the economic and social history of Britain during the eighteenth century;
2. developed a good understanding of the underlying economic, social, and cultural reasons for Britain’s success as a military power;
3. established a firm grasp of the key concepts utilised by historians in their analyses of eighteenth-century warfare, public finance, state formation, identity, and industrialisation;
4. familiarised themselves with the secondary literature;
5. been introduced to a selection of relevant source materials and statistics;
6. thought critically and analytically about the subject matter.

They should be able to:

1. prepare work thoroughly and on time;
2. engage in independent research and wide reading;
3. offer an informed interpretation of secondary materials, primary sources, and statistics.
4. present information, ideas, and argument clearly in oral or written form.

**C. LECTURES**

1. War and change: themes and trends.
2. Chronology and context: Britain during the eighteenth century.
5. The state and war (I): government expenditure and borrowing.
6. The state and war (II): taxes and taxation.
7. The state and war (II): the state and its methods.
8. The state and war (III): social problems.
11. A military state? (III): identities, attitudes, outlooks
15. War and the economy (III): trade, agriculture, and empire.

**D. TUTORIAL TOPICS**

It expected that students will attend all classes and that they will engage in preparation and reading sufficient to allow them to participate fully and properly in group discussions.

1. Introduction: the recipe for success

Read H.V. Bowen, *War and British society, 1688-1815* (1998). Then identify and list in detail the economic, social, and military factors that underpinned Britain’s success in almost every war fought between 1688-1815. Identify also some of the factors that might explain why Britain was unable to secure victory in the war fought against the American colonists between 1775 and 1783. You will all be asked to be contribute to the session, so please be prepared to offer you views backed up by appropriate evidence and examples.
2. The nature of war: eyewitness accounts.


Then:

a. Identify the main defining characteristics of eighteenth century military engagements and tactics (provide examples and evidence).

b. Consider the extent to which the conduct of war changed over time.

c. Discern an differences between actions fought in Europe and overseas?

3. Advising the cabinet 1793-1815

Consider the economic, financial, logistical, and military factors that influenced the implementation of British war strategy in the war against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France.

Group 1: Advise the cabinet that it is best to implement a strategy based upon defeating France in Europe.

Group 2: Advise the cabinet that it is best to implement a strategy based upon defeating France in the wider world.

The cabinet: Outline the practical and political constraints acting upon you. Then assess the strength of the two cases based upon their clarity, persuasiveness, and presentation.

4. Propaganda and war

Examine the paintings and cartoons (The two paintings are to be found at the following websites; copies of the cartoons will be distributed in class).

a. www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/west/death-wolfe.jpg - Benjamin West ‘Death of General Wolfe’ (1770)


Then:

1. Consider the date of their completion/publication. Is there anything significant about this?

2. Write a brief thumbnail sketch of the artist.

3. In general, consider whether the work is offering a positive or negative image of war.

4. As far as possible, interpret and explain the main character(s) and scene depicted.

[For details of eighteenth-century art and artists see section 14 of the Bibliography]
E. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Minor assignment.

Using the statistical information attached to this booklet as a starting point, identify and explain any trends that are evident in EITHER Government income OR Government expenditure between 1688 and 1815. Your response should take the form of a 1,500 word report and, where appropriate, it should be illustrated with graphs, charts, and tables.

The aim of this exercise is:

- To encourage you to think about the factors that shaped the development of British public finance
- To enable you to understand and apply in an historical context some of the basic terms and concepts that inform discussion of public finance.
- To develop your ability to interpret figures
- To encourage you to apply your computing/IT skills to the presentation of historical data.
- To encourage you to present clear, concise explanations in written report form.

Warning: Do not simply describe any trends you can identify. The emphasis is upon explanation and thus you will, of course, need to engage in appropriate background reading (which must be indicated in a short bibliography).

2. Essay(s)

Write a 2,500-word essay based on one of the following questions. Any students requiring 20 credits for this module must write two essays. Please bear in mind the following general points:

- append a bibliography to your essay.
- give the source of quotations, figures etc. in the form of a footnote.
- use the departmental style sheet.
- be sure that you do not copy out, i.e. plagiarize, unattributed complete sentences or passages from secondary works.
- try wherever possible to make use of primary evidence.

1. What factors shaped the development of the ‘British way in war’ between 1688 and 1815?
2. Do you consider the army or the navy to have been more important to Britain’s success in war between 1688 and 1815? Explain your choice.
3. To what extent did political factors cause changes in British taxation policy between 1688 and 1815?
4. Explain the relationship between war and the growth of the eighteenth-century British state.
5. How stable was British society during wartime between 1688 and 1815?
6. To what extent, and why, was the domestic impact of the American War of Independence different from all the other wars fought between 1688 and 1815
7. To what extent did military ideals and influences shape the development of British society and culture during the eighteenth century?

8. Why are historians unable to agree about the effects of war upon British industrialisation?

9. To what extent did war act as a stimulus to innovation in Britain between 1688 and 1815?

10. What effect did war have upon the lives of Britain’s civilian population between 1688 and 1815?
F. BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Britain during the eighteenth century: general studies

H.V. Bowen, War and British Society, 1688-1815 (1998)

2. The impact of wars upon British society: general studies

B. Lenman, Britain’s colonial wars 1688-1783 (2000).

3. The nature of warfare: the European context

M. Duffy, The military revolution and the state, 1500-1800 (1980).

4. Warfare and defence: British power, strategy, and tactics


P.M. Kennedy, The rise and fall of British naval mastery (1976).


5. The armed forces

a) The army


b) The navy

D.A. Baugh, British naval administration in the age of Walpole (1965).


S. Gradish, The manning of the British navy during the Seven Years’ War (1980).


c) The militia and volunteers


6. The state and government (see also sections 7 and 8)


7. War finance: taxation and borrowing


8. Social and political tensions: law, order, local government, and relief


9. Responses to war: patriotism, loyalty, and pacifism


L. Colley, ‘The reach of the state, the appeal of the nation. Mass arming and political culture in the Napoleonic Wars’ in L. Stone (ed.), *An imperial state at war: Britain from 1689 to 1815* (1994), 165-84.


B. Harris, ‘“American idols”: empire, war and the middling ranks in mid-eighteenth-century Britain’, *Past and Present*, 150 (1996), 111-41.


10. The economic impact of war


11. War, industry and technology


A. Birch, The economic history of the British iron and steel industry, 1784-1879. Essays in industrial and economic history with special reference to the development of technology (1967)


D.C. Coleman, ‘Naval dockyards under the later Stuarts’, Economic History Review, second series, 6 (1953), 134-55.
R. Morriss, The royal dockyards during the Napoleonic War (1983).

12. Trade and shipping


13. Agriculture


14. Art, war, and military images

a) General works.

b) Artists and their work
G. Cruickshank, *400 humorous illustrations*
H. and M. Evans, *The man who drew the drunkard’s daughter: the life and art of George Cruickshank* (1978)
A. Graves, *Sir Thomas Lawrence* (1900).
D. Jarrett, *The ingenious Mr Hogarth* (1976)
T. Wright and R.H. Evans, *Historical and descriptive accounts of the caricatures of James Gillray* (1968)