British History, Literature and Politics: The Middle East—Spring Semester 2018
(Meets voluntarily with Faculty Seminar on British Studies Fridays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.; thereafter regular seminar hours are 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.)

History 384K, E392M, GOV 390L

Spring Semester 2018
W. Roger Louis
HRC 3.206
Office Hours Thursday 2-3
Friday 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
HRC 3.202
and by Appointment

This seminar is designed as a reading course in history, literature, and politics, and as a class in professional writing. In addition to the required reading listed below, each student draws up an individual reading list in consultation with the professor.

The scope of the seminar includes not only the literature, history and politics of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland but also the interaction of British and other societies throughout the world, especially in the Middle East. One point of emphasis will be the history of the British Empire and Commonwealth in its Middle Eastern, Asian and African as well as American dimensions.

Another point will be a focus on historical and literary biography—and autobiography—for example, not only Disraeli (Suez Canal), Lord Cromer (Egypt) and T. E. Lawrence (Seven Pillars of Wisdom), but also Gandhi (Pakistan and the Middle East).

The main requirements of the course are met by students reading a book or its equivalent each week and by submitting a weekly critique of the reading. Each of the weekly essays is circulated to all other members of the class who make annotations on style as well as substance. The class thus becomes as much a course in professional writing as one in which individual academic interests are pursued.

The class also voluntarily meets together with the British Studies faculty seminar at three o’clock Friday afternoons. There is an informal and voluntary dress code (coat and tie for men, business attire for women).

In a general way, the seminar upholds the principles of the Modern History Faculty at Oxford—to enhance (1) intellectual curiosity; (2) conceptual clarity; (3) intellectual flexibility; (4) accuracy and attention to detail; (5) critical engagement; (6) capacity for hard work; (7) enthusiasm for history, literature, and politics; and (8) historical imagination and understanding, that is, the possession of appropriate historical knowledge and the capacity to deploy it.

Grades are determined by attendance and participation in seminar discussion (25%) and quality of the weekly critiques (75%).

Reading List—The following works are required: Olivia Manning, The Levant Trilogy; Eugene Rogan, Destruction of the Ottoman Empire; Albert Hourani, History of the Arabs.
Wm. Roger Louis
Kerr Professor of English History and Culture and Distinguished Teaching Professor

B.A. University of Oklahoma, 1959
M.A. Harvard University, 1960
D.Phil. Oxford University, 1962
D. Litt. Oxford University, 1979

Assistant and Associate Professor, Yale University, 1962-1970
Professor of History, University of Texas at Austin, 1970-1985
Director of British Studies, 1975 —
Kerr Professor 1985 —
Fellow of St. Antony’s College, Oxford, 1986 —
UT Distinguished Teaching Professor, 1999 —

Editor-in-Chief, Oxford History of the British Empire, 1992 —
Appointed Commander of the British Empire by the Queen for professional service, 1999
President of American Historical Association, 2001
Founding Director, AHA National History Center, 2001 —
US State Department Historical Advisory Committee, 2003 – 2009 (resigned on principle)
U.T. Professor of the Year, 2009
Kluge Chair, Library of Congress, 2010
Author or editor of some thirty books including Ends of British Imperialism (2006)

Edited books include Adventures with Britannia; More Adventures with Britannia; Still More Adventures with Britannia; Yet More Adventures with Britannia; Penultimate Adventures with Britannia; Ultimate Adventures with Britannia; Resurgent Adventures with Britannia; Effervescent Adventures with Britannia; and Burnt Orange Britannia