

Immigration to the United Kingdom since 1945: History and Representations

Course taught in English, 12 two-hour classes.

Assessment : 15-minute oral exam

Immigration has played a major role in the demographic and cultural transformations which the United Kingdom experienced in the second half of the twentieth century. Following the German refugees who fled the Nazi regime, Poles and Italians made their way to Britain in the immediate post-war era, while Irish migration, already well-established in the nineteenth century, continued at high levels. The arrival of immigrants from beyond Europe in large numbers from the late 1940s represented a turning-point. Whereas non-whites represented no more than 1 percent of the British population at the close of the Second world war, half a century later, the British society had turned into a multi-ethnic society, with over 3 million people of Asian, African or Caribbean origins. Beyond its social fabric, the British media and cultural representations testify to the extent to which the UK has indeed become multicultural.

The first objective of this course is to provide students with precise knowledge concerning the history of immigration to the UK by emphasising the specificity of immigration flows to the UK, the originality of the political responses by the successive British governments and the impact which immigration had both on the native society and on migrant communities. The second objective of this course is to help students to acquire the essential concepts needed to question political issues connected to immigration such as the reasons for the weakness of the extreme right in Britain, the United Kingdom's original position on religion and secularism and the opposition between various models of integration, assimilationism and multiculturalism in particular. Although the primary focus of this course will be the United Kingdom, interrogating these concepts should help students to better apprehend other national situations, the French one in particular. The final objective of this course is to focus on British representations of immigration and ethnic minorities by analysing a variety of documents, both written and visual. A few political speeches and literary texts will be analysed and special attention will be devoted to visual representations (caricatures, sitcoms and films in particular).

The course will follow a chronological progression, in order to highlight the varying patterns of immigration flows, shifts in the legislative framework concerning immigration, evolutions in the situation of immigrants and their offspring in British society as well as changing attitudes to ethnic minorities.

PROVISIONAL OUTLINE:

Lesson 1: Immigration to Britain before 1945: Britishness, Citizenship and Integration

1. *Kingdom and Empire: The Formation of Identities of Self and Other*
 - 1.1. From Multi-National Kingdom to Empire
 - 1.3. Empire and Britishness
 - 1.4. Scientific Racism
 - 1.5. Popular Views of the Imperial Other
2. *British Policy on Immigration and Citizenship up to 1905*
3. *The Gradual Integration of European Immigrants*
 - 2.1. Irish immigration
 - 2.2. Jewish immigration
4. *Early Black and Asian presence in Britain*

Lesson 2: Immigration to Post-war Britain (1945-1962): From Laissez-faire to Restrictionism

1. *The Political and Economic Reasons of Post-War Laissez-Faire*
 - 1.1. From War to Reconstruction: Migration to Britain in the 1940s
 - 1.2. The British Nationality Act, 1948
2. *Primary Immigration from the 'New Commonwealth'*
 - 2.1. General explanatory factors
 - 2.2. West Indian Migration to Britain
 - 2.3. South Asian Primary Migration
 - 2.3. Other Diasporas
3. *British Attitudes to New Commonwealth Immigrants: Racialising Immigration?*
 - 3.1. Popular and Media Attitudes to Immigration
 - 3.2. Attitudes to Immigration in Parliament and Government
 - 3.3. The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act

Lesson 3: Immigration in the Age of Bipartisan Consensus (1962-1979)

1. *Post-1962 Immigration Flows*
2. *The 'Package Deal' on Immigration: Restrictions and Equal Rights*
3. *Love Thy Neighbour (1972): Turning Racism into a Laughing Matter*
4. *The East African Asian Crises of 1968 and 1972*
5. *Powellism and the right-wing shift on Immigration*
 - 5.1. Powell's Rivers of Blood speech (April 1968)
 - 5.2. The Restrictionist Turn to Conservative Policy on Immigration
 - 5.3. British Far-Right Movements

Lesson 4: Ethnic minorities in Neo-Conservative Britain (1979-1997)

1. *Neo-Conservative Immigration Policy*
 - 1.1. The 1981 British Nationality Act
 - 1.2. From Commonwealth Migrants to Asylum Seekers
2. *Integration in Question*
 - 2.1. Assimilationism in Education Policy
 - 2.2. Policing and Urban Unrest
 - 2.3. Political Attitudes among Ethnic Minorities
3. *The Emergence of Black and Asian Cinema: My Beautiful Laundrette (1985)*

Lesson 5: The Rise and Fall of Multiculturalism (1997-2010)

1. *The Paradoxes of New Labour's Multiculturalism*
 - 1.1. The Promotion of State Multiculturalism
 - 1.2. *Bend it Like Beckham* (2002) and *Ae Fond Kiss*(2002): Triumphant Multiculturalism?
 - 1.3. Immigration Policy under New Labour: Change or Continuity?
2. *The Impact of 9/11 and 7/7*
 - 2.1. Political and Media Discourse on Multiculturalism following 9/11 and 7/7
 - 2.2. British Muslims in the 2000s
 - 2.3. Losing Faith in Multiculturalism: *Yasmin* (2005) and *Four Lions* (2010)

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