

ENG 2306G: Seventeenth-Century Literature and Culture  
Mondays 3:30-5:30pm & Wednesdays 2:30-3:30pm  
Instructor: Dr. Amanda Di Ponio

The seventeenth century was a very exciting time: developments in religious, economic, political, intellectual, literary and cultural history were revered – and reviled – the world over. England, considered a super power by the end of the century, acquired its position as an Imperial power through colonial and overseas projects usually sponsored by the Crown: under Sir Walter Raleigh, Virginia, the West Indies, and South America were explored and exploited; campaigns fronted by the East India Company (1600), The Hudson’s Bay Company (1670), The Royal African Company (1672), and the slaving voyages of John Hawkins – Elizabeth I would also refer to the enterprise as “detestable” – all took place during this time. Some critics suggest, therefore, that from the 1620s – and even earlier – the literature of England is not separate from the literature of England’s colonies.

With this understanding in stride, we will study popular literary and cultural phenomena of Europe – such as the imperialist drive, the marginalization of the other, *auto de fé* – and their permeations across the globe in the West Indies, the Americas, and Asia. We will also examine the colonies’ agency in responding to/setting important literary and cultural trends – often in response to exploitation – and will look for those powerful voices of dissent on the continent and abroad. We will read novels, short stories, poetry, drama, historical treatise, and diaries (the following is a selection only): Francis Bacon (“Of Empire”), Anne Bradstreet (selected works), Aphra Behn (*Oronoko*), Sir Walter Raleigh (*The Discovery of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empire of Guiana*), Shakespeare (*The Tempest*), John Milton (*Eikonoklastes*).



Questions? [adiponi@uwo.ca](mailto:adiponi@uwo.ca)