French Colonialism
POLS 333 Advanced Topics in Global Politics (3)

Prof. Jon Goldberg-Hiller

This course is designed to introduce several significant themes regarding French colonialism, including the philosophical, political and social consequences of colonialism for French cultural life today. French colonialism has a long history that has persisted throughout the modern period; isolating its historical impact is not simple, nor can we be comprehensive in a single course. Our goals here are to preliminarily theorize the relevance of French colonialism and imperialism for limited aspects of contemporary French philosophy, governance, society, art, film, and music. This course will emphasize the influence of colonialism in the twentieth century and examine several disparate sites of colonial control, including sub-Saharan Africa, Indochina, the Pacific, and Algeria, as well as metropolitan France.

The course will examine the following questions: In what ways has French colonialism expressed and transformed French political ideals and social relations? In what ways do cinema, literature, and art express the meanings of colonial control including resistance to French policy and common attitudes towards empire? In what ways have writers who experienced colonialism spoken back to metropolitan France?

Students will gain knowledge of French colonial history and cultural criticism. In addition, students will build context for analysis of the poetry of Aimé Césaire, the philosophy and political theory of Jean-Paul Sartre and Frantz Fanon, and cinematic theory of Sembène Ousmane and others.

Students will be expected to write two papers, 8-10 pages long, and turn in drafts of these papers prior to their due dates. This course will fulfil a Writing Intensive (W) focus. The course will be conducted in English. However, should you choose, you may complete your writing assignments in French.

Students will be asked to buy one book (Blanchard, Pascal, Sandrine Lemaire, Nicolas Bancel, Dominic Richard David Thomas, and Alexis Pernsteiner, eds. Colonial Culture in France since the Revolution. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014.) which costs $9.99 in electronic form. Other readings will be available on the course website.

Student learning outcomes:

• Analyze orally and in writing primary texts and secondary Colonial texts, including films and art work.
• Identify and differentiate central cultural themes pertaining to various sites of French colonialism
• Demonstrate an understanding of how colonial themes are presented popularly, and how they are resisted through various media
Demonstrate ability to research primary and secondary sources using bibliographic tools, read and comprehend secondary sources, and write coherently

15 weeks

(1) **Introduction**

(2) **Imperialism and colonialism for the masses**

⇒**Assignment:** Write a one page, single-spaced essay describing one cultural aspect of French colonialism that you observed this week in Paris.

(5) **Colonialism: Race, Gender and Resistance in Paris**

⇒**Assignment:** Write a one-page essay in which you explain the relationship of Feminism to anti-Imperialism.

(4) **Blackness, colonialism and slavery: Africa and the Caribbean I**

⇒**Assignment:** Attend Musée Dapper (50 Avenue Victor Hugo [16]) and write a one-page, single space essay on one exhibit. Ask yourself what this exhibit is expressing about African culture.
(5) **Blackness, colonialism and slavery: Africa and the Caribbean II**
Mamdani on legacy of colonialism in Africa
(b) Watch: Sembene’s “Xala”
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilC01dfKTqY)

> Assignment: Write a one-page, single space essay in which you analyze “Xala” for its commentary on French colonialism and culture.

(6) **Blackness, colonialism and slavery: Africa and the Caribbean III**

> Assignment: Submit an abstract or outline for an 8-10 page paper in response to one of the following prompts:
1. Taking an example of a form of music, visual arts, or literature, explore how the themes of the good life intersect with colonial relations or history.
2. Find several musical videos from French African artists and write an essay in which you examine themes of race, gender, or segregation in these popular artworks.
3. Write an essay in which you explore the cultural meanings applicable to the idea of “postcoloniality.”

(7) **Colonising Indochina**
(a) Pentagon Papers
(c) Brocheux *Indochina* selections

⇒**Assignment due: draft of first paper**

### Colonizing Algeria I

(c) Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, selections.

⇒**Assignment:** write an essay explaining your understanding of colonial binaries (e.g., the colonizer and the colonized; good colonists v. wicked colonists) from the perspective of Camus (as understood by Said).

### Colonizing Algeria II


⇒**Assignment:** Submit an abstract or outline of your second paper. You may choose any theme that has attracted your attention in the readings so far.

### Colonizing Algeria III

(a) Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*
(b) Film: “Battle of Algiers”
**Assignment:** Write a two-page essay in which you address the significance of Fanon's argument about the necessity of violence for the colonized.

(11) **Colonialism and the bomb in the Pacific:**

**Assignment:** Submit a draft of your second paper.

(12) **The politics of Museums: the Case of the Quai Branly**

**Assignment:** Go to the Musée de l’homme Quai Branly and choose a small section of an exhibit. Write two pages in which you assess the claims of two of this week’s scholars.

(13) **Cinema I**
(a) *Chocolat*

(14) **Cinema II**
(a) *Un été à la goulette*
(b) *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*
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<th>Learning outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Analyze orally and in writing primary texts and secondary Colonial texts, including films and art work.</td>
<td>Inability to identify and write about central thesis in course texts (including films).</td>
<td>Identification of and writing about thesis within course texts.</td>
<td>Identification of thesis within course texts and written discussion of how various theses interact, and the significance of these scholarly perspectives and arguments.</td>
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<td>Identify and differentiate central cultural themes pertaining to various sites of French colonialism</td>
<td>Inability to comprehend and write about cultural and political differences in various colonial sites.</td>
<td>Identification of cultural and political differences in various colonial sites and ability to argue how they have made an impact on French culture.</td>
<td>Identification of cultural and political differences in various colonial sites and ability to comprehend and identify various schools of thought explaining how they have made an impact on French culture.</td>
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<td>Demonstrate an understanding of how colonial themes are presented popularly, and how they are resisted through various media.</td>
<td>Inability to identify, comprehend, and write about the differences between cultural supports for and antagonism towards colonialism.</td>
<td>Identification of cultural supports for colonialism and comprehension of how opponents utilize similar cultural forms.</td>
<td>Ability to comprehend and write about various themes and personalities resisting the cultural supports for colonialism.</td>
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<td>Demonstrate ability to research primary and secondary sources using bibliographic tools, read and comprehend secondary sources, and write coherently.</td>
<td>Inability to discover and comprehend additional sources, or distinguish secondary from primary sources, or to write clearly and properly cite sources.</td>
<td>Ability to write competently using both primary and secondary sources, to cite properly, and to conduct independent research.</td>
<td>Ability to research extensively, argue coherently using various primary and secondary sources while weighing their merits, and to write clearly and compellingly about a significant question.</td>
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Written Paper Evaluation Rubric

Performance Scale

- 3 .... Work is exceptional, excellent skills apparent
- 2 .... Work is competent, meeting minimum requirements; adequate skills apparent, but additional instruction/practice required.
- 1 .... Work is underdeveloped or incomplete.
- 0 .... Work is unacceptable.

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