G46.1500: Colonization and Immigration in the Francophone World

Professor George R. Trumbull IV

Tues 4:05-6:35pm
15 Washington Mews

This course aims at exposing themes, commonalities, and discontinuities in the history of the French imperial project and its consequences. To what extent did empire represent the culmination of other political, cultural, and intellectual projects? How did empire arise as a response to the political upheavals of national identity formation? Drawing on examples from numerous disciplines, a wide array of theoretical perspectives, and various geographical contexts, the course readings introduce central themes in recent scholarship on French colonialism.

Week I: Introduction

Week II: France and the Americas (I): Louisiana
Reading: Bradley G. Bond, ed. *French Colonial Louisiana and the Atlantic World*

Week III: France and the Americas (II): Revolution, Slavery, and Emancipation
Reading: Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804*

Week IV: France and the Americas (III): Empire and the Legacy of Slavery

Week V: Professionalization and Bureaucracy
Reading: Patricia M.E. Lorcin, *Imperial Identities: Stereotyping, Prejudice and Race in Colonial Algeria*

Week VI: Memory and Representation
Reading: Robert Aldrich, *Vestiges of the Colonial Empire in France.*

Week VII: Art, Aesthetics, Empire

Week VIII: Identity and the Inter-War Years
Reading: Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State: Negritude and Colonial Humanism Between the Two World Wars*

Week IX: Vichy and the Fascism of Empire
Reading: Eric Jennings, *Vichy in the Tropics: Pétain’s National Revolution in Madagascar, Guadeloupe, and Indochina, 1940-1944*
Week X: Warfare, Decolonization, and the Marketing of Independence

Week XI: New Forms, New Institutions
Reading: Richard Watts, *Packaging Post/Coloniality: The Manufacture of Literary Identity in the Francophone World*

Week XII: Theories of Identity
Reading: Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau, Raphaël Confiant. *Eloge de la Créolité*

Week XIII: Empire at Home (I)
Reading: Paul A. Silverstein, *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race, and Nation*

Week XIV: Empire at Home (II)
Reading: Jean-Loup Amselle, *Affirmative Exclusion: Cultural Pluralism and the Rule of Custom in France*

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1) CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE. 25%
a) All students are expected to arrive at discussion section prepared to contribute to our conversation about the readings; attendance is required. EVERY WEEK, BY 9:00 P.M. THE EVENING BEFORE DISCUSSION, every student must post two discussion questions drawn from the readings to the Blackboard site. Questions should aim at provoking discussion, rather than soliciting answers to factual queries.
b) Every student must present one week’s readings. In a short discussion of no more than five minutes, you should outline salient themes and discontinuities in the text(s) and provide rigorous avenues for inquiry in our discussion.

2) CRITICAL READING: 25%
Each student must offer a critical reading of one or more of the additional texts listed below. In a reading response of no more than five pages, please substantively engage with the text(s) selected. What aspects of the work prove methodologically problematic or analytically inconsistent? Which elements of the argument present compelling avenues for future research or theoretical inquiry?

3) PAPER: 50%
As a final exercise, please prepare a 15-20 pages research paper on a relevant topic in the history of the French colonial empire. I expect papers to: a) demonstrate a mastery of relevant theoretical material; b) engage in a substantive manner with works from other intellectual traditions or disciplines; c) offer a particular perspective on one (or more) of the fundamental questions in the emerging field(s) of Francophone Studies.

Books available for Purchase at the NYU Bookstore:


Suggested Supplemental Readings for Assignment #2:


