
POST-COLONIAL LIT. & THEORY in Spring 2019 (CL3081)

Course Code	CL3081	Professor(s)	Sneharika Roy
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-117
Class Schedule	TF: 12:10-13:30 in G-113	Office Hours	14:15 - 15:15 on Tue, Fri and by appointment
Credits	4	Email	sroy@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

Have you ever felt that people's reactions to you seem to be pre-determined by specific criteria—your skin colour, your religion, your origins, the status of your country as powerful or peripheral? Postcolonialism will give you a language to articulate this feeling of being pigeon-holed in socio-political boxes—often without your consent. It will help you understand the pervasive role of colonialism in shaping, sometimes violently, the seemingly self-evident categories that we use in discussions everyday: modern/traditional, science/religion, west/east, citizen/immigrant, civilian/terrorist. No sincere investigation of your place in the world today is complete without a certain awareness of postcolonialism.

AUP's cosmopolitan location as an Anglophone university in Paris provides a wonderful starting-point for the exploration of Postcolonial theory and literature. Postcolonial theory is the product of the encounter between the poststructuralist intellectuals and the writer-activists of the Francophone world (Derrida, Foucault, Fanon, Césaire) and thinkers in the Anglophone world (Saïd, Bhabha, Spivak, Achebe, Chow)—and beyond (Glissant, Benítez-Rojo). The strength of both Postcolonial theory and literature lie in their exhilaratingly comparative scope—as transgeneric, transdisciplinary, transcultural, and translinguistic phenomena. Through a combination of excerpts and full works, originals and translations, we will explore many of the theorists mentioned above and a host of literary texts—by Césaire, Djébar, Walcott, Carpentier, Xun, Hosseini... We will also reflect on France's complex stance towards its colonial past and its multicultural present during a daytrip to Le Havre, a former slave-port, and in class with the help of two extraordinary guest speakers: French writer, theatre director and activist Jocelyn Brudey who celebrates his Guadeloupian slave origins; and French blogger and novelist Grace Ly who ironically self-identifies as the “petite banana”, “yellow” on the outside due to her Cambodian-Chinese roots and “white” on the inside because of her French upbringing...

Course Learning Outcomes

To approach postcolonial studies as a critique of colonialism; but also to see its broader relevance as a deconstruction of any discourse of power (e.g. extreme nationalism) that seeks to legitimize exclusion

To approach postcolonial theory as an intertextual “genealogy” in which each theorist builds on and extends the work of previous thinkers

To place postcolonial literary texts in terms of the specific historical, socio-cultural and linguistic contexts in which they emerged

To recognize the stylistic and generic specificities (rewriting history, national allegory, magical realism etc.) of postcolonial literature

To appreciate the comparative scope of postcolonial theory (orientalism, the third space, the role of the intellectual etc.) in its application to literary texts, but also to recognize its limits

To be critical of postcolonial theory as the intellectual production of postcolonial intellectuals who risk silencing the subalterns they wish to empower

To explore the potential of culture (which includes literature, but also other forms like performance and the web), to resist discourses of power through messages of survival and self-affirmation

To go beyond representations of French identity in terms of baguettes and berets or laïcité, and discover the postcolonial face of a hybrid, multicultural France

General Education

[PLEASE EDIT OR REMOVE THE FOLLOWING TEXT AS APPLICABLE]

The general education program at AUP consists of four requirements: Speaking the World, Modeling the World, Mapping the World, and Comparing Worlds Past and Present.

This course can be used to fulfill the [INDICATE THE REQUIREMENT(S) FULFILLED BY THE COURSE] requirement and as such has the following learning outcomes:

[INDICATE THE GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES]

Course Outline

[Tentative Schedule](#)

Jan. week 1

Tue 22: *La Bamba!* Postcolonialism: definition, scope, critiques...

Response paper 1 on postcolonialism (audio assignment) due by Mon midnight

Fri 25: *Fantasia*

Reading: Introduction and Part I

January 27 – last day to drop/add courses online

Jan.- Feb. week 2

Tue 29: Negritude, *Journal of a Homecoming*

Reading: Dubois and Senghor in course packet (p. 25-29) + *Journal*: first 4 pages in original and translation (p. 76 – 79) and climax of the poem (p 122-127). See also explanatory notes to these pages (p 151-160, p 245-256)

Response paper 2 on negritude due by Thur midnight via Blackboard

Fri 1: *Fantasia*

Reading: *Fantasia* Part II

Feb week 3

Tue 5: Frantz Fanon

Reading: Fanon in course packet (p. 30 – 40)

Response paper 3 on Fanon due by Thur 7 midnight via BB

Fri 8: *Fantasia*

Reading: *Fantasia III* and Finale

Feb. week 4

Tue 12: Edward Said

Reading: Said in course packet (p. 41 – 62)

[Fri 15: In conversation with guest speaker Grace Ly](#)

Reading: Ly's blog, la petite banane: <http://lapetitebanane.com/>. Watch her webseries "ça reste entre nous" and "Grace is hungry"

Feb. week 5

Tue 19: Third World Feminism through Chandra Mohanty and Gayatri Spivak

Reading: Mohanty and Spivak in course packet (p. 63 – 78)

Fri 22: Review of critical theory so far; reading *Fantasia* in tandem with Fanon, Said, Mohanty, Spivak

Feb.- Mar. week 6

Tue 26: No classes

[Fri 1: In-class exam on *Fantasia* and theoretical concepts studied so far](#)

Weeks 7 & 8: March 4th – 15th, Spring break, no classes

Mar. week 9

Tue 19: *Cahier* and re-reading négritude

March 20th Mid-semester grades due

[Fri 22: In conversation with Jocelyn Brudey](#)

Reading: Entire poem

Fri evening performance (Fri 5 class cancelled; attending this event will be considered as attendance for Fri 5 class)

Mar. week 10

Tue 26: *Cahier*

Reading: Entire poem

Fri 29: *Cahier* contd.

Apr. week 11

Scrapbooking proposals due by Mon 1 midnight via BB

Tue 2: Jameson and Lu Xun

Reading: Jameson in course packet (p 88 – 94) and Xun's "Diary of a Madman" (on Blackboard)

Fri 5: class cancelled

April 5th- last day to withdraw or choose credit/no credit option

Apr. week 12

Detailed scrapbooking outline due by Mon 8 midnight via BB

Tue 9: Diaspora and hybridity (Hall and Bhabha)

Reading: Hall and Bhabha in course packet (p. 95 – 108)

Fri 12: Marvellous realism, *Kingdom of this World*

Reading: Carpentier in course packet (22-24) [Full version of "On the Marvellous Real in America" available on online], *Kingdom of this World* (Parts 1 & 2)

Apr. week 13

Scrapbook due by Tue 24 midnight via BB

Tue 16: Bhabha contd.

Reading: Re-read Bhabha (100 – 108)

Fri 19: *Kingdom of this World*

Reading: *Kingdom of this World* (Parts 3 & 4)

Apr. week 14

Tue 23: *Kingdom of this World*

Response paper 4 on *Kingdom of this World* due by Thur midnight on BB

Fri 26: *Sea Prayer* (entire poem)

Apr. – May, week 15

Tue 30: *Sea Prayer*, scrapbook feedback

Readings: *Sea Prayer* (entire poem) and Bhabha's "Even the Dead have Human Rights" on BB

[Fri 3: Settler literature](#)

Reading: Blackboard

May, week 16

Tue 7: Last class – Review

Reading: "The Imam and the Indian" (Blackboard)

FINAL EXAM on Césaire's Journal and theory: May 14 2019 8:30AM

Bibliography: See "List of Complete References" in course packet

Textbooks

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
3. Kingdom of this World, The	Carpentier, Alejo (Trans. Harriet de Onis)	Farrar, Straus and Giroux	9780374530112	Yes
4. Sea Prayer	Hosseini, Khaled	Riverhead Books	9780525539094	Yes
2. Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade	Djebar, Assia (trans. Dorothy S Blair)	Quartet Books Ltd	9780704326101	Yes
1. Journal of a Homecoming / Cahier d'un retour au pays natal (English and French Edition)	Cesaire, Aime (trans. Gregson Davis)	Duke University Press Books	9780822368960	Yes

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an “F” for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

GRADING:

Participation.....	15%
Response Papers.....	15%
In-class exam.....	20%
Scrapbooking.....	25%
Final Exam.....	25%

Response Papers (1-2 pages): Topics include spontaneous theorising, a short close reading of an excerpt, summaries of concepts etc. The response paper focuses exclusively on content, form is irrelevant (no need for an introduction or conclusion, no obligatory requirement of academic style, conversational tone welcome). However, every sentence must be densely packed with important information and argument. Scrupulously avoid “empty sentences”.

Scrapbooking: Unlike a research paper, scrapbooking is not an academic form of expression, but a popular and vernacular one, and therefore appropriate for the anti-academic thrust of this class. Scrapbooking is a “private assemblage” of printed material – photos, newspaper cuttings, poems etc. that “both trace social networks and reveal personal preferences” (Christensen “Look at us!” 176). We will be expanding this to include audiovisual items – selfies, sound recordings of yourself, your classmates and our guest speakers, video recordings

during our daytrip to Le Havre etc.

Your scrapbook will have two components – an expressive one and a narrative one.

The expressive component will comprise 5 items (snippets, photos, videos etc.).

- 1 of the pieces must necessarily be a punchy 1-minute audio/audiovisual self-recording (elevator pitch format) answering the question: How did the Le Havre daytrip experience confirm or challenge my conception of identity? What is its place in my personal trajectory?
- For those who cannot be there for the daytrip, this item will be an equally punchy, fast-paced, sharp, and compelling postcolonial analysis of any *thing* in Paris including: a monument, bridge, street name, metro name, shop sign, graffiti, food, flea market etc. The focus of your presentation is the presence—or absence (which is sometimes far more interesting and historically revealing)—of an acknowledgement of France's colonial past as concretised in the item of urban geography of your choice. If you choose to do a monument, zoom in on a particularly telling detail and not on the entire edifice. A list of potential sites is attached to this syllabus.

The narrative component will provide a narrative or reflective commentary to frame these items in a coherent, cohesive whole. It will set up an introductory frame, provide accompanying text to each item and connect the dots between all the items. It must include **at least two theoretical concepts** interwoven into the scrapbook in a relevant and meaningful way. All or most of the text must be **handwritten**.

The scrapbook must be submitted as a **physical compilation** – a booklet, pages tied together, items in a box etc. Virtual submissions can be used as complements but the focus is on the material artifact.

Remember, the scrapbook replaces the research paper: it must reflect the same amount of time, care, thought and energy you would devote to an end-of-term research paper. It should reflect your **personal response to postcolonialism as well as the social dimension of the class** (by including a classmate in some way in one of the items). It is meant to be a playful activity – but do not dismiss it as simple or take it lightly.

In-class exam on *Fantasia* and theory studied till that point

Final exam on Césaire's *Journal* and concepts studied in class.

Other

Comparative overview of theorists and authors highlighting the syllabus's rationale and underlying coherence

<i>Theory Classes</i>	<i>Literature Classes</i>
Introduction	
Anticolonial Precursor to Postcolonialism: a. Negritude b. Fanon	<u>Caribbean Francophone poetry: <i>Journal of a Homecoming</i></u>
Postcolonial Thought: a. Said's "Orientalism" b. Postcolonial Feminism: Mohanty on Third World Feminism, Spivak on the subaltern c. Postcolonial allegory: Jameson, Slemon d. Caribbean diasporic theory: Chamoiseau et al (créolité), Carpentier (New world marvelous realism), Hall	<u>Algerian Francophone Literature: <i>Fantasia</i> as a feminist intertwining of personal and collective counter-histories</u> <u>Chinese Postcolonial Literature: Lu Xun's "Diary of a Madman" as a postcolonial national allegory</u> <u>Caribbean Anglophone Creole Performance: <i>Pantomime</i> as a problematisation of skins and masks;</u>

e. Hybridity and Diaspora: Hall and Bhabha Critique of Postcolonial thought: a. Shohat b. Arif Dirlik Extending Postcolonialism: Moore	parrots and mimicry, performative identities; rewriting of <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> <u>Caribbean Hispanophone Literature: Kingdom of this World</u> as an expression of marvelous realism and baroque <i>Sea Prayer</i>
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[Suggested Locations in Paris and problematics](#)

Source: Robert Aldrich. "The Colonies in Paris." *Vestiges of Colonial Empire in France: Monuments, Museums, and Colonial Memory*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. 21-75. Print.

Entire e-book accessible through the AUP library website.

1. Exoticism:

- a. Librairie de l'Outremer, Rue Jacob
- b. Michele Dhennequin, Rue du Cherche-Midi
- c. Poussières d'Empire, rue Brezin
- d. Compagnie Française de l'Extrême-Orient, bd. St Germain
- e. « La Maison Coloniale », a furniture line at Au Bon Marché
- f. « Le salon des singes » at the Lapérouse Restaurant
- g. The sculpture « Mort du Lion », Parc Montsouris Paris XIV
- h. Rue du Caire
- a. The frieze of Egyptian art at the Grand Palais
- j. CCF HSBC Bank façade, Champs Elysées
- k. *Pagode Rouge*, *Place du Pérou*
- ? Orientalist art in the *Louvre*, the *Musée d'Orsay*

2. The Colonial Exhibition:

- a. The *Jardin tropical de Paris (Bois de Vincennes)* with scattered vestiges of the colonial exhibition (a bewildering mix of sculptural fragments imitating Asian and African architecture, “colonial pavilions,” *monuments aux morts* etc. that were exhibited to the French public in 1931 to celebrate France’s imperial dominions across the world). Natives, animals, and plants brought specially from the colonies also comprised the colonial “exhibits.” Ironically, the “pavilions” of Togo and Cambodia today house the *Centre Bouddhique International* (Buddhist International Centre).
- b. The impressive exterior façade (with representations of Africa, Asia, and colonial ports as part of an “imperial family”) and interior frescoes in the forum of the Palais de la Porte Dorée, now the Musée de l’Immigration (the “allegories” of France are particularly revealing)

3. Vestiges of Racism and Symbols of French colonial domination

- a. The panel « Au bon planteur » in the rue Montorgueil
- b. The panel « Le nègre joyeux » in the rue Mouffetard
- c. The obelisks in the Place du Châtelet and the Place de la Concorde
- d. Fontaine du Fellah, rue de Sèvres (an allegory of Roman and French imperialism)
- e. Street names commemorating Napoleon’s battles at Aboukir, Nil, Alexandria and officers like Damiette
- f. Street names commemorating explorers (Champlain, Cartier...), moments of colonial expansion (rue d’Algers, rue d’Annam...)
- g. Metro names (Dupleix, Kléber, Dugommier, Barbès-Rochechouart, La Tour-Maubourg, Pyramides, Daumesnil Felix-Eboué...)
- h. The colonial ministry at the Invalides
 - a. The Hôtel de Montmorin (bd des Invalides), seat of the Ministry of Colonies, currently a historical building
 - j. Murals of the Church St François Xavier depicting the civilising mission (*mission civilisatrice*) at 39 Boulevard des Invalides
 - k. The musée de l’armée at the Invalides with objects and documents pertaining to the North African campaigns
 - ? Statues of Lyautey, Gallieni and Gourard outside the Invalides
- H. The gilded statue “*La France colonisatrice*” (Colonising France) at the Place des Combattants en Indochine which formerly stood at the porch of the *musée colonial*
- n. The colonial vocation of the *Jardin des Plantes* and the *Jardin acclimation* (the latter’s aim was “the introduction, acclimatisation, and domestication of useful or ornamental animal species” from colonies into France)

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4. Colonial Amnesia, Historical “Whitewashing” (a veneer of political correctness), and Beginning to Confront the Colonial Past (official acknowledgements of colonial domination)
- a. Place des Combattants de l'Afrique du nord
 - b. Place des Combattants en Indochine
 - c. Plaques outside the Charonne metro station and on the Quai du Marché-Neuf
 - d. The successive names of the Palais de la Porte Dorée (« musée des colonies » à « de la France d'outre-mer » à « le musée des Arts africains et océaniques » à « musée de l'histoire de l'immigration »)
 - e. The successive names of the Ministry of the Colonies at the Hôtel de Montmorin (bd des Invalides), seat of the Ministry of the Colonies, now called the Ministry of Overseas France. Representations of Africans and busts of French colonial figures can still be found there today.
 - f. The *Ecole Coloniale*, today the *Ecole Nationale d'Outre-mer*: Embarrassing celebrations of colonialism were removed after decolonisation: the names of colonial heroes outside were sandblasted off the outside of the building, the ceiling fresco celebrating French imperialism replaced by a false ceiling etc. (See pages 32-35 of *Colonial Vestiges* for a description of the colonial art and architecture that was made to “disappear.”)
5. Diaspora and historical revisionism (affirmations of the place of former French colonies in French history)
- a. Street names recognising the importance of diasporic French communities and territories (rue Port au Prince, Place d'Acadie, Place des Antilles...)
 - b. Renaming the street rue Richepance as the rue du Chevalier-de-Saint-George
 - c. Place Mohammed V in front of the Institut du Monde Arabe
 - d. The church of Invalides with plaques commemorating the service of military personnel from the colonies and abroad (*spahis*, *Zouaves*, *tirailleurs sénégalais*), *harkis* (plaque added in 2001), *Legionnaires*
 - e. The *Musée Quai Branly*
 - f. The *Musée de l'histoire de l'immigration*
 - g. The *musée de l'homme* (formerly the *musée d'ethnographie du Trocadéro*)
 - h. The *Maison de l'Indochine*, *Maison du Cambodge*, the *Maison de la France d'Outre-mer* at the *Cité Universitaire* (compare its exoticist style with the rejection of exoticism by the *Maison de la Tunisie*)
 - a. The Paris mosque
 - j. Diasporic neighbourhoods in Paris today