Through the lens of African American expatriates in France – epitomized by James Baldwin’s 1953 essay, “Stranger in the Village” – this course explores the construction of racial and national categories and identities in the long twentieth century. Looking back from our present political moment, incorporating biography, memoir, literature, and film, we will explore the historical experiences, creative production, and identifications of African-descended writers, artists, and exiles in France. While our sustained focus will remain on the life and writings of James Baldwin, additional figures will range from W.E.B. Du Bois and Josephine Baker to Richard Wright and Anita Reynolds to Ta-Nehisi Coates. Ultimately, we will return to our current moment, employing the past foundation for interrogating contemporary questions of race, nation, and belonging, including students’ present-day experiences of travel, migration, and diaspora.