History 160
France and Africa
Since the Eighteenth Century

This syllabus is subject to change!

Professor Elizabeth Foster
East Hall 106

Course Description

This course examines the encounters between France and Africa from the eighteenth century to the present. Topics and themes include slavery, Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, the nature of French colonial rule in North, West, and Equatorial Africa, African responses to French rule, competing conceptions of a French "civilizing mission" in Africa, the role of non-state actors such as French missionaries in colonial Africa, decolonization, relations between France and its former African colonies, and the experience of African immigrants and their descendants in contemporary France. Some prior knowledge of French or African history is helpful, but not required.

Structure

This class meets twice a week and combines lecture and discussion of the readings. Students are expected to come prepared to participate in class every day. Readings are due on the day they are listed on the syllabus. Students will also write two papers and take a final examination.

Requirements

- Attendance and informed participation in class.
- 2 4-6 page essays
- 12-15 page paper
- Final examination

All students are expected to be respectful of one another and the instructor at all times and to do their own work. Any incidence of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in a zero on the assignment, possible failure of the course, and disciplinary action. Late assignments will be docked 1/3 grade per 24 hours late.

Students requesting an accommodation as a result of a documented disability must register with the Disability Services Office at the beginning of the semester. To do so, call the Student Services Desk at 617-627-2000 to arrange an appointment with Sandra Baer, Program Director of Disability Services. I cannot make accommodations without notification from the DSO.

Grading

- Active and informed participation in class discussion and activities 20%
- 4-6 page essays 30%
- 12-15 page paper 30%
Schedule of Readings:

Part I: Early Encounters

Week 1: Introduction
Sue Peabody, “There are no Slaves in France”: Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Régime, selections.

Week 2: Race and Slavery in the French Revolution

Week 3: Napoleon in Egypt
Shmuel Moreh and Robert L. Tignor, eds. Napoleon in Egypt: al-Jabarti’s Chronicle of the French Occupation

Part II: A New Empire

Week 4: A New “Mirror” Across the Mediterranean
Alexis de Tocqueville, Writings on Empire and Slavery, selections.

Week 5: Settlers, Citizens, and Subjects
Readings TBA

Week 6: “Civilizing Missions” in a “republican” Empire
Alice Conklin, A Mission to Civilize, selections.

Week 7: France and Islam in Colonial Africa
Julia A. Clancy-Smith, Rebel and Saint: Muslim Notables, Populist Protest, Colonial Encounters, selections.
David Robinson, Paths of Accommodation: Muslim societies and French colonial authorities in Senegal and Mauritania 1880-1920, selections.
Week 8: Africans in the World Wars: To the aid of the metropole


Week 9: Race and Gender in French Colonial Africa

Primary documents and images related to the International Colonial Exposition in Paris in 1931

Film: *Chocolat*, Claire Denis, 1988

Week 10: African Identity, Expressed in French


Part III: The End of the Empire?

Week 11: Rupture

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*


Week 12: French Foreign Policy in Africa Since Decolonization

Reading TBA

Week 13: Africans and their Descendants in Contemporary France

Reading TBA