

# Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Culture of Empire

Professor Lisa Tiersten

HIST 2321 | Fall 2022 | MW 10:10-11:25

[ltiersten@barnard.edu](mailto:ltiersten@barnard.edu) | Office hours: Wednesdays 2:30-4:00 <https://calendly.com/ltiersten>



Colonial Possessions and Commercial Highways of the World, 1910.

## ***Course description:***

This course explores the shaping of European identity through colonial encounters with American, African, Middle Eastern, and Asian cultures from 1500 to the post-colonial era. We will examine how Europeans have understood and managed difference and diversity in the modern period, with a focus on how these ideas and methods both emerged from and reshaped definitions of European culture and civilization. Topics include exoticism in the Enlightenment, the role of slavery in the development of European capitalism, orientalism in art and literature, comparative colonization, the rise of ethnographic and other scientific discourses on the primitive, tourism, and consumer culture and empire.

## ***Course requirements:***

1. In-class midterm exam on October 19th (25% of grade).
2. A 5-7-page paper, either analyzing the use of a novel, travel memoir, or other primary source as a historical document or exploring a particular aspect of the colonial and postcolonial history of a geographic or cultural region. E-mailed prospectus due October 10<sup>th</sup>. Paper due November 22<sup>nd</sup> (30% of grade).
3. Final exam (30% of -grade).
4. Class participation, including participation in class discussion and ten brief (~1-2 paragraphs) reading posts. Posts, which can respond to a prompt or analyze a student-chosen quote from the reading, must be posted to the Canvas discussion board by 9 a.m. of the morning of class; students may choose the texts or films they wish to write about. Students should also keep a record of their Canvas postings in a word document, which they will send to me twice (once after completing 5 postings and again after completing 10 postings) (15% of grade).

## ***Course materials:***

I've ordered the following books at Book Culture (112<sup>th</sup> St. between Broadway & Amsterdam) for those who prefer to read physical books. These readings, along with all other assigned readings, are also posted on Canvas. Course films are streamable through Canvas (E-Reserves & Panopto) or CLIO, except for one, for which I have arranged a screening.

Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*.

Edward Said, *Orientalism*.

## I. EARLY MODERN COLONIAL MENTALITIES

- 1. Weds., 9/7: Introduction**
- 2. Mon., 9/12: Before European Hegemony**  
*Assignment:* Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950-1350*, Ch. 12, “The Political Sociology of Europe After the Expansion.”
- 3. Weds., 9/14: Expansionist Europe: The Conquest of the “New World”**  
*Assignment:* Hernan Cortés, *Letters from Mexico* [trans. and ed. Anthony Pagden], (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), “Second Letter” (1522), excerpt.
- 4. Mon., 9/19: “Barbarians” of the Americas**  
*Assignment:* Michel de Montaigne, “On Cannibals” (c. 1580), *Essays*.  
 Bartolome de las Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies* (1542), trans. Herma Briffault (NY: Seabury Press, 1974), 27-43; 79-87.  
 Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, *Democrates Alter or Just Causes for War Among the Indians* (1544).
- 5. Weds., 9/21: Enlightenment: Science, Exoticism, Paternalism**  
*Assignment:* Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, selection (1719).
- 6. Mon., 9/26: Enlightened Primitivism: The “Noble Savage”**  
*Assignment:* Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, “Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality,” Part I (1755).  
[The Mission](#) (dir. Roland Joffe, 1985) (stream on CLIO via Swank).
- 7. Weds., 9/28: Plantation Slavery and European Capitalism**  
*Assignment:* Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, Ch. 2, “Authority, Alienation, and Social Death.”  
 Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, Ch. 2, “Building War Capitalism.”
- 8. Mon., 10/3: The Slavery Debate**

*Assignment:* Thomas Fowell Buxton, *The African Slave Trade and Its Remedy* (1840), Ch. 4, "Superstitions and Cruelties of the Africans," 226-45; 267-73. Anti-slavery poetry.

## II. NATIONS AND EMPIRES

**9. Weds., 10/5:** **Nation-Building and National Consciousness**  
*Assignment:* Linda Colley, "Britishness and Otherness: An Argument," *Journal of British Studies* 31 (1992): 309-29.

**10. Mon., 10/10:** **Orientalisms**  
*Assignment:* Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Ch. 1, "The Scope of Orientalism," 49-92, "Afterword," 329-52.  
Start E.M. Forster, *A Passage to India* (1924), Part I, "Mosque," chs. 3-11. Byron and Coleridge poems.

### **PAPER PROSPECTUS DUE (in an e-mail, no attachments)**

**11. Weds., 10/12:** **The Case of India**  
*Assignment:* Finish E.M. Forster, *A Passage to India* (1924), Part I, "Mosque," chs. 3-11.  
Thomas Macaulay, "Minute on Education" (1835).  
Uday Mehta, "Liberal Strategies of Exclusion," in Frederick Cooper and Ann Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*.

**12. Mon., 10/17:** **Darwin and the Invention of Race**  
*Assignment:* Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man* (1871), Ch. 7, "On the Races of Man."

**13. Weds., 10/19:** **Midterm Examination**

**\*\*\*Thurs, 10/20: *Tarzan the Ape Man* (dir. W.S. Van Dyke, 1932)\*\*\***  
6:00-8:00 pm, MLC LL002

**14. Mon., 10/24:** **Africa, "Childhood of Man"**

*Assignment:* Henry Stanley, *Through the Dark Continent*, vol. 2. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1878), Ch. 3 (48-72).  
*Tarzan the Ape Man* (dir. W.S. Van Dyke, 1932)

**15. Weds., 10/26: The New Imperialism in Africa**

*Assignment:* Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, Ch. 2, “Decentralized Despotism” (37-61) and Ch. 3, “Indirect Rule” (62-108).

**16. Mon., 10/31: Empire for the Masses**

*Assignment:* Bernth Lindfors, “Ethnological Show Business: Footlighting the Dark Continent,” in Rosemarie Thomson, ed., *Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body*, 207-18.

**17. Weds., 11/2: Primitivism in the Museum**

*Assignment:* Sally Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, Chs. 5, “Power Plays,” and 6, “Objets d’Art and Ethnographic Artifacts,” 68-99.  
 Kwame Anthony Appiah, “Whose Culture Is It?” *The New York Review of Books*, February 9, 2006.

**18. Mon., 11/7 Election Day Holiday**

### III. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: EMPIRE IN DECLINE

**19. Weds., 11/9: Europe in Crisis: The Interwar Years**

*Assignment:* W. Somerset Maugham, “Rain” (1921), *Collected Short Stories*.

**20. Mon., 11/14: Anthropology and Eugenics in the Interwar Period**

*Assignment:* Franz Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (1911), Ch. 1, “Racial Prejudice.”

**21. Weds., 11/16: Empire and Popular Culture: Babar and Tintin**

*Assignment:* Jean de Brunhoff, *The Story of Babar* (1931).  
 Hergé, *Tintin in the Congo* (1931).

**22. Mon., 11/21: Colonial Relationships and Nationalist Consciousness**

*Assignment:* Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), Chs. 2, “The Woman of Color and the White Man,” and 3, “The Man of Color and the White Woman.”  
*Chocolat* (dir. Claire Denis, 1988) (stream on Canvas/Panopto)  
**PAPER DUE BY MIDNIGHT EDT 11/22**

**23. Weds., 11/23:** **Thanksgiving Holiday**

**24. Mon., 11/28:** **Things Fall Apart: The Aftermath of World War II**  
*Assignment:* Aimé Césaire, “Discourse on Colonialism” excerpt (1950), in Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman, eds., *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*.

**25. Weds., 11/30:** **The Algerian War: A Case Study**  
*Assignment:* Jules Roy, *The War in Algeria* (1961), Chs. 1, 2, 4, and 6.  
 Mouloud Feraoun, *Journal, 1955-1962: Reflections on the French-Algerian War*, ed. James Le Sueur, 34, 42-43, 47, 48, 58, 59, 63, 64, 65, 74, 75, 81-81, 86-87, 90, 93, 117 (marked passages only)

#### IV. THE POSTCOLONIAL WORLD

**26. Mon., 12/5:** **The Afterlife of Empire**  
*Assignment:* Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, “Images of Empire: Tokyo Disneyland and Japanese Cultural Imperialism,” in Eric Smoodin, ed. *Disney Discourse: Producing the Magic Kingdom*.  
 Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place* (1988).

**27. Weds., 12/7:** **Tourism and Cultural Traffic in the Postcolonial World**  
*Assignment:* Philip Frick McKean, “Towards a Theoretical Analysis of Tourism: Economic Dualism and Cultural Involution in Bali,” in Valene Smith, ed. *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*.  
[Cannibal Tours](#) (dir. Dennis O’Rourke, 1988) (**stream on CLIO via Alexander Street**).  
 Browse through travel guide excerpts.

**28. Mon., 12/12** **Conclusions**

*Assignment:* Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Ch. 5, "Playing with Modernity: The Decolonization of Indian Cricket."

**Course outcomes:**

- Students who complete the course will be able to:
- Evaluate primary source materials through critical reading and interpretation
- Understand how historians interpret evidence to construct historical narrative.
- Evaluate divergent perspectives in the understanding of the same event
- Interpret arguments in light of the existing literature on empire
- Analyze how particular social and cultural contexts inform the perspectives and actions of historical actors.
- Gain an awareness of the historical origins of contemporary conceptions of human rights.
- Present arguments cogently in writing and speaking

**Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity**

The intellectual venture in which we are all engaged requires of faculty and students alike the highest level of personal and academic integrity. As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity.

Scholarship, by its very nature, is an iterative process, with ideas and insights building one upon the other. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars' work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that inform our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited.

In practical terms, this means that, as students you must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.

Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated. Students failing to meet these responsibilities should anticipate being asked to leave Columbia.

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**Affordable Access to Course Texts**

All students deserve to be able to access course texts. The high costs of textbooks and other course materials prohibit access and perpetuate inequity, and Barnard librarians are partnering with students, faculty, and staff to increase access. By the first day of advance registration for each term, you should be able to view on CourseWorks information provided by your faculty about required texts (including ISBN or author, title, publisher and copyright date) and their prices. Once you have selected your classes, here are some cost-free methods for accessing course texts, recommended by the Barnard Library: find out if your faculty has placed the texts

on reserve at Barnard Library or another Columbia library, and look for course texts using [CLIO](#) (library catalog), [Borrow Direct](#) (request books from partner libraries), [Interlibrary Loan](#) (request book chapters from any library), and [NYPL](#). Students with financial need or insecurity can check items out from the FLIP lending libraries in the Barnard Library and Butler Library and can consult with the [Dean of Studies](#) and the [Financial Aid Office](#) about additional affordable alternatives for getting access to course texts. Talk with your librarian and visit the [Barnard Library Textbook Affordability guide](#) ([library.barnard.edu/textbook-affordability](http://library.barnard.edu/textbook-affordability)) for more details.