Postcolonial Europe, 1945-Present
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Course proposal, fall 2014

Course Description
This course examines contemporary European dilemmas of immigration, assimilation and multiculturalism via the history of European imperial decline after 1945. It begins with consideration of the historical foundations and formal end of empire, recounting the varied and sometimes violent ways in which European colonial territories separated themselves from direct European control after World War II. The second unit of the course will focus upon the subsequent wave of non-European immigration to Europe, and upon the enduring social, political and cultural conflicts that accompanied it. These will include changing national immigration policies, periodic eruptions of social and political violence, struggles over minority rights, and the continent-wide resurgence of radical right wing political tendencies since the 1970’s. The third and final unit will enter more intimately into the realities and possibilities of a multicultural Europe, using film, fiction, memoir, music and other sources to explore the textures of individual and community life among those of immigrant descent within contemporary Europe. For purposes of focus and continuity, greatest attention will be dedicated to South Asian, Turkish, and North African communities in Britain, Germany and France, respectively. Through illuminating the historical bases of Europe’s post-colonial condition, the course aims to provide insight into the broader impact of global restructuring in our time.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes
After taking the course, students should be able to

- explain the historical impact of European empire and its long-term dissolution upon European and world history
- historically contextualize struggles over minority rights and identities in twentieth and twenty-first century Europe
- integrate theoretical, historical, representational and experiential knowledge to explain post-colonial dilemmas
- demonstrate facility in interpreting varied forms of historical evidence and in applying the analytical perspectives of multiple academic disciplines to historical and contemporary problems
- identify commonalities and differences in experiences of immigration and assimilation across national, class, gender and generational lines
- reflect critically and historically upon contemporary issues of European (and American) politics and social life
Course Materials:

The following are the required books for the course. They are available at the campus bookstore, and should be acquired as soon as possible. Additional readings will be made available on the course website, or put on reserve at O’Leary Library. All visual resources for the class will also be housed on the course website.

Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Beacon, 1991)
Ziauddin Sardar, *Balti Britain: A Journey through the British Asian Experience* (Granta, 2009)
Azouz Begag, *Shantytown Kid* (Bison, 2007)
Ruth Mandel, *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany* (Duke, 2008)

Course Requirements:

Written Work (80% of grade)
- Unit One essay, on the topic of violence in colonialism/decolonization, 5-6 pages
- Unit Two essay, on a specific instance of conflict over issues of immigration and assimilation, 5-6 pages
- Final Multimedia Project, with 10 page essay

Class Participation (20% of grade)

This course has a discussion-based format, and requires active student participation. A formal requirement of that participation is that students assume responsibility for being a primary discussant for two classes of their choosing at some point over the course of the semester. In line with that duty, students are required to submit a one to two-page summary of that day’s reading in advance to me via email, along with any questions of their own they may wish to raise for discussion.

Topics Covered:

**Introductory**
- The Post-Colonial Condition: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives

**Unit One: Empire and the End of Empire**
- Historical Lineages of European Empire
- Anti-Colonial Nationalism and the Challenge to Empire, 1918-1947
- Indian Independence and British Imperial Decline
- Colonial Wars of Independence: Vietnam, Algeria, Kenya
On the Violence of Empire and Decolonization: Frantz Fanon and Albert Camus
Psychology of the Colonial and Postcolonial Conditions: Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*
Visualizing Decolonization: “The Battle of Algiers” (1965)

**Unit Two: The Politics of Immigration and Assimilation**
Overview: Minority Rights, Autonomy and National/European integration
Postwar European Economic Restructuring and Shifting Patterns of Labor Migration
Enoch Powell’s “Rivers of Blood” speech: Background and Aftermath
The Return of the Radical Right in Europe: Jean-Marie Le Pen, Jörg Haider, the skinheads
The 1981 Riots in England
The Headscarf Controversy in France
Islam and Islamic Revival in Europe
Boundaries, Limitations and Exclusions of European Union: The Question of Turkish Membership
Arson, Austerity and Soccer: Contemporary Expressions of Anti-Immigrant Racism and Violence

**Unit Three: Multicultural Europe?**
Memoirs of Immigration and Assimilation: Azouz Begag’s *Shantytown Kid*
Asian Experience(s) in Britain: Ziauddin Sardar’s *Balti Britain*
Urban Transformation, Housing and Segregation in postwar Europe
Urban Youth Subcultures
Hybridity and Postcolonial Music in Europe
Cinema and Multiculturalism: “My Beautiful Laundrette” (1985); “Gegen die Wand/Head On” (2004)
Conflicts of Colonial Memory: Recalling Torture in Algeria and Kenya
Revising the Colonial Past? The Quai Branly Museum in Paris