Colonialism, Race, and Identity

Course number: HUM3102
Semester: Block 2, Semester 2, 2010
Dates: February 7 - March 2, 2011
Time: M-F 12:20-3:20
Location: A.315

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Course overview

Course Description

This history course examines the development and impact of Western colonialism. Our focus is on three cases: the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs in the early sixteenth century, the Haitian Revolution of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the Belgian colonization and exploitation of the Congo in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We examine the role of technology, religion, politics, disease, and culture. Our aim is to understand several interrelated themes: the theoretical and practical justification of imperialism and colonialism, the importance of and changes in race and racism in the development of Western colonialism, and the cultural impact of colonialism for both colonizer and colonized.

Learning Objectives

To understand the ideologies that underpinned and justified colonialism

To be able to make informed comparisons among different colonialisms

To develop a sensitivity to the issues of race and power in the creation of the modern world

To understand how to engage in research on historical questions

To critically assess primary and secondary sources for historical research

To learn to write a successful history research paper

Methods of Instruction

Lectures

Student presentations

Large group discussion

Small group discussion

Required Texts – Available at Quest University Bookstore

Castillo, Bernal Diaz Del. *The Conquest of New Spain*. Penguin, 2003.

Pagden, Anthony. *Lords of all the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France c.1500-c.1800*. Yale University Press, 1998.

Dubois, Laurent. *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005.

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*.

Hochschild, Adam. *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*. Mariner Books, 1999.

Fredrickson, George M. *Racism: A Short History*. Princeton University Press, 2003.

Supplementary readings will also be made available; details will be provided on the first day of class.

Recommended texts

A number of *recommended* books and articles are on two-hour reserve in the library; please consult the library catalog (under "Course Reserves") to find these.

Doing well in this course

Reading

The reading load for this course is heavy.

Reading is a vital part of your education. *It is not a passive activity*. You will be expected to understand and assimilate the assigned material. You will be asked to master the material in a comprehensive and sophisticated way.

Ask yourself the following questions when you read or study a work:

- Who wrote or created it?
- When was it written or produced?
- What does the work say?
- What questions is it attempting to answer?
- What is the author's argument? What are the argument's strengths and weaknesses?
- What kinds of evidence does the author provide for her or his argument? What kinds of sources does the author use?

Pay careful attention to the clues the author gives you:

- Read (and decipher) the title. What does it tell you about the piece you are reading?
- If the piece is a book, read the *introduction* and *conclusion* of the book; if the piece is an article or a chapter, read the first and last paragraphs. These should help you figure out what the piece's argument is. Ask yourself what the thesis of the piece is.
- Read the entire work (or all of the assigned portions). Try to decide which parts or passages are most important. If you own the work, make notes in the margins next to important or interesting parts. (Do not do this in library books!)
- Write down your responses to the work in a notebook. Think of note-taking as a way of organizing your thoughts. You need not write down everything; instead, jot down notes about interesting ideas, problems in the argument, or surprising aspects of the piece. (This is actually a formal requirement — see the section on "Reading Journal," below.)
- Re-read the work. You will find that a second (and often, a third and fourth) reading greatly improve your understanding.
- Finally, summarize the author's argument in a few lines. If you can complete a sentence beginning "The author of this book/article argues…," you have read intelligently and productively.

If you do all this, you should be ready for *classroom discussion*.

Participation

The tutor's role is to facilitate discussion and to act as a guide when necessary. Your responsibility is to be prepared to engage in serious discussion of the materials. Participation is a crucial part of this course — not just because you can show what you know and how you think, but also because your participation helps other students learn. You should come to class prepared to contribute to the discussion. This means that you must have read and reflected upon the assigned material; it also means that you should have formulated questions about the material. (It is good practice to write these questions down and bring them to tutorial.) On the other hand (there is always an other hand, isn't there?), you should know that not every thought springs up full-grown like Athena from the brow of Zeus. Please do feel free to try to articulate an idea that is still not fully formed; part of our task as a group is to develop and test these ideas. Our aim is to make discussions free and unfettered.

Remember, too, that the point of discussion is to gain a deeper or better understanding of the topic at hand. In that spirit, we understand that what you say about a topic may not necessarily reflect your own likes, dislikes, politics, preferences, or prejudices.

Because discussion and engagement is a central part of what we do, participation counts for a hefty proportion of your grade. So how do you demonstrate your engagement?

- By being there every day and on time. (Note that unexcused absences will have a serious, even devastating, effect on your grade.)
- By raising pertinent questions. ("Pertinent" does not mean complex or obscure; sometimes, simple questions work very well.)
- By volunteering to read passages for discussion.
- By treating your classmates and tutor with courtesy and respect.
- By taking your classmates' questions seriously, and taking the time to think about what they have said.
- By being willing to go out on a limb from time to time. (Not literally.)
- By having the courage to say (or ask) out loud what others may be thinking but are afraid to say (or ask): "I've lost the plot here." "I don't understand." "What does *imperium* mean in this context?" And so on.
- By playing the devil's advocate on occasion.

A final note on participation: Some people are shy. Some people find themselves tongue-tied in class. Some people think that other people are better at articulating their questions or comments. Nevertheless, taking part in a discussion is a useful, even vital, skill. You can prepare questions ahead of time. (Your journal will help you with this.) You can jot down important points before class begins. And you can wait for your tutor to call on you — which he will do (gently) at some point if he does not hear from you.

Writing

The heart of history is the written word. Successful historians must not only to read carefully but write clearly. In other words, they must be able to understand and use words precisely. Sloppy expression — in writing and in discussion — is as big a problem in history as getting formulae wrong is in chemistry; sloppy expression results in papers that fizzle out rather than illuminate.

You may consult your tutor if you have specific questions; we also urge all students to make use of the Learning Commons and Peer Tutors.

Writing well requires at least three things: *content*, *expression*, and *structure*.

Content: You must have read carefully (and, it should go without saying, taken notes) before you begin to write. You must *think* about what you have read. You must *understand the question* you are asked to answer. And, of course, you must have something to say. All of this will give your paper *content*.

You must supply *evidence* in the form of (properly-cited) quotations. That evidence will come not only from the assigned readings for this course but also from primary and secondary sources you find elsewhere. No matter what kind of source you use, you must be sure the evidence is *reliable*. (Please do not think that Wikipedia, sources drawn haphazardly from the web, or other dodgy sources will persuade your reader of the merits of your work!)

Expression: *How* you say things is crucial. If your writing obscures your meaning, then it is impossible for your reader to evaluate the content of your paper. Style matters: it makes your content accessible and your ideas intelligible.

Papers for this course must be written in formal, standard English. You must:

- punctuate properly;
- use proper grammar;
- make appropriate word choices.

If you are not certain of a word's precise meaning, look it up in a good dictionary before handing in your paper. (If you don't yet own a good dictionary, get one.)

Structure: Good papers will have a crisp **introduction**. This introduction will let readers know the topic or subject of the paper *and* will let readers what *problem* that the paper aims to discuss. (This is the *thesis statement*.) The introduction should let readers what the limits of the discussion will be.

Good papers will have a solid **conclusion**. A conclusion is not just a summary of what has been discussed before: it emphasizes the importance of the thesis statement, provides the essay with a sense of completeness (it *concludes*) the thoughts of the essay), and leaves the reader with a final sense of what the paper is about. (The conclusion should answer the dreaded "so what?" question — it should give the reader a sense of why s/he read it.)

Good papers will be built around solidly-constructed **paragraphs**. Paragraphs are the building blocks of good writing: they are built around one thought or idea.

Moving from paragraph to paragraph also requires good **transitions**. Transitions connect the ideas in an essay, and allow the reader to understand the flow of your ideas.

Overall: It takes time and effort to write well. Good writing, you will scarcely need to be reminded, is *re-writing*. Plan to write at least two drafts before you submit an essay. And ask for help: ask your peers to read your drafts critically and unsparingly; get advice from the Learning Commons; and raise questions in class.

Course and university policies

General Expectations

You are not on your own. You can expect your tutor to take an active interest in the course and in your work.

- If you have questions about any aspect of the course, do not hesitate to ask your tutor.

- Your tutor has consultation hours, which are posted on his door and on the D2L site for this course. (If you cannot meet with your tutor during consultation hours, you may make an appointment at a mutually convenient time.)
- Your tutor expects you to:
- Read the syllabus and all handouts and therefore be aware of policies, homework, and due dates.
- Check D2L and your Quest e-mail account frequently; changes to the syllabus and to assignments will be posted there.
- Attend every class.
- Arrive on time.
- Be prepared.
- Make use of the tutor's office hours.
- Obtain notes and handouts in the event of an absence.
- Turn in assignments at the beginning of class on the due date given in the syllabus.

Please:

- Be courteous.
- Turn off your cell phone before class.
- Help keep the classroom neat and tidy.
- Please do *not*:
- Bring food into the classroom. (Beverages are ok.)
- Use laptops, iPads, electronic tablets, netbooks, smart phones, stupid phones, Wii controllers, Gameboys, or other devices in class unless specifically authorized to do so by the tutor. (If you have a special need, please discuss this with the tutor.)

Absences

There are — infrequently — valid reasons to miss class: illness, family emergencies, war, famine, pestilence, and so forth. If you have a really good reason for missing class, your case will be stronger if you notify your tutor *before* you miss class. You are in any event responsible for obtaining notes, handouts, and assignments.

Academic Integrity

As the Quest University Calendar notes, "Quest is committed to the principle of academic integrity, itself grounded in the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in all academic work." (Quest University Calendar, p. 17.) We depend on the honesty and responsibility of all of our members — scholars and teachers alike.

In keeping with the Honour Principle, you will do your own work, and you will conscientiously and meticulously credit sources. Citing sources is not optional in academic work — it is a fundamental principle. As you should know, plagiarism is, broadly speaking, passing off someone else work or ideas as your own, failing to properly identify and credit the source of material you submit, or using cited material improperly. Please be aware that failure to observe the rules of citation will result in charges of plagiarism or academic dishonesty.

Charges of plagiarism or of academic dishonesty are not taken lightly, and may have dire consequences: failure on the assignment, failure of the course, and worse. To avoid this sort of unpleasantness, please be sure to read "University Policies: Quest Honour Principle and Protocol" on page 17 of the University Calendar. If you have questions about citation, crediting sources, or any-

thing else relating to academic integrity, please ask *before* you turn in the work. (Information about plagiarism can also be obtained from the Learning Commons.)

If the *principle* of citation is the same across academic disciplines, the *practice* of citation varies from discipline to discipline, and even within disciplines. *Our* practice will be to use the Chicago footnote/bibliography style. Your tutor will discuss citation formats and principles with you in class; further guidelines will be posted on D2L.

Assessment

Your grade for the course will be based on the following elements:

Assignment	Date Due	Weight (%)
Participation	All block	20%
Presentation I	Varies	10%
Presentation II	Varies	10%
Formulation of research problem	February 16	10%
Finding a book review	February 18	5%
Annotated bibliography	February 23	15%
Essay	March 2	30%

A letter grade will be assigned for the course. See the *Quest University Calendar 2010-2011*, p. 19, for details on the grades awarded.

You may, if you wish, opt *not* to have grades appear on your individual assignment. If you choose this option, you will of course receive an evaluation of your work, and grades will still be recorded for your final grade.

Portfolio

You will given a portfolio on the first day of class. This portfolio is important: you will keep all of your written work in it — including the notes for your group presentation. You must hand in the complete portfolio *every time you turn in written work*.

Assignments

Group Presentations - 10% each

You will be called upon to make two presentations in this course. You will be assigned a group with which you will provide a ten to fifteen minute talk on a topic related to the day's discussion. Topics appear in the "Course Schedule" at the end of this syllabus. Groups will sign up for topics on the first day of class.

You should carefully prepare your presentation, rehearse it before you give it, and respect the time limit. (You may find that your tutor or your classmates cut you off if you go beyond the allotted time.) Be prepared to answer questions from your classmates about the material you present.

Sources: Your presentation must begin with a discussion of the sources that you used to prepare the presentation. Please tell your audience what your sources are, how you went about finding those sources, and why you think they are reliable, appropriate, and useful for your presentation.

(You will want to dig to find out who the best sources on your topic might be — and you will want to be able to justify your choices.)

Notes: At the end of the class in which you and your group make a presentation, you must turn in your typed notes for your presentation with your portfolio. These notes need not be in essay form — an outline will do — but they *must include the sources* upon which you drew to construct your presentation as well as the major points of your contribution to the presentation. (Each member of the presenting group must provide his or her own notes.)

Topic assignments will be made during the first meeting of the block; we will go over the details of the presentation in the first class.

Research and writing

Formulation of a research problem (10%; February 16, 2011): After consultation with the tutor, you will develop a research problem based on the themes of this course. You will write a research proposal of between 250 and 500 words. That proposal must indicate your research **topic**, the **reasons** you wish to write about this topic, and a well-thought-out **thesis**. You should also indicate the *kinds* of **sources** you will consult, though you need not (yet) provide great detail about those sources. The purpose of this exercise is to get you to think deeply about your topic in preparation for the research and writing you will do. (It is not a contract — you may modify your topic as you gather more information.)

Finding a book review (5%; February 18, 2011): You must find a good (e.g, well done, not necessarily positive) review in a scholarly journal of a book relevant to your topic. Explain, in a typed page or so, why the review is helpful. Be specific about your criteria.

Annotated bibliography (15%; February 23, 2011): Gather a list of sources for your essay. These may include journal articles, books, and primary sources. (We will discuss the appropriateness of sources as the due date for the assignment approaches.) Provide a *brief* (two or three sentences) description of *each* source: why it is relevant to your topic, why it is important, whether you think it is reliable, whether its thesis is debatable, etc. (The number of sources will vary with your topic — but keep in mind that you want to be reasonably comprehensive and still have a *manageable* list for your essay. This is not a capstone project.)

Essay (30%): Write an essay of approximately 1800-2100 words on the topic you developed. (Remember that the formulation of the research problem is not a contract — you are not bound to follow the proposal in lockstep.)

Course Schedule

Course Schedule

Mon, Feb 7, 2011 Introduction

Go over syllabus.

Tue, Feb 8, 2011 Theories of empire

Reading: Pagden, Introduction, "The Legacy of Rome," "*Monarchia Universalis*", 1-62.

Wed, Feb 9, 2011 The practice of conquest (1)

Reading: Díaz, "The Expedition of Francisco Hernandez de Cordoba," "The Expedition of Juan de Grijalva," "The Expedition of Hernando Cortes: Preparations," "The Voyage," "Doña Marina's Story," and "A Pause on The Coast", 15-106.
Presentation topic: Spanish technology

Thu, Feb 10, 2011 The practice of conquest (2)

Reading: Díaz, "Events at Vera Cruz: The Destruction of the Ships," "The Tlascalan Campaign," and "Peace with Tlascala: Embassies from Mexico", 126-188.
Presentation topic: Modes of warfare

Fri, Feb 11, 2011 Comparing accounts

Reading: Díaz del Castillo, "Cortes in Difficulties," "The Flight from Mexico," "Cortes Collects Fresh Strength," and "Expeditions around the Lake", 278-352
Reading: Leon-Portilla, Selections from *Broken Spears* ("The Night of Sorrows," "The Siege of Tenochtitlan"), 83-102
Presentation topic: Disease

Mon, Feb 14, 2011 Consolidation

Reading: Pagden, "Conquest and Settlement," "Expansion and Preservation," "Metropolis and Colony", 63-155.
Presentation topic: Bartolomé de las Casas

Tue, Feb 15, 2011 Toward the Modern World

Reading: Pagden, "The Calculation of Benefits," "From Empire to Federation", 156-200.

Wed, Feb 16, 2011 Race and Rights

Reading: Fredrickson, "Introduction," "Religion and the Invention of Racism", 1-47.
Selections from *The French Revolution and Human Rights*, 101-119.
Paper topics due
Group work on paper topics

Thu, Feb 17, 2011 Saint Domingue

Reading: Dubois: Prologue, "1. Specters of Saint-Domingue," "2. Fermentation," "3. Inheritance," "4. Fire in the Cane", 1-114.
Presentation topic: Sugar cane

Fri, Feb 18, 2011 **Saint Domingue**

Reading: Dubois: "5. New World," "6. Defiance," "7. Liberty's Land," "8. The Opening," "9. Power", 115-208.
Review of book review due

Mon, Feb 21, 2011 **Saint Domingue**

Reading: Dubois: "10. Enemies of Liberty," "11. Territory," "12. The Tree of Liberty," "13. Those Who Die," "Epilogue: Out of the Ashes", 209-308.
Presentation topic: Haiti today

Tue, Feb 22, 2011 **Modern Racism, Scientific Racism**

Reading: Fredrickson, "The Rise of Modern Racism(s): White Supremacy and Antisemitism in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries", 51-95.
Cohen, "Scientific Racism", 210-262.
Presentation topic: Social Darwinism and Eugenics

Wed, Feb 23, 2011 ***Bibliographies***

Bibliographies due *Group work on bibliographies*

Thu, Feb 24, 2011 **Racism and Racialism**

Reading: Todorov, "Races", 90-170.
Presentation topic: The power of technology

Fri, Feb 25, 2011 **Scramble for Africa**

Reading: Hochschild: 1-100.

Mon, Feb 28, 2011 **Scramble for Africa**

Reading: Hochschild: 101-181.
Essay workshop — bring notes, draft, bibliography to class
Presentation topic: Representations of Africa in Western popular culture

Tue, Mar 1, 2011 **Scramble for Africa**

Reading: Hochschild: 185-234.
Presentation topic: Congo today

Wed, Mar 2, 2011 ***Final paper due***

Wrap-up discussion