

Associate Professor Shawn McHale
George Washington University

Comparative Colonialisms: Asia and Africa

This course explores a major theme in the history of the modern world: colonialism and its legacy. From the Americas to Asia, colonialism helped shape the modern world. To approach these topics, we will begin by exploring the rise of empires and their expansion throughout the world during the age of imperialism. We will then move from this panoptical view to zero in on colonialism in Africa and Asia and its legacies to the modern world. Our attention will focus on the colonized, though some attention will be paid to the colonizers.

It is often assumed that Western Europe provided a model for state development that other countries have emulated. The proof seems to be the nation-state system in which we live today, in which territorially demarcated states pursue international relations according to shared norms defined in large part by Euro-American theory and practice. But how accurate is this view? And how does the colonial experience fit into it? And what has been the legacy of colonialism to the post-colonial world?

This course draws its historical examples from Europe, Africa, and Asia. One of the aims of this class is to allow us to engage in comparative analysis, an analysis that helps us understand not simply the past but the particularities of the present as well.

Course requirements and grading:

Class attendance and participation: 20%

Three short (5-7 page) papers: 48%

One take-home midterm exam: 16%

One final exam: 16%

The paper requirement will be explained in class. Briefly, you will choose to write on two of the readings for the week, and the third paper will be on a topic of your choice. Students will have the opportunity to rewrite two papers for a higher grade.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The GW Code of Academic Integrity states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.”

I admire academic integrity, and I hate plagiarism. (Is that clear enough?) I have a gift for detecting cheating. In the last three years, I have reported two persons to the Office of Academic Integrity. A few years ago, I successfully pushed to have a student expelled from GW. Another student withdrew from GW permanently after I made an allegation. Do not cross me on this issue. If you don't understand what I am saying about plagiarism, I suggest that you drop my class. If, on the other hand, you do not plan to commit plagiarism – welcome to the course!

Students, of course, have *numerous* reasonable questions about what does and does not constitute plagiarism. Feel free to ask me questions on this topic. There are good websites such as www.plagiarism.org which explain what plagiarism is and isn't. I will also add that students sometimes commit plagiarism when they are under time pressure. The lesson: plan your semester well.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

It is my **duty** to help students with disabilities get accommodations. Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should talk to me and (if need be) contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in Rome Hall, 801 22nd Street, NW, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: <https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/>

Books:

- **James Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed* (2009)
- **Judith Carney and Richard Rosomoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World* (2011)
- **Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (1997)
- **Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History* (2010)
- **Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya* (2009)
- **Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, *The River Between* (1965)

** Marguerite Duras, *North China Lover* (1991 original, 1992 in English).

** Heonik Kwon, *Ghosts of War* (2008)

Ian Talbot and Gurhpal Singh, *The Partition of India* (2009) -- PLEASE ORDER YOURSELF!!!

PART I: PEOPLES ON THE FRINGES OF EMPIRE

Week 1 (January 17)

Introduction to course. Overview of themes and readings.

Week 2 (January 24): Expansion of Empire, Beyond Empire: Theory and Practice

James Scott, *Art of Not Being Governed*, 1-126

Week 3 (January 31): State Spaces . . . and Non-State Spaces under Colonial Rule

James Scott, *Art of Not Being Governed*, 127-219, 238-282, 324-338.

Part II: EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF EMPIRE

Week 4 (February 7): Africa and the Americas: Slavery

Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, 1-22, 219-50, 287-306.

Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776).
Read only Book III, chapter 7, part II, pp. 455-477 [these are really double pages]
(BLACKBOARD).

Week 5 (February 14): Underside of Empire: Slaves and Foodways

Carney and Rosamoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World* (2011), 1-138.

Note: For criticisms of Carney's earlier work, see David Eltis, Philip Morgan, and David Richardson, "Agency and Diaspora in Atlantic History: Reassessing the African Contribution to Rice Cultivation in the Americas," *AHR* 112, no. 5 (Dec. 2007): 1329-1358; and *AHR Exchange: "The Question of Black Rice,"* *AHR* 115, no. 1 (Feb. 2010): 123-171 (articles by Max Edelson, Gwendolyn Mido Hall, and Walter Hawthorne, with response by Eltis, Morgan, and Richardson).

Week 6: (February 21) Underside of Empire: Slaves, Convicts and the Dispossessed

Carney and Rosamoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World* (2011), 139-186

Clare Anderson and Hamish Maxwell, "Convict Labour and the Western Empires, 1415- 1954," in Aldrich, R; McKenzie, K, eds., *The Routledge History of Western Empires* (Routledge, 2013), pp. 102-117.

Clare Anderson, "The Transportation of Narain Sing: Punishment, Honour and Identity from the Anglo-Sikh Wars to the Great Revolt," *Modern Asian Studies* 44, 5 (2010) pp. 1115-1145.

Clare Anderson, "Writing Indigenous Women's Lives in the Bay of Bengal: Cultures of Empire in the Andaman Islands, 1789-1906," *Journal of Social History*, Volume 45, Number 2, Winter 2011, pp. 480-496.

Week 7 (February 28): Colonialism and the Bifurcated State

Mahmood Mandani, *Citizen and Subject*, 3- 27, 37-90, 109-137, 138-168.

Week 8 (March 7): Poor and Dysfunctional Whites, Gender, and Empire

Marguerite Duras, *North China Lover*

Recommended: George Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant"

SPRING BREAK Monday, March 13 - Saturday, March 18

Part III: Decolonization and Its Legacies

Week 9 (March 21): Postcolonialism?

Burbank and Cooper, *Empires*: 369-459. (SKIM 369-393, read 393-459 more carefully.)

Tran Duc Thao, "On Indochina" (On Blackboard)

Franz Fanon, selection (On Blackboard), read pp. 1-52 ONLY.

SPRING BREAK: MONDAY MARCH 14—SATURDAY MARCH 19

Week 10 (March 28): Understanding "Communal" Violence and Suffering

Ian Talbot and Gurhpal Singh, *The Partition of India* (2009)

Recommended (but not at all required!!!): Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (2007)

Note: The literature on the partition of India, taken as a whole, tends to overlook the impact on Muslim communities and accentuate the impact on Hindu and Sikh communities. The two books above, in different ways, rectify this imbalance while remaining rigorous in their scholarship.

Week 11 (April 4): Gender and Post-Colonialism

James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, pp. 1-16, 202-228.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, *The River Between*

Week 12 (April 11): Colonial Repression and Anti-Colonial War

Burbank and Cooper, 413-442.

Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya* (2009), pp. 1 –93.

Recommended: The most riveting historical account of a massacre in Kenya is “Death at Lari: The Story of an African Massacre,” pp. 119-180, chapter in David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (2005).

Week 13 (April 18): Post-Colonial Legacies of Violence

Branch, Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya* (2009), pp. 94-end.

Week 14 (April 25):

Heonik Kwon, *Ghosts of War in Vietnam* , 1-103

THIRD PAPER DUE APRIL 30th.