

Sociology 446 “Colonialism and Society” (Fall 2023)

Instructor: Professor Matthew Lange
Class Location: Arts W-5
Class Time: Tuesdays 8:35-10:25am
Office Hours: Thursdays 10:30am to noon and by appointment
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Course Overview

Overseas colonialism caused dramatic social transformations wherever it occurred. This course provides a general overview of colonial-induced social change and explores how the colonial past helps us understand present social circumstances in former overseas colonies. The course does not have a temporal or geographic focus. Instead, the readings cover diverse former colonies located throughout the world and look at different social phenomena: social identities, gender, conflict, states, development, population, etc. Although all the materials assigned for this course are based on empirical evidence, some also have normative components and take one of two sides: colonialism as a source of positive change or colonialism as a source of negative change. Similarly, many of our readings were written by scholars who were themselves colonial subjects, whereas others were written by scholars from countries that colonized large parts of the world. In the course, students are encouraged to consider and compare these different views.

The course is a seminar organized for advanced undergraduates and pursues two goals. First, the course pushes students to participate in critical assessments of the readings and topics related to colonialism. Students are encouraged to come to class with questions for discussion and must be ready to discuss the readings. The second goal is to support students in the completion of a large research project. For this, students will need to submit both a paper proposal and a final research paper.

The course grade is based on four graded components. First, 40 percent of the grade is based on student participation. The grade for this component depends on attendance, participation in class discussions, and demonstrated knowledge of the reading materials. Students who are late for class will also have their grades reduced. Students who are unable to participate in the course can contact Professor Lange about the possibility of making up this component through written assignments. Participation is a necessary component of the course, and students will receive an incomplete for the course if they do not participate in any way.

For the second graded component, each student must prepare a two-page written critique of one of the week's readings, and this assignment is worth 5 percent of the grade. Student critiques should focus on both positive and negative aspects and should include questions that the student has about the readings. *The critique is not a book report and should not provide a summary of the readings.* At the beginning of class, the student(s) who wrote the critiques for the week will begin class by spending a minute or two reviewing their critiques and posing their questions to the class. This will begin discussion for the class. Because these presentations occur at the beginning of class, tardy students will disrupt the presentations, so please make an effort to arrive on time. Students will sign up to write and present their critiques for a particular week during our second class.

The two remaining graded components deal with a research paper focusing on how colonialism affected social change in some way. The first assignment is a 3 to 4-page research paper proposal and must be submitted by class time on November 7th using the myCourses assignments tool. The grades of late submissions will be reduced by 5 percent per day. The proposal should clearly lay out the research question, describe its importance, consider potential answers to the question, and describe what types of material you will gather to answer the question. It should also include an annotated bibliography of five sources relevant to your research project (these should briefly describe the information provided by these works and what the work says about your research question; one to two sentences is usually sufficient). The research proposal is worth 15 percent of the final grade. Students who do not complete it will receive an incomplete for the course.

The research paper itself is due by the beginning of class on December 5th. *No late penalties will be given until 8:35am on December 12th*, and the grade of papers submitted after that time will be reduced by 5 percent per day.

The research paper has a maximum length of 15 pages (double spaced, 12-point font, at least 1.5cm margins) and is worth 40 percent of the final grade; there is no minimum length requirement, although shorter papers commonly have lower grades because they do not go into sufficient detail and leave issues unaddressed. Students who do not complete this assignment will be given an incomplete for the course.

Inclusive Learning Environment

As an instructor, Professor Lange strives to provide an inclusive learning environment. If you experience barriers in learning in this course, please contact him. And to promote inclusion, students must interact respectfully during discussions. Belligerent and hurtful behaviour is not tolerated.

Academic Integrity and Rights

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity> for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/integrity).

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.

All aspects of this syllabus can change due to unforeseen circumstances.

Course Schedule

Week 1: September 5: Introduction—No readings.

Week 2: September 12: Why Europe?—Abernathy, David, *The Dynamics of Global Dominance*, 1-12, 175-253.

Week 3: September 19: How Europe Ruled and Lost Control—(1) Abernathy, David, *The Dynamics of Global Dominance*, 277-360.

Week 4: September 26: Views of Colonialism from Within—(1) Achebe, Chinua, *Things Fall Apart*; (2) Orwell, George, "Killing an Elephant."

Week 5: October 3: Colonialism and Development— (1) Ferguson, Niall, *Colossus*, 169-199; (2) Rodney, Walter, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Chapter 6; (3) Rist, Gilbert, *History of Development*, Intro and Chapter 3.

NO CLASS ON OCTOBER 10th—ENJOY THE BREAK!

Week 6: October 17: Colonial States—(1) Lange, Matthew, "State Formation and Transformation in Africa and Asia"; (2) Englebert, Pierre, "State Legitimacy and Developmental Capacity"; (3) Kohli, Atul, "Where Do High Growth Political Economies Come From?"

Week 7: October 24: Colonialism and Population—(1) Diamond, Jared "Lethal Gift of Livestock," *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, 195-214; (2) Hochschild, Adam, *King Leopold's Ghost*, 115-166; (3) Ittmann, "The Colonial Office and the Population Question in the British Empire, 1918-62."

Week 8: October 31: Colonialism and Ideas of Other—(1) Fanon, Frantz, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 7-40; (2) “What is Orientalism?”; (3) Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, 1-92.

Week 9: November 7: Colonialism and Ethnic Conflict—(1) Horowitz, Donald, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 141-184; (2) Mamdani, M., *When Victims Become Killers*, 41-102, (3) Lange, Amasyali, and Jeong, “Communalizing Colonial Policies and Postcolonial Ethnic Warfare.” 3 to 4-page final project proposal due before class.

Week 10: November 14: Colonialism and Gender—(1) Van Allen, Judith, “Sitting on a Man”; (2) Hunt, Nancy Rose, “Domesticity and Colonialism in Belgian Africa”; (3) Stevenson, Winona, “Colonialism and First Nations Women in Canada.

Week 11: November 21: Settler Colonialism—(1) Wolfe, Patrick, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native”; (2) Baker, Adam, “The Contemporary Reality of Canadian Imperialism”; (3) Bombay, Amy et al., “The Intergenerational Effects of Indian Residential Schools.”

Week 12: November 28: Comparing Empires—(1) Cogneau, Denis and Alexander Moradi, “Borders that Divide”; (2) Anderson, Siwan, “Legal Origins of HIV”; (3) Lange, Matthew, Tay Jeong, and Charlotte Gaudreau-Majeau, “A Tale of Two Empires.”

Week 13: December 5: No Readings.