

**MA Modern French
Studies
Student Handbook 2009/10**

2009/2010 Term Dates

Autumn Term

Monday 28 September to Friday 11 December 2009

Reading week takes place in week 6

Spring Term

Monday 04 January to Friday 19 March 2010

Reading week takes place in week 6

Summer Term

Monday 19 April to Friday 02 July 2010

Who's Who in French in the Department of European Cultures & Languages

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1. Programme Overview

1.1 Course aims and objectives

The MA Modern French Studies is offered both as a full-time (one-year) and as a part-time (two-year) programme, with an emphasis on meeting the needs of mature students.

This degree programme focuses on the culture and society of Modern France through the study of key themes, issues and developments in French cultural and political debates, art, literature, film and language. It aims to survey and challenge current critical and theoretical discourses within the various fields encompassed by Modern French Studies.

A key objective of the programme is to develop and foster the practical and intellectual skills, methods and perspectives required for specialised, independent research. By the end of the course, students will have acquired an understanding of the breadth of Modern French Studies, and will be equipped to undertake further research to the highest level. A further objective of the programme is to develop the academic and communicative skills of students in French.

1.2 Degree structure

Core Course

Your core module for the 2009/10 academic year will be Approaches to French Studies. This is compulsory and you will be expected to attend one 1.5 hour session per week, over a period of twenty three weeks. This module is divided into parts, each lasting five weeks.

Option Courses

You will be expected to take three one term option modules. Further information on these modules can be found in section 3 of this handbook.

One option may be chosen from some other MA programmes (subject to any pre-requisites), including those in European Cultures, Applied Linguistics, Modern German Studies, Spanish, Portuguese & Latin American Cultural Studies and Japanese Cultural Studies. This is subject to the approval of the MA Programme Director, Dr Akane Kawakami.

Dissertation

It is compulsory that you complete a dissertation of 15,000 words on a topic of your choice, but chosen with reference to the research specialism of one of the members of the teaching team. Further information on the dissertation can be found in section 4 of this handbook.

It is important to note that this programme has a Language Requirement whereby you are expected to complete at least one major assignment in French and at least one in English. Further information can be found in section 2.2.

1.3 Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and understanding in the context of the subject

By the end of the programme, students will have gained advanced level knowledge of a range of disciplinary approaches to the study of the culture and society of modern France. They will have been introduced to various theories and models which may be applied in studying and undertaking research in Modern French Studies. Students on the course are encouraged to apply these theories and models critically, and to develop an original and independent approach to research, as exemplified by a critical approach to the question or topic, a willingness to return to sources, wide reading and research, and sensitivity to cross-disciplinary issues. Whereas the core course allows students a broad overview of the various disciplines encompassed by Modern French Studies, the option modules provide the opportunity to specialise, and to develop personal research objectives.

Cognitive skills

Students will develop skills of understanding, analysis evaluation and argumentation. They will learn to assess the usefulness of theoretical and methodological frameworks for analysis and to work within them as appropriate. Skills relating to the formulation and testing of hypothesis and of comparative assessment will also be learnt.

Subject-specific practical/professional skills

Both the core course and the option courses provide students with the opportunity to develop and practice the interpretative and research skills required for the advanced study of literature, film, history, thought, linguistics and the visual arts and encourage students to think independently about the material with which they are confronted. The seminar format and the proposed assessment methods provide students with ample opportunity to practice these skills. The production of a substantial dissertation provides a final target for the development of skills related to research and academic writing at the highest level, and should equip students to progress to doctoral study if they so wish.

The programme is taught and assessed in both English and French, giving the students the opportunity to develop their academic and communicative skills in both languages, whether in seminars or in their written work.

General/transferable skills

Communication skills in both English and French, IT skills relating to research and writing, the ability to work independently, continuous learning skills, presentational skills and teamwork will all be promoted in the course of the programme.

1.4 Timetable

TERM 1	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI
6.00-7.30pm		Approaches to French Studies	Option: Histoires du Cinema		
7.30-9.00pm		Research Skills			
TERM 2					
6.00-7.30pm		Approaches to French Studies	Option: Comparative Decolonisation		
7.30-9.00pm				Option: Race and Racism	
TERM 3					
6.00-7.30pm		Approaches to French Studies (weeks 1-3)			
7.30-9.00pm					

1.5 Communication with staff

Emails

Emails are the best way to communicate with staff. It is reliable and fast and the staff can check them outside of normal working hours.

Students are advised to check their emails regularly for up-to-date information on the programme. Please ensure that you have marked our bbk.ac.uk emails as 'safe' to ensure that they are not directed to your spam folder. You may request your own Birkbeck email address. If you wish to do this, please contact the *MyBirkbeck* Helpdesk (please see section 5.2) as soon as possible, otherwise your nominated personal email will be used.

Mail and messages

Students will be allocated pigeon holes in the Reception area (ground floor) of 43 Gordon Square. These pigeon holes are labelled 'Postgraduate Students' organised alphabetically by surname and will be used frequently for written correspondence from the staff including feedback comments and marks. It is important to check your pigeon hole regularly.

Messages for staff can be left in the staff pigeon hole in the Reception area or can be given to the Programme Administrator.

French notice board

Students are advised to consult the notice board in the Reception area regularly, as notices and information are posted here.

Notice of change of contact address

All students must notify the Programme Administrator in writing immediately of any change of address, telephone number, email address or other circumstances concerning their degree.

2. Assessment

2.1 Assessment requirements

Coursework

Each piece of coursework must be a unique production. Work submitted for one course must not be submitted for a second. Students may be asked to provide electronic copies of their coursework.

You should submit two copies of your essays, with the word count clearly stated on the last page, and one complete Department cover sheet and declaration form. A copy of the coversheet will be sent to you once you have enrolled. Please ask the department administrator if you have not received a copy.

Dissertation

Students are required to produce a 15,000 word dissertation. The dissertation is an original piece of research, conducted under supervision, and should comprise a selective critical review of the literature relevant to the chosen topic, an explanation of and motivation for study, an argument and evidence for the thesis and conclusions arising from the study. The project should demonstrate the ability to review sources, identify research issues, and formulate a coherent argument.

Again, two copies of your dissertation should be submitted along with the department cover sheet and declaration form. Further information concerning format and instructions for the dissertation can be found in section 4.

2.2 Language Requirement

Students must submit at least one major course assignment in French (either a research essay or equivalent for Option 1 or Option 2, or the dissertation), and at least one in English, by prior arrangement with the Programme Director. Assignments for the core course and examinations for either option may be completed in either French or English, as the student chooses, but do not count towards fulfilment of the Language Requirement.

2.3 Assessment criteria

DISTINCTION: The work must meet most if not all of the following criteria:

- 70-100%
- the work shows good evidence of original treatment of a given topic: e.g. exercises independent intellectual judgment and original insight(s); approaches question or topic critically; displays a willingness to return to sources, wide reading and research
 - the work is extremely well planned, written, argued, structured, showing excellent knowledge and analytical/critical ability

- the work demonstrates a high level of awareness, and mature and confident handling, of appropriate critical theories, models or approaches
- the work is based on a high level of bibliographical research and (where relevant, especially in the Critical Essay) on excellent handling of primary sources; references are used appropriately
- the work must completely meet the criteria for word-length and presentation
- the work must be impeccably presented, including appropriate chapter structure, references, appendices, pagination, etc.

MERIT: The work must meet most if not all of the following criteria:

60-69%

- the work shows some evidence of original treatment of a given topic (as defined above)
- the work is generally well-planned, well-written, well-argued, well-structured, showing reasonable knowledge and analytical/critical ability
- the work demonstrates some awareness of appropriate critical theories, models or approaches
- the work is based on an appropriate level of bibliographical research and (where relevant, especially in the Critical essay) on fair handling of primary sources; footnotes or other references are used appropriately
- the work must normally conform to the recommendations concerning work-length
- the Critical essay must be appropriately presented including appropriate chapter structure, references, appendices, pagination, etc.

PASS: The work must meet most if not all of the following criteria:

50-59%

- the work may be largely derivative or uncritical in its approach, but shows some evidence of independent thinking
- a fair piece of work, but poorly written, uneven in argument, structure, expression, in knowledge shown or analytical/critical ability, or coverage
- the work may demonstrate little awareness of appropriate critical theories, models or approaches
- the work is based on a fair level of bibliographical research but (where relevant, especially in the Critical essay) handling of primary sources may be defective; footnotes or other references may be deficient
- the work may be too long or too short or inappropriately presented in terms of structure, references, pagination, etc.

FAIL: The work fails to meet most or all of the criteria set out for a Pass:

- Below 50%
- the work may show no evidence of independent thinking
 - the work may be very poorly argued, written, expressed and structured, may tend to be descriptive, or show little or no relevant knowledge or analytical/critical ability
 - critical apparatus and references may be deficient or absent
 - handling of references and other sources may be defective
 - the work may be too long or too short or very poorly presented in terms of structure, references, pagination, etc.

2.4 Submission of assignments

Deadlines for submission of assessed work must be adhered to. Extensions to deadlines cannot be granted under any circumstances. Any late submission will be given a maximum mark of 50%. If you have mitigating circumstances, such as medical or compassionate reasons, you should submit the mitigating circumstances form, along with supporting documentary confirmation, to the administrator. Consideration will then be taken into account when the Examinations Board meet. The mitigating circumstances form is available from the Programme Administrator.

All coursework, including your dissertation, must be accompanied by a signed coursework assignment cover sheet. This is available from the Programme Administrator or via the department website. You should also provide two copies of your assignments and clearly state the word count on the last page of each copy. Students must retain one copy of each piece of work submitted and may be asked to submit the essay in an electronic format.

Students will be informed by the programme administrator when they can collect their individual feedback and provisional marks. The marks only become final once they have been approved by the Examinations Board.

2.5 References

From the outset you should get into the habit of compiling full details of the material encountered in your reading, so that this may be retrieved in full for your assignments and dissertation. Bibliographic databases (such as EndNote©) can help to organise notes and references. It is suggested that you use one of these and that you familiarise yourself with your chosen software right from the start of the course. However, whether you use bibliographic software or not, it is important to devise a means of rapidly accessing notes at any time alphabetically by title, or by author, or by key topics that seem appropriate.

The final session of the Research Skills module in Term 1 will give an overview of this subject. The Modern French Studies Tutors do not specify

that a particular style be used, as long as it is appropriate and consistent. The most commonly used styles are the MHRA and the Harvard styles.

Details of the MHRA style can be downloaded free of charge (in Adobe format) from:

<http://www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/index.html>.

For advice on Harvard style, and a link to specific advice on internet resources, see <http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/libdocs/hsl-dvc1.pdf>.

2.6 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the most common form of assessment offence encountered in universities, partly because of the emphasis now placed on work prepared by candidates unsupervised in their own time, but also because many students fall into it unintentionally, through ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism. Even if unintentional, it will still be considered an assessment offence. This section is intended to explain clearly what plagiarism is, and how you can avoid it. Acknowledgement is made to guidance issued by the USA Modern Language Association (MLA, 1998).

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's ideas as one's own. In any form, plagiarism is unacceptable, as it interferes with the proper assessment of students' academic ability.

Plagiarism has been defined as "the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own" (*Lindey*, 1952, p. 2). Therefore, using another person's ideas or expressions or data in your writing without acknowledging the source is to plagiarise.

Borrowing others' words, ideas or data without acknowledgement.

It is acceptable, in your work, to use the words and thoughts of another person or data that another person has gathered but the borrowed material must not appear to be your creation. This includes essays, practical and research reports written by other students including those from previous years, whether you have their permission or not. It also applies to both 'hard-copy' material and electronic material, such as Internet documents. Examples include copying someone else's form of words, or paraphrasing another's argument, presenting someone else's data or line of thinking.

This form of plagiarism may often be unintentional, caused by making notes from sources such as books or journals without also noting the source, and then repeating those notes in an essay without acknowledging that they are the data, words or ideas belonging to someone else. Guard against this by keeping careful notes that distinguish between your own ideas and researched material and those you obtained from others. Then acknowledge the source.

Example 1

Original source quotation:

'To work as part of a team, to be able and prepared to continue to learn throughout one's career, and, most important, to take on board both care for the individual and the community, are essential aspects of a doctor's role today.'

Greengross, Sally (1997), "What Patients want from their Doctors", *Choosing Tomorrow's Doctors*, ed. Allen I, Brown PJ, Hughes P, Policy Studies Institute, London.

Plagiarism:

The essential aspects of a doctor's role today are to work as part of a team, be able and prepared to continue to learn throughout one's career, and, most importantly, to take on board both care for the individual and the community.

Acceptable:

One social writer believes that the essential aspects of a doctor's role today are to work as part of a team, be able and prepared to continue to learn throughout one's career, and, most importantly, to take on board both care for the individual and the community (Greengross, 1997).

Example 2

Original source quotation:

'The binary shape of British higher education, until 1992, suggested a simple and misleading, dichotomy of institutions. [...] Within their respective classes, universities and polytechnics were imagined to be essentially homogenous. Their actual diversity was disguised. [...] The abandonment of the binary system, whether or not it encourages future convergence, highlights the pluralism which already exists in British Higher Education.'

Scott, Peter (1995), *The Meanings of Mass Higher Education*, SRHE and Open University Press, Buckingham, p43.

Plagiarism:

Prior to the removal of the binary divide between polytechnics and universities in 1992, there was a misleading appearance of homogeneity in each sector. Now there is only one sector, the diversity of institutions is more apparent, even if convergence may be where we're heading.

Acceptable:

Peter Scott has argued that prior to the removal of the binary divide between polytechnics and universities in 1992, there was a misleading appearance of homogeneity in each sector. Now there is only one sector, the diversity of institutions is more apparent, even if convergence may be where we're heading. (Scott, 1994)

In each revision, the inclusion of the author's name acknowledges whose ideas these originally were (not the student's) and the reference refers the reader to the full location of the work when combined with a footnote or bibliography. Note that in the second example, the argument was paraphrased – but even so, this is plagiarism of the idea without acknowledgement of whose idea this really is.

In writing any work, therefore (whether for assessment or not) you should document the source of everything that you include – not only direct quotations and paraphrases but also information and ideas. There is, of course, some common-sense exceptions to this, such as familiar proverbs, well-known quotations or common knowledge, but you must indicate the source of any appropriated material that readers might otherwise mistake for your own. If in doubt, cite your source or sources.

Copying material verbatim

Another example of plagiarism is the verbatim copying of chunks of material from another source without acknowledgement *even where they are accepted facts*, because you are still borrowing the *phrasing* and the *order* and the *idea* that this is a correct and complete list. Also, you might be infringing copyright (see below).

Re-submission of work

Another form of plagiarism is submitting work you previously submitted before for another assignment. While this is obviously not the same as representing someone else's ideas as your own, it is self-plagiarism and thus another form of cheating. If you want to re-work a paper for an assignment, ask your lecturer whether this is acceptable, and acknowledge your re-working in a preface.

Copyright infringement

Finally, you must guard against copyright infringement. Even if you acknowledge the source, reproducing a significant portion of any document (including material on the Internet) without permission is a breach of copyright, and a legal offence. You may summarise, paraphrase and make brief quotations (as I have done from my sources), but more than this risks infringing copyright.

References:

Modern Language Association (1998), *Guide for Writers of Research Papers* (4th edition), MLA, New York
Lindey, A (1952), *Plagiarism and Originality*, Harper, New York.

3. Modules

All students must complete 180 credits as follows:

- Core Course module: Approaches to French Studies (30 credits)
- Three option modules (30 credits each)
- Dissertation (60 credits)
- Research Skills module (compulsory, but unassessed)

It is possible to take one interdisciplinary option module (weighted 30 credits) from certain other MA programmes within Birkbeck. This is subject to the approval of the MA Programme Director, Dr Akane Kawakami.

3.1 Core module

Approaches to French Studies

Course convenor: Dr Akane Kawakami

Aims and objectives

The aim of the core course is to offer students a range of texts, issues, theories and approaches from Modern French Studies, unified around a theme which changes from year to year. The course is made up of four five-week Parts, each of which examines the main theme from a different perspective. Future themes for the core course may include Frenchness, Violence, Transgression, and/or Revolution.

In the past three years the themes have been 'modernity', 'evil' and 'memory': in 2009-10 it will be 'Illness/Health'. The distinctions between illness and health, definitions of the states and potential metaphors extending far beyond the human body are all issues that have fascinated thinkers and writers throughout the ages. It is a theme which can be approached from a plethora of perspectives, of which we hope to cover a number in this module. The following gives a very general overview, as well as some suggested reading, for what will be taught, and by whom, over the course of the coming year.

N.B: Part-time students must complete the course in one year, but are invited to attend the Core Course in their second year of study when the theme will be different.

TERM ONE	
Weeks 1-5	Part 1: Illness, Health and French Cinema's Constructions of Kinship and Community, taught by Dr Andrew Asibong.
Reading Week	

Weeks 7-11	Part 2: Colonial pathologies: uses and abuses of concepts of mental health in the French colonial empire, taught by Dr Martin Shipway. Includes a Library Induction Session (in Library Seminar Room), Wk.7/8, 6-7.30 pm, tbc.
TERM TWO	
Weeks 1-5	Part 3: Diseases 'du jour': Iconic Illness in the 20 th century, taught by Dr Akane Kawakami.
Reading Week	
Weeks 7-11	Part 4: Venal Bodies: Health and Illness in the Literary Representation of the Prostitute, taught by Dr Ann Lewis.

Part 1: Illness, Health, and French Cinema's Constructions of Kinship and Community

Recent French cinema frequently turns to the representation of the sick human subject not in the interests of melodrama, but rather so as to meditate upon new visions of forms of relation potentially facilitated by illness and proximity to death. We will discuss a broad array of films that "use" illness in this way, considering the aesthetic, ethical and even political stakes of the enterprise.

Primary films (you must watch these before the start of the module)

- *Conte de Noël* (film, Arnaud Desplechin, 2007)
- *Les Témoins* (film, André Téchiné, 2007)
- *Les Nuits fauves* (film, Cyril Collard, 1992)
- *Trouble Every Day* (film, Claire Denis, 2001)

Part 2: Colonial pathologies: uses and abuses of concepts of mental health in the French colonial empire

In this part of the course, we will examine ways in which ideas of 'madness' or mental disorders were associated either with French colonial subjects or with processes of colonialism and decolonisation. First, we will study ways in which colonial officials and medical practitioners diagnosed mental disorders or psychological 'complexes' as a way of understanding colonial disorder or indeed anti-colonial nationalism. Secondly, we examine the history of colonial psychiatry, principally in Algeria, and consider how psychiatric doctrine and practice reflected the colonial setting. Thirdly, we explore metaphors of madness and other 'sickness' (e.g. 'la gangrène') in relation to the traumas of the end of empire.

Recommended reading

- Mannoni, Octave. *Psychologie de la Colonisation* (Paris: Seuil, 1950); trans, with an introduction by Maurice Bloch, as Prospero and Caliban: *The Psychology of Colonisation* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, new ed. 1990).
- Fanon, Frantz. *Peau noire masques blancs* (Paris: Seuil, 1952)
- Keller, Richard C. *Colonial Madness: Psychiatry in French North Africa* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2007)
- Lonsdale, John. 'Mau Mau of the mind: Making Mau Mau and remaking Kenya', In *Journal of African History*, 31, 1990, 393-421; also repr. in Le Sueur, James D. ed. *A Decolonization Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003), 269-90
- Macey, David. *Frantz Fanon: A Life*. (London: Granta, 2000)
- Shipway, Martin. 'Le Corps rebelle: explications françaises de l'insurrection malgache de 1947', in *La Chouette*, no.29, (1998), 67-78
- Vergès, Françoise. *Monsters and Revolutionaries: Colonial Romance and Métissage* (Durham, NC, & London: Duke University Press, 1999)

Part 3: Diseases 'du jour': Iconic Illness in the 20th century

For every age, there is an 'unmentionable', yet much discussed, disease: in the 19th century there was tuberculosis and syphilis, in the 20th century it was cancer, followed by AIDS, which has carried on into the present century. There seems always to have been a need for such an illness in the community's imaginary: an iconic disease whose sufferers, in the healthy public's mind, are tainted with symptoms that go far beyond the physical, like lepers in the Bible. In this section we will examine the facts and fictions of illnesses of this kind in a literary context, and the metaphorical, structural and narrative uses to which they have been put.

Recommended reading

- Gide, *L'Immoraliste* (1902) (Gallimard folio edition)
- Camus, *La Peste* (1947) (Gallimard folio edition)
- Guibert, *A l'ami qui ne m'a pas sauvé la vie* (1991) (Gallimard folio edition)
- Ernaux, *L'Usage de la Photo* (2005) (Gallimard edition)

Part 4: Venal Bodies: Health and Illness in the Literary Representation of the Prostitute

The marginalised figure of the prostitute haunts the literary imagination of different periods. The literal and symbolic representation of the health and illness of the prostitute's body, mind and moral being are not only narrative devices, but also articulate a range of anxieties about society and social class, family and reproduction, and relations between the genders. In this part of the course, we will examine and compare the exploration of these themes in three novels written in very different cultural contexts: one from each of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Recommended reading

- Rétif de la Bretonne, *La Paysanne pervertie* (1784)
- Zola, *Nana* (1880)
- Darrieussecq, *Truismes* (1996)

Assessment

Two 3,000 word essays, one per term (terms 1 and 2).

Research Skills

Course convenor: Dr Eckard Michels

Aims and objectives

This course is designed to help you acquire skills which will allow you to progress successfully through your MA programme. It will also offer you the change to meet students from other programmes (German; Japanese; Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Cultural Studies; European Cultures) and to exchange experiences and develop skills in an interdisciplinary setting.

The programme includes the following topics:

- What is postgraduate study?
- Electronic library resources
- History
- Literature
- Visual culture
- Film
- Popular culture
- What is interdisciplinarity?
- Using secondary/theoretical sources and writing a literature review

Assessment

A critical literature review of 1,500 words.

3.2 Option modules

Histoires du cinéma: occupation, collaboration, résistance

Course convenor: Dr Michael Temple

Aims and objectives

The challenge of this course is to investigate the interaction between history and cinema in modern French culture. In *Histoires du cinéma*, we explore how French cinema has represented French history, and conversely how the history of France has determined the evolution of its cinema. In order to do this, we shall start by studying in detail a specific period of French film history (for example, the 1930s, the Occupation, the 1960s) asking ourselves how the film industry and film production of the period were influenced by the broader historical context and major historical events of the times. Secondly, we shall examine how that same period of French history has subsequently been

represented in fiction and documentary films of later years. In 2009-2010 we shall focus on the period 1940-45, i.e. 'occupation, collaboration, résistance'.

Recommended reading

- Michael Temple and Michael Witt, *The French Cinema Book* (2004)
- Guy Austin, *Contemporary French Cinema* (1996)
- Pierre Billard, *L'Âge classique du cinéma français* (1995)
- Colin Crisp, *The Classic French Cinema 1930-1960* (1997)
- Jill Forbes, *The Cinema in France after the New Wave* (1992)
- J-M. Frodon, *L'Âge moderne du cinéma français* (1995)
- Susan Hayward, *French National Cinema* (1993)
- J-P. Jeancolas, *Histoire du cinéma français* (1995)
- Alan Williams, *Republic of Images: a History of French Filmmaking* (1992)

A detailed bibliography will be distributed at the start of the year, or contact the course convenor at m.temple@bbk.ac.uk for further information.

Sample films

- *On tournait pendant l'Occupation*, J-P Bertin-Maghit, Didier Deskiewicz, (1995)
- *Le Corbeau*, Henri-Georges Clouzot, (1943)
- *Les Documenteurs des années noires*, J-P Bertin-Maghit, (2005)
- *L'Œil de Vichy*, Claude Chabrol, (1993)
- *La Bataille du rail*, René Clément, (1945)
- *Nuit et brouillard*, Alain Resnais, (1956)
- *Le Chagrin et la pitié*, Marcel Ophuls, (1971)
- *Lacombe Lucien*, Louis Malle, (1974)
- *Le Dernier Métro*, François Truffaut, (1980)
- *Pétain*, Jean Marboeuf, (1992)
- *Un Héros très discret*, Jacques Audiard, (1995)
- *Laissez-passer*, Bertrand Tavernier, (2002)

Assessment

One 5,000 word essay.

Comparative Decolonisation: the End of the European Colonial Empires

Module Convenor: Dr Martin Shipway

Aims and objectives

Decolonisation has tended to be studied either as a general category, or, more usually, from the perspective of individual decolonising countries or of particular colonial empires. Most obviously, the end of the British Empire has tended to dominate the literature, while other less 'successful' decolonisation have been relatively neglected or viewed with regard to an implied British paradigm.

In this Option, building on recent research focused across the former colonial empires, we will adopt a more broad-based thematic approach to the study of

decolonisation, giving students the opportunity both to study individual cases of decolonisation from a comparative or regional perspective and to take an overarching approach to aspects of decolonisation as a whole.

Themes studied may include some or all of the following:

- The impact of the Second World War on the colonial empires
- Asian Revolutions in the immediate post-war period
- Nationalism and late colonial nation-building
- Concepts of imperial 'revival' and liberal colonial reform after 1945
- Insurgency and counter-insurgency, terror and counter-terror
- Decolonisation internationalised: Cold War and 'non-Aligned' perspectives
- 'Winds of change': imperial and 'neo-colonial' rationales for decolonisation
- 'Late' decolonisations
- The 'return of the repressed': post-colonial memory

Recommended reading

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 3rd edition, 2006)
- Cooper, Frederick. *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005)
- Hobsbawm, Eric. *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991* (London: Michael Joseph, 1994)
- Le Sueur, James D. ed. *A Decolonization Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003)
- Shipway, Martin. *Decolonization and its Impact: A Comparative Approach to the End of the Colonial Empires* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008)
- Thomas, Martin, Bob Moore & L.J. Butler. *Crises of Empire: Decolonization and Europe's Imperial States, 1918-1975* (London: Hodder 2008).

Assessment

One research essay of 5,000 words.

Representations of 'Race' and Racism in French and Francophone Culture

Module Convenor: Dr Andrew Asibong

Aims and objectives

To study the deployment and development of discourses invoking 'race' in the French-speaking world from the seventeenth century to the present day. To analyse the potential of anti-racist (and anti-'race') modes of thought and representation by French speakers to explore and explode myths of 'race' and practices of racism. How have discourses of 'race' been deployed by French speakers as an ideology to justify the subjugation of those designated as non-white, and specifically 'black'? How have literature, theatre, cinema and philosophy interacted with historical and social reality in the depiction and exploration of changing modes of racial oppression and struggle? And what

legacy has the persistent idea of 'race' left on the colonial and post-colonial francophone world both inside and outside metropolitan France?

Themes studied may include some or all of the following:

- Slavery: Louis XIV and the 'Code noir'
- Révolution (French): Robespierre and the Société des Amis Noirs
- Revolution (Haitian): Toussaint L'Ouverture and the Black Jacobins
- 19th-century 'science': Gobineau and the phrenologists
- From colonialism to Négritude: Aimé Césaire and the *Cahier pour un retour au pays natal*
- 'Race' and anti-colonial literature, thought, theatre: Jean-Paul Sartre; Jean Genet
- Post-colonial 'race'

Core texts

- Barkat, Sidi Mohamed, *Le Corps d'exception: Les Artifices du pouvoir colonial et la destruction de la vie*
- Tévanian, Pierre, *La République du mépris: Les Métamorphoses du racisme dans la France des années Sarkozy*
- Genet, Jean, *Les nègres*
- Fanon, Frantz, *Peau noire masques blancs*
- Bernabé, Chamoiseau and Confiant, *Eloge de la créolité*
- Ndiaye, Pap, *La Condition Noire : Essai sur une minorité française*
- Claire Denis, *J'ai pas sommeil* (film, 1994)
- Marie Chauvet, *Amour, colère et folie* (novel, 1968)
- Marie NDiaye, *Papa doit manger* (play, 2003)

Further reading

- Bancel et al. *Zoos humains : Au temps des exhibitions humaines*
- Barkat, Sidi Mohamed, *Le Corps d'exception: Les Artifices du pouvoir colonial et la destruction de la vie*
- Césaire, Aimé, *Discours sur le colonialisme*
- Ferro, M., *Le Livre noir du colonialisme*
- Foucault, Michel, *Il faut défendre la société*

Assessment

One 5,000 word essay.

4. Dissertation

4.1 Guidelines for dissertation

When students embark on a dissertation their immediate focus is on their choice of topic, their research design and the process of carrying out the work, rather than the final report. Here are some helpful guidelines:

References

Keep a full record of every reference that you read or consult. This record should contain all the information needed to cite correctly the paper or book.

Quotations

Keep the full reference of any quotation you write down, including the page number on which it occurs. It is also wise to check the wording and punctuation and, for books, the inside page showing the author, date, edition, full title, place of publication and publisher. This will ensure that you do not accidentally plagiarise.

Keep everything

Keep everything you write. If you write summaries of what you are reading and what you think of it right from the beginning you may well find that you can incorporate parts of these summaries into your final dissertation.

Make copies

As with references and written material it is important to make copies of any audio and visual material if at all possible.

4.2 Role of supervisor

You should meet with your supervisor several times between your preliminary discussions about your topic and a final discussion before submission: an average number is four meetings, but this is a figure that you should discuss and decide with your supervisor. Your supervisor is not allowed to read the complete dissertation before it is submitted, but would normally expect to have read at least one or two chapters (up to two thirds of the total). Your supervisor may make suggestions as to how you can re-write your material in order to maximise their potential. It is extremely unwise to submit your dissertation without your supervisor having read any of it.

4.3 Dissertation timetable

Part-time students

You should have chosen your research area by the end of your first year, so you can be allocated a supervisor. By October of the second year you should have given your supervisor a draft outline of the dissertation, breaking the subject into chapters, and specifying the research question(s) you are asking. Ideally, you should have written one chapter (and shown it to your supervisor) by the end of the summer term. You can then complete the writing over the summer vacation in order to meet the deadline.

For part-time students, the dissertation is due 30 September 2011.

Full-time students

You should have chosen your research area by the end of January, and arranged supervision from one of the lecturers teaching on the programme. By the end of the spring term you should have submitted, and discussed with your supervisor, a draft outline of the dissertation, breaking the subject into chapters, and specifying the research question(s) you are asking. Ideally you should have written one chapter (and shown it to your supervisor) by the beginning of the summer term; and have written a second chapter (again, showing it to your supervisor) by the end of the summer term. You can then complete the writing over the summer vacation in order to meet the deadline.

For full-time students, the dissertation is due 30 September 2010.

You have the opportunity to present your dissertation topic fairly informally in the Dissertation Workshop which forms part of the core course in the summer term. Part-time students can elect to do this in either or both of their two years of study.

Viva Voce Examination

All candidates will attend a Viva Voce examination, the purpose of which is to confirm or adjust the mark provisionally awarded for the Dissertation by the two internal Examiners. This will normally take place in late November, i.e. two months after the dissertations have been submitted. The Viva Voce examination is an opportunity for candidates to discuss and develop their thoughts on and around their chosen topic, and should not be regarded as a worrying or frightening 'test'. The External Examiner will be present at the Viva Voce examination.

4.4 Instructions on final presentation and submission

Dissertations have to be robust enough to endure the examination process and also have to be easily identified. They will need to have the candidate's name on the spine to distinguish them. The result of the examination will not be issued to you until Birkbeck has two final approved copies of the dissertation in the required formats.

Every candidate submitting a dissertation must do so in accordance with the following instructions:

Number of copies

Two copies must be submitted to Programme Administrator. You should also provide an electronic copy of the dissertation. This is required to detect plagiarism.

Presentation

Dissertations must be presented in a permanent and legible form in typescript or print. You must make every effort to correct errors before submission. Failure to do so will not create a good impression to the Examiners.

Paper

A4 size paper (210 x 297 mm) should be used. Plain white paper must be used, of good quality and of sufficient opacity for normal reading. Only one side of the paper may be used.

Layout

Margins at the binding edge must be not less than 40 mm (1.5 inches) and other margins not less than 20 mm (0.75 inches). Double spacing should be used in typescripts, except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.

Pagination

All pages must be numbered in one continuous sequence, i.e. from the title page of the first volume to the last page of type, from 1 onwards. This sequence must include everything bound in the volume, including maps, diagrams, blank pages, etc. Any material which cannot be bound in with the text must be placed in a pocket inside or attached to the back cover.

Each line should also be numbered to facilitate marking. To add line numbers to a whole document following the below guidelines:

Step 1: On the file menu, click Page Setup, and then click the Layout tab.

Step 2: In the Apply box, click Whole document.

Step 3: Click Line Numbers. Select the Add Line Numbering check box, and then select the options you want.

Title Page

The title page must bear the officially-approved title of the dissertation, the candidate's full name as registered, the month and year of submission, the degree award for which the dissertation is submitted, acknowledgements of any help received, followed by the name of the college: Birkbeck, University of London.

Declaration and Word Count

You must include in each bound copy of your dissertation a signed declaration that the work presented in the dissertation is your own work and also give a total word count for the thesis. This page should be bound in with the dissertation.

One example:

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this dissertation is entirely my own.

Word count (exclusive of appendices, and bibliography): xxxxxxxxxxxx words

The dissertation must be as close to 15,000 words as possible, including footnotes but excluding bibliography.

Table of Contents

In each copy of the dissertation the abstract and declaration/word count page should be followed by a full table of contents (including any material not bound in) and a list of tables, photographs or any other materials. This should include page numbers.

Binding

In the first instance candidates should submit two copies of their dissertations, either soft-bound or hard-bound.

Addresses of binders can be provided by Registry.

5. Advice and support services for students

5.1 Primary contact

Your Personal tutor will normally act as your primary source of advice, on matters both academic and personal. If you have a specific query about a particular module, your first port of call should be the tutor of that module. Any other, more general queries should be addressed to the Programme Administrator.

5.2 Birkbeck Student Centre

A new 'Birkbeck Student Centre' for all enquiries is now open. The *My Birkbeck* Helpdesk is located in the foyer of the main building in Torrington Square (WC1) and staff will be on hand to provide the information and advice you need.

My Birkbeck Helpdesk opening hours:

- Term time: Monday to Friday 10am - 10pm
- Vacations: Monday to Friday 10am – 8pm
- All year: Saturday and Sunday 11am – 5pm

Contact details:

- Email: info@bbk.ac.uk
- Tel: 0845 601 0174 (lo-call number)
- Tel: +44 (0)20 7631 6601/6435/6692 (if outside the UK)

5.3 Supporting your study and English language skills

Birkbeck's Study Skills team offers advice and information on access to a wide range of activities relating to academic study and personal and professional skills development including:

- Preparing to return to study
- Academic writing
- Study skills techniques
- Personal development planning
- Library access skills
- IT skills/development/enhancement
- In-depth assessment of English language proficiency level
- English language courses
- Maths and stats support

The Study Skills team offer one-to-one sessions where you can get advice and support on any study difficulties you may be facing and this year we will be delivering a range of courses and workshops on topics such as essay writing, preparing for exams and note-taking. They can also advise on

English language skills, assess a student's level of language and recommend strategies for improvement.

A range of learning materials and e-learning packages to help you in your studies are also available.

For the latest details please see the website: www.clpd.bbk.ac.uk/students.

Please feel free to contact the Study Skills team if you would like advice on supporting your learning.

The team are based in the Malet Street building and can be contacted on 020 7631 6683 or by emailing clpd@bbk.ac.uk.

5.4 Disabled students support

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities including dyslexia, visual or hearing impairments, mobility difficulties, mental health needs, HIV, ME, etc.

The College has a Disability Officer located on the main corridor on the ground floor of the Malet Street building. It is managed by the Disability Service Manager, Mark Pimm, who is your first point of referral for disability enquiries at the College. Mark is assisted by the Disability Advisor, Steve Short. They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA), special equipment, personal support, examination arrangements and so on.

At your first appointment with the Disability Service Manager you will be asked to complete a Confidentiality Consent Form. This enables you to state who in the College can be informed of your disability. Remember, if you wish, we do not need to inform people of the exact nature of your disability, just your disability related needs.

Students with disabilities or dyslexia are eligible to apply for the Disabled Student's Allowance. This can meet the cost of special equipment e.g. computers, minidisk recorders, etc, non-medical help e.g. note-takers, interpreters, readers, etc, book and photocopying allowances and additional travel costs. For further information and advice on all disability related queries please email the Disability Officer at disability@bbk.ac.uk, check their website at www.bbk.ac.uk/disability/, or call them on 020 7631 6336. For minicom please call 020 7631 6630.

5.6 Birkbeck Students' Union

Birkbeck Students' Union provides student support services, promotes welfare issues, represents students' interests on College committees and provides social activities via events, Clubs and Societies. All students are automatically members of the Union (although there is an opt-out facility) which entitles

them to benefit from all the facilities and services the Students' Union offers. Birkbeck Students' Union is affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS).

The support services that Birkbeck Students' Union offers are counselling, an advice centre, Skills for Study workshops, student representation and more. For further information please consult your guidance handbook provided by the Birkbeck Student Union or email the Union at info@bcSU.bbk.ac.uk or consult www.bbk.ac.uk/su.

5.7 College Research School Training Courses

Now in its fifth year, the College Research School (CRS) was recently identified by the Quality Assurance Agency as a specific example of good practice in the quality assurance of research degree provision at Birkbeck.

The Research School is comprised of all Birkbeck academic and research staff, as well as approximately 884 research students (of whom 67% are part-time) registered at the College. The key aims of the CRS are to:

- Facilitate communication and collaboration between Departments in the provision of research training.
- Promote and ensure best practice in research supervision.
- Provide opportunities for interdisciplinary intellectual exchanges for both research students and staff.

To achieve these aims, the CRS organises lecture series, generic skills workshops and social events. All research students are invited to these events, giving you an opportunity to share ideas and expertise not just with students in your own subject area, but also with students across the disciplines.

Room 159 in the Malet Street building is a dedicated Research Students' Resource Room. It serves as a private study area and information point for research students and is furnished with computers, desks and other equipment. The barcode on your Birkbeck student identity card will be programmed to allow you access to the room.

For further information, visit the Research School web pages at www.bbk.ac.uk/crs.

5.8 Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network

Birkbeck is a member of the Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network (BPSN) which is a collaboration between eight colleges of the University of London (Birkbeck, University College London, the Institute of Education, the School of Oriental and African Studies, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, the Royal Veterinary College, the School of Pharmacy, and the School of Advanced Study). This Network enables students of the eight colleges to attend generic skills courses provided at any of the colleges.

Information about the Network and the courses is available on the University College London (UCL) Graduate School website, and students are asked to register for courses on-line.

The URL for the BPSN Web-form is: <http://www.grad.ucl.ac.uk/bloomsbury/>.

5.9 The Student Community

The MA programme enables students to get to know each other and to share knowledge and expertise amongst themselves; this is particularly important in the early stages. You will form part of a cohort of students who join the programme at the same time and you should regard your fellow students as a significant resource. You should be able to learn from and support each other, and gain other social and academic benefits from your fellow students within a supportive, friendly and productive research environment.

5.10 Other useful information

Programme regulations

The regulations for all programmes can be found via our Registry website at www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/regs/prog_regs.

College Facilities

Birkbeck College has traditionally specialised in providing university teaching for students who can only study on a part-time evening basis. Thus most of the College's formal lectures take place in the evenings, but libraries and computing facilities, as well as other college facilities, are open throughout the day and evening. Due to the emphasis on evening studies, these facilities are often relatively free during the day. Full details of College facilities, which are mainly located in Birkbeck's main building in Malet Street, are given in the College prospectus.

Canteen facilities in Gordon Square

There is a snack bar at 43 Gordon Square open for lunch and snacks throughout term-time. This can be found on the ground floor.

Library

Please see the library website at www.bbk.ac.uk/lib for details of opening hours, as well as full details of subject guides, electronic resources and access to other libraries. Alternatively you could call Helpdesk enquiries on 020 7631 6063.

Once you have enrolled at the College you will be issued with a College identity card which should give you automatic use of the library. Birkbeck library has an excellent collection of books and journals in special areas of research in the department. Students registered at Birkbeck are entitled to use the libraries of the Universities of London, including the University Library at Senate House.

Film Library

The School of Arts Film Library (room G18) houses a collection of film and audio material which can be borrowed to support learning. Normal opening times are 16:00-20:00 Monday-Friday during term time.

A large-print version of this document is available and alternative formats can be provided on request.

Please contact the Disability Office for assistance.

Telephone: 020 7631 6336

Minicom: 020 7631 6630

Email: disability@bbk.ac.uk