

# Age of European Global Expansion

Rutgers University. Course: 506: 110: H6.

Instructor: Satyasikha Chakraborty (satyasikha.c@rutgers.edu)

Summer Session 3, July 10-Aug 16, 2017, Mon & Wed, 6pm to 9.40pm, Scott Hall 102



## Course Description:

How did European states fighting Crusades, suppressing peasant revolts and reeling under the Black Death in the late medieval period, dramatically expand beyond Europe and establish global dominance during the next few centuries? This course looks at the rise of European powers through fierce commercial competition with each other and with various Asian, African and Native American powers to eventually create huge colonial empires. Spanish, Portuguese, French, Dutch and British colonizers not only imported and imposed European norms and systems on the new territories they took over, but also adapted to local methods of governance and forged domestic ties with local people. This mutual but hierarchical cultural interaction not only changed the political, economic and knowledge structures of non-Western societies, but in the process, also transformed Europe.

In this course, we will look at the crucial role played by ideologies of race, gender, class, religion, sexuality and morality in sustaining European colonial powers. How were these ideologies produced through colonial cultural products, from paintings and poems to advertisements? How were race and gender legitimized by colonial science (both social and natural sciences)? Finally, we will trace the developments of anti-colonial resistances and nationalist movements in Asia and Africa; we will see how these movements deployed concepts like “freedom”, “equality” and the idea of the “nation” itself from European history, and used these to challenge and end European imperialism. The course concludes with the question, has European global dominance ever really ended? How does Euro-centrism operate in our contemporary globalized world?

This course does not require any background in history, and welcomes the perspectives of students from different disciplines into the classroom.

**I look forward to seeing you in the summer! Feel free to email me with any questions you may have about the course.**

### **Readings:**

**Purchase of books is not required for this course.** But, you are expected to do daily short readings of primary documents, book chapters and articles, which will all be posted on Sakai. Please bring copies of the day’s readings to class (either softcopies or printouts) to facilitate discussion. Part of every class will be devoted to intensive reading of texts to enable you to read historical documents critically. Use of laptops/tablets is permitted only to open pdfs of the day’s required readings and for taking notes.

Suggested books:

Glenn Ames, *The Globe Encompassed: The Age of European Discovery* (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008)

Bonnie Smith, *Imperialism: A History in Documents* (Oxford University Press, 2000)

### **Attendance:**

This is a very condensed course consisting of only 12 classes. Attendance is mandatory in order to understand key concepts, arguments, and develop critical reading skills. 30% of your final grade will depend on regular class participation, which makes attendance tied to your success in this course. If you have any special needs, please let me know how I may assist you.

**Class schedule** (outline and readings for each class is available in the detailed syllabus on sakai):

- 1) Mon, July 10<sup>th</sup> – Why and how did European powers come to dominate the globe? A review of historical perspectives
- 2) Wed, July 12<sup>th</sup> – Colonial conquests and competition among the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French and English
- 3) Mon, July 17<sup>th</sup> – European relations with various American, Asian and African powers
- 4) Wed, July 19<sup>th</sup> – Colonial intimacies and sexualities: temporary marriages to prostitution
- 5) Mon, July 24<sup>th</sup> – Colonial commodities and colonial labors: slavery to indenture
- 6) Wed, July 26<sup>th</sup> – Anti-colonial resistances: Caribbean slave revolts to the Indian mutiny
- 7) Mon, July 31<sup>st</sup> – ‘Civilizing mission’: Social and educational reforms and the rescuing of ‘native’ women from ‘native’ men
- 8) Wed, Aug 2<sup>nd</sup> – European scientific production of race and gender: Anthropometry, primatology, taxonomy
- 9) Mon, Aug 7<sup>th</sup> – Germ theory, bio-medicine and the epistemic violence of colonial rule
- 10) Wed, Aug 9<sup>th</sup> – European global expansion and the World Wars
- 11) Mon, Aug 14<sup>th</sup> – Decolonization: Nationalist movements, Pan-Asianism, Pan-Africanism
- 12) Wed, Aug 16<sup>th</sup> – Post-colonialism and the struggle against European hegemony

### **Assignments and Grading:**

#### 30 points for Class Participation:

Doing daily readings and contributing to class discussions.

#### 25 points for Mid-term:

- a) A take-home essay (1500 words) on the colonial history of any commodity of your choice, such as tea, sugar, spices, cotton, chocolate, soap etc. Details of the assignment will be posted on sakai and explained in class. Due by Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup>. (20 points)
- b) One brief class presentation on your chosen mid-term topic. (5 points)
- c) An optional short response paper (500 words) on Ann McClintock’s article “Soft-soaping Empire”. This reading will be posted on sakai, discussed in class, and will help you write your mid-term essay. Due by Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup>. (5 extra credit points)

#### 25 points for End-term Essay:

Topic for take-home essay (2000 words) will be provided one week before submission deadline. Due by Tuesday, Aug 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### 20 points for In-class Final Exam:

In-class brief written analysis of two primary texts discussed over the course. Wednesday, Aug 16<sup>th</sup>.