



## Colonial and Anticolonial Berlin: History, Society and Politics

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Fall Term 2024: 2 September – 13 December 2024  
(break: 21-25 October 2024)

### **CATEGORY**

History, Sociology, Anthropology

### **COURSE STRUCTURE**

3 contact hours à 45 min per week (14 weeks)

### **WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

#### **Time**

Day: Tuesday, 4:00 pm – 6.30 pm

#### **Place**

Schönhauser Allee 10, 10119 Berlin  
Room 1.23

### **COURSE LANGUAGE**

English

**Language requirements** (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)

English B2

### **TARGET GROUP**

International exchange students of all subjects with a strong interest in the course topic. Humboldt Perspectives Study Abroad courses are designed for undergraduate students. Master students may participate if their home university agrees.

### **CREDITS = 6 ECTS**

All courses are accredited according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the complex historical and contemporary dynamics of German colonialism, anti-colonial resistance movements, and the impact of colonialism on present-day German society. Divided into four themes that intersect throughout the classes, the course provides a comprehensive understanding of the German colonial past, anti-colonial struggles in Berlin, contemporary Berlin as a site of colonial heritage, and the emergence of post-colonial and decolonial movements in the city.

The first main theme is the German colonial era, in which we examine key historical events, colonial practices, and the territories under German control. We explore Berlin as a physical and symbolic space that reflects the remnants of German colonialism and consider how these remnants shape the city's identity.

The second one focuses on resistance movements against colonization. We study the diverse strategies and initiatives employed by individuals and communities who fought against German colonialism both in the colonies and in Berlin and the capital of the German empire. By analyzing the resistance movements, we aim to understand their motivations, challenges, and the lasting impact of their efforts.

Moving into the third theme, we investigate the effects of colonialism on contemporary German society. We examine how colonial legacies continue to shape social, political, and cultural structures in Germany today. Topics include the influence of colonialism on immigration policies, racial dynamics, cultural heritage, and the representation of marginalised communities.

As far as the fourth theme is concerned, we engage with postcolonial and decolonial contemporary movements. We critically examine different theoretical frameworks and approaches used to deconstruct colonial power structures, challenge Eurocentric narratives, and envision alternative futures. We explore the global context of decolonial movements and their relevance to Germany and Berlin specifically.

In this course, students will have the possibility to apprehend Berlin as a complex city marked by colonial and anticolonial stories. From the presentation of how the questions related to those stories have moved from the German Empire (1871-1918) to the contemporary faces of Berlin, students will be able to have a historical understanding of both the mechanisms of colonialism and the resistances that have been built in Berlin.

Throughout the course, students will be able to develop critical thinking skills, gain historical knowledge, and engage in interdisciplinary analysis. By examining the German colonial past, anti-colonial resistance movements, and decolonial theories, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding colonialism and its aftermath, fostering a critical lens for interpreting and addressing contemporary issues of power, identity, and social justice in Germany and beyond.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### Knowledge

- Understand, describe, and identify the core theories of the topic of decolonial and post-colonial theory
- Account for the stylized facts and direct empirical tests of the core theories of the German colonial past and its present implications.
- Provide an overview of recent theoretical and empirical developments in the field of decolonial theories, with an in-depth study case of Berlin and the decolonial movements that took and take place in the city.
- Understand and analyze the circumstances surrounding German colonization
- Understand and analyze the circumstances surrounding anti-colonial and decolonial movements in Germany and especially in Berlin.

### Academic/Transferable Skills

- Analyze and critically reflect on colonial and decolonial practices and theories.
- Select relevant theories and methods for analyzing societal questions and possible issues with decolonial lenses.
- Communicate and discuss key concepts in the field of decolonial theory.
- Communicate and discuss key concepts regarding the German colonial past.
- Development of critical skills to understand and analyze coloniality and decoloniality.

### Competencies

- Read the most recent theoretical and empirical research in decolonial theory, having Germany and Berlin as a focus.
- Read relevant texts about the German colonial past.
  - Apply relevant theories and concepts in independent work to analyze new problems with decolonial lenses.

## **READINGS**

Bakshi, Sandeep. "The Decolonial Eye/I: Decolonial Enunciations of Queer Diasporic Practices." *interventions* 22.4 (2020): 533-551.

Bacchetta, Paola, Fatima El-Tayeb, and Jin Haritaworn. "Queers of Color and (De)Colonial Spaces in Europe." In *Global Raciality: Empire, PostColoniality, DeColoniality*, edited by Paola Bacchetta, Sunaina Maira, and Howard Winant. New York: Routledge, 2019: 158–170.

Césaire, Aimé. *Discourse on colonialism*. NYU Press, 2001

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 2004. Conclusion.

Florvil, Tiffany N. *Mobilizing Black Germany: Afro-German women and the making of a transnational movement*. University of Illinois Press, 2020.

Khan, Khatija Bibi. "The Kaiser's Holocaust: the coloniality of German's forgotten genocide of

the Nama and the Herero of Namibia." *African Identities* 10.3 (2012): 211-220.

Kuck, Nathanael. "Anti-colonialism in a Post-Imperial Environment—The Case of Berlin, 1914–33." *Journal of Contemporary History* 49.1 (2014): 134-159.

Oyěwùmí, Oyèrónkẹ́. *The invention of women: Making an African sense of western gender discourses*. U of Minnesota Press, 1997. Chapter 4 - Colonizing Bodies and Minds: Gender and Colonialism.

Patel, Sujata. "Anti-colonial thought and global social theory." *Frontiers in Sociology* 8 (2023).

Petersson, Fredrik. "Hub of the anti-imperialist movement: The league against imperialism and Berlin, 1927–1933." *Interventions* 16.1 (2014): 49-71.

Prein, Philipp. "Guns and top hats: African resistance in German south west Africa, 1907–1915." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 20.1 (1994): 99-121.

Schilling, Britta. *Postcolonial Germany: Memories of Empire in a Decolonized Nation*. Oxford University Press, 2014. *The State Gift, 1969-1968*.

Tuck, Eve, and K. Wayne Yang. "Decolonization is not a metaphor." *Tabula Rasa* 38 (2021): 61-111.

Vögele, Hannah. "Colonial Intimacies: Constellations of Property and Kinship in German Colonial (After) Lives." *Women, Gender & Research* 1 (2022): 15-32.

Žižek, Slavoj. *Multiculturalism, or, the cultural logic of multinational capitalism*. Ljubljana: New Left Review, 1997.

## ASSIGNMENT INFO

### Workload and assignments

In order to be granted 6 ECTS, participants will be asked to

- actively attend all sessions (a minimum of 80% attendance is required for classroom and online sessions)
- prepare and revise the classroom/online sessions
- hand in the following **assignments**:
- Reaction paper (20% of final grade)
- Final assignment, which consists of a written paper (80% of final grade) of approx. 25,000 characters including spaces.

A written paper about a practical and contemporary colonial problem in Berlin (object restitution, police racism, anti-colonial cultural/political movements, etc.) and some reflections on the concepts/discussions of the class.

Failure to fulfil one of the mentioned components results in failure of the class.

## **Assessment Components**

The final grade will be composed of the above-mentioned assignments.

## **YOUR INSTRUCTOR**

### **Julia de Freitas Sampaio**

Julia Sampaio is a Ph.D. student at the Humboldt University of Berlin. She is currently researching immigration in Berlin and she follows a decolonial approach. She has dedicated most of her academic life to gender studies. In her current work, she has an intersectional approach to identity and political minorities.

She holds a B.A. (2017) from UFGRS (Brazil) in Social Sciences, an M.A (2019) in Social Development and strategies of inclusion from Paul Valéry (France) and she is currently part of the Faculty of Sociology at Humboldt, where she is pursuing her Ph.D.

### **Alexandre Nogueira Martins**

Alexandre Martins is a Ph.D. student at Freie Universität Berlin. He is currently researching decoloniality, queer politics and social movements. Decolonial and anticolonial perspectives are at the center of his investigations, alongside queer of color theories, critique of violence and punishment, and studies of neoliberal governmentality.

He holds a B.A. (2018) and M.A. (2020) from University of Sao Paulo (Brazil). His thesis was published as the book "LGBTphobia: a story of criminalizations" (2023). He is a researcher at the International Training Group "Temporalities of the Future: Dynamics of Aspiration and Anticipation in Latin America".

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# COURSE SCHEDULE

3 hours à 45 min per week

## **Week 1: Introduction + Program**

Introduction of the lecturers and the students, followed by the introduction to the program and to the evaluation methods. We will then watch "The danger of the single story" from Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and discuss what that could mean for this class and for the studies of colonial and anticolonial stories in Berlin.

## **Week 2: Colonialism and Anticolonialism**

What is colonialism, colonisation and coloniality?

How can we understand anticolonial, decolonial and post-colonial thought?

In this class, we will present a brief panorama of the main authors and theoretical traditions on the debate on colonial relations. We will discuss with the students the main theoretical tools they may provide us for understanding the colonial stories of Berlin.

Readings:

Patel, Sujata. "Anti-colonial thought and global social theory." *Frontiers in Sociology* 8 (2023).

## **Week 3: Berlin as the capital of a colonial empire**

What was the role of Berlin as the capital of the colonial German empire? Which parts of the world were under colonial German rule? And which consequences this brought to Berlin and to the territories violently exploited by the German Reich? Which discourses were the basis for those relationships and which social imaginaries they have entailed?

We will discuss the Berlin Conference of 1885 and the Berlin colonial entanglements in Africa and Oceania during the II Reich. For discussion with the students, we will exhibit parts of the documentary "German Colonialism in Namibia" (Art.tv Documentary - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZG5nBJ7uYE&ab\\_channel=ARTE.tvDocumentary](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZG5nBJ7uYE&ab_channel=ARTE.tvDocumentary))

Readings:

Khan, Khatija Bibi. "The Kaiser's Holocaust: the coloniality of German's forgotten genocide of the Nama and the Herero of Namibia." *African Identities* 10.3 (2012): 211-220.

## **Week 4: Gender, sexuality and coloniality**

What are the consequences for gender and sexuality constructions in societies colonized by European countries? How can we understand the ways those societies have been transformed to become the image of European ones?

We will discuss the construction of colonial societies as the building of other worlds and other systems of thought and social stratification. The enduring consequences of colonialism in sexuality and gender realms will be addressed in a dialogue with contemporary queer of colour and feminist of colour literature.

Readings:

Oyèwùmí, Oyèrónkẹ́. *The invention of women: Making an African sense of western gender discourses*. University of Minnesota Press, 1997. Chapter 4 - Colonizing Bodies and Minds: Gender and Colonialism.

Vögele, Hannah. "Colonial Intimacies: Constellations of Property and Kinship in German Colonial (After) Lives." *Women, Gender & Research* 1 (2022): 15-32.

## **Week 5: Berlin as an European centre of anticolonial movement**

How can we understand Berlin as part of the stories of anticolonial resistances? Which politics have the colonised subjects enacted in this city during the German empire and during the Weimar Republic?

We will also present to the students an introduction for the tour of the following week and what we expect from their participation.

Readings:

Petersson, Fredrik. "Hub of the anti-imperialist movement: The league against imperialism and Berlin, 1927–1933." *Interventions* 16.1 (2014): 49-71.

## **Week 6: Colonial Berlin Tour with Jara Nassar**

Tour with Jara Nassar on sites with colonial and anticolonial stories in the city of Berlin.

Readings:

Kuck, Nathanael. "Anti-colonialism in a Post-Imperial Environment—The Case of Berlin, 1914–33." *Journal of Contemporary History* 49.1 (2014): 134-159.

## **Week 7: Anticolonial struggles I: Theories**

How have people resisted colonisation? What are the different projects and perspectives at stake in anticolonial struggles? What are the main frames we could theoretically use to understand those contradictory processes?

In this class we will present and discuss with the students the main theoretical tools on the debate of anticolonial struggles.

Readings:

Césaire, Aimé. *Discourse on colonialism*. NYU Press, 2001.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 2004. Conclusion.

## ***BREAK: 21 – 25 October 2024***

## **Week 8: Anticolonial struggles II: Praxis**

After the theoretical discussions of anticolonial, students should present some examples of anticolonial struggles in the former German colonies, during the German colonial power and after the German colonial power.

Readings:

Prein, Philipp. "Guns and top hats: African resistance in German south west Africa, 1907–1915." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 20.1 (1994): 99-121.

## **Week 9: Berlin after 1945: BRD, DDR and anticolonial struggles**

What were differences in West and East Berlin in dealing with the colonial legacy and the anticolonial struggles during the 20th century? In which ways was Berlin politics connected to the liberation movement of the Third World during the decades of 1940, 1950, 1960?

Students should present examples of the connections of Berlin with those movements: either solidarity entanglements supporting decolonization in Africa, Asia and Oceania or colonial relationships of defending the colonial status quo against liberation movements.

Readings:

Schilling, Britta. *Postcolonial Germany: Memories of Empire in a Decolonized Nation*. Oxford University Press, 2014. *The State Gift, 1969-1968*.

## **Week 10: Anticolonial and intersectional struggles in Berlin I: Black feminists**

What were the contributions of black and people of colour in Berlin in the second half of the 20th century for the anticolonial thought and critique? How can we think of Berlin as central in the story of transnational anti racist solidarities between feminist of colour movements?

We will present parts of the documentary "Audre Lorde - The Berlin Years (1984-1992)" for the discussion with the students.

Readings:

Florvil, Tiffany N. *Mobilizing Black Germany: Afro-German women and the making of a transnational movement*. University of Illinois Press, 2020.

## **Week 11: Berlin since the 1990s: Multicultural in a postcolonial world?**

What are the transformations in the global stage of the representations of Berlin after the fall of the Wall? And what are their implications for colonial and anticolonial stories of this city?

Visit to the Museum of Immigration and discussion about the meaning of multiculturalism.

Readings:

Žižek, Slavoj. *Multiculturalism, or, the cultural logic of multinational capitalism*. Ljubljana: New Left Review, 1997.

## **Week 12: Anticolonial and intersectional struggles in Berlin II: Queer and trans liberation**

We will discuss the connections of queer and trans struggles in Berlin since the 1970s with contemporary movements and resistances against colonial constructions in the city. We will present videos of contemporary drag queens and kings in Berlin inside of those struggles.

Students should research and present collective practices in 21st-century Berlin (cultural and political events such as exhibitions, events, protests, and others) that intertwine gender and sexuality struggles with anticolonial critique.

Readings:

Bakshi, Sandeep. "The Decolonial Eye/I: Decolonial Enunciations of Queer Diasporic Practices." *Interventions* 22.4 (2020): 533-551.

Bacchetta, Paola, Fatima El-Tayeb, and Jin Haritaworn. "Queers of Color and (De)Colonial Spaces in Europe." In *Global Raciality: Empire, PostColoniality, DeColoniality*, edited by Paola Bacchetta, Sunaina Maira, and Howard Winant. New York: Routledge, 2019: 158-170.

## **Week 13: Policing borders and reproducing coloniality**

How does contemporary immigration and refugee politics reproduce and deal with the colonial legacy in Berlin? How have immigrants and refugees tried to continue the legacy of anticolonial struggles in this city?

Readings:

Bhimji, Fazila. "Visibilities and the politics of space: Refugee activism in Berlin." *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 14.4 (2016): 432-450.

## **Week 14: Reparation and Restitution**

How are Berlin institutions dealing with their colonial legacy? What can be done with the material and the immaterial patrimonies that have been brought to and maintained in Berlin territory?

At this session, we will discuss with the students the class' final assignment, possible topics, and



how to execute them in class. We will discuss the experience of the course and dialogue about which contributions the course could provide the students.

Readings:

Hamrick, Ellie, and Haley Duschinski. "Enduring injustice: Memory politics and Namibia's genocide reparations movement." *Memory Studies* 11.4 (2018): 437-454.

Tuck, Eve, and K. Wayne Yang. "Decolonization is not a metaphor." *Tabula Rasa* 38 (2021): 61-111.

## TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Registration on Moodle (HU's e-learning platform)

### in case of online sessions

- Fully functional device (laptop, tablet, PC)
- Stable internet connection
- Software: Zoom (video/audio)
- *Recommended* hardware: external headset for better sound quality

## EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

**Preparation for lively discussions:** be on time, have at least the required readings completed, and points in mind for discussion or clarification.

**Assignments:** complete all assignments according to the specified requirements on the schedule including handing them over to the lecturer.

**Commitment:** pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions in this international classroom.

**Academic guidelines:** Comply with academic integrity policies, especially the academic honor code and the student code of conduct. Plagiarism in even a small assignment will result in failing the entire course.

**Attendance policy:** Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work – to excuse absence please contact the lecturer.

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The course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: 8 January 2024