



IMMIGRATION, SLAVERY AND CULTURAL BLENDING OF THE FRENCH ANTILLES IN THE MODERN ERA

APA Program: French Antilles

Language of instruction: French

US semester credits: 4.0

Term: Summer (6 weeks)

Instructor: Dr. Erick Noël | Université des Antilles

Course Description

From the pre-Columbian era which saw Arawaks and the Carib people arrive in turn, to the Spaniards gradually invading the entire archipelago, the Caribbean area experienced a settlement that occurred in successive waves. It is in the voids of this Hispanic Mediterranean that the Europeans of the northwest, French in particular, tried at the dawn of the 17th century to occupy islands disputed by the Dutch and English. Far from being homogeneous, the French settlement saw Normans, Bretons and Aquitains arrive in turn, tempted by *eldorados* that proved lucrative only for the wealthy: instead of white hires discouraged by an unprofitable exploitation of "tobacco places", the capitalist enterprises of Nantes and Bordeaux, and then families close to the central government, allowed the slave system of "Sugar Habitations" to be installed from the 1670s onwards. This was introduced under the Black Code of 1685. Like the English who made Jamaica their flagship, the French erected Santo Domingo as their "Pearl of the Isles" in the Americas. The black slave chain brought slaves from the Gulf of Guinea, Congo and Angola, and then, with the fall of the French Indies Company (Compagnie des Indes) in 1769, blacks from the Mascarene and Bengal. Since the dawn of the 18th century, and beyond the servile condition, the issue of interbreeding has questioned the elites. In fear of seeing the growing group of emancipated mulattos play a subversive role, they sought to save the plantocracy, lock down the social order, and defend the colonial order. It is therefore through the prism of these different elements that the question of the fate of the French Islands will be addressed at a time when the Revolution challenges the settlers, but also the "free people of color" on the rise and, in the background, the mass of slaves.

Schedule

1) The Invention of the West Indies

- Jean-Pierre MOREAU, *The Lesser Antilles, from Christopher Columbus to Richelieu*, - Karthala, 1992. (Les Petites Antilles, de Christophe Colomb à Richelieu,)
- Eric ROULET, *The Company of the Islands of America (1635-1651)*, PUR, 2017. (La Compagnie de l'Amérique 1635-1651)

2) From Trafficking to Slavery

- Olivier PETRE-GRENOUILLEAU, *The Slave Trade, Global History Essay*, Gallimard, 2004. (Les traites négrières, essai d'histoire globale)
- Hugh THOMAS, *The Black Slave Trade*, Laffont, 2006. (La traite des Noirs)

3) The Range of Island Products

- Jean MEYER, *History of Sugar*, Desjonquères, 1989. (Histoire du Sucre)
- Frédéric MAURO, *History of Coffee*, Desjonquères, 1991. (Histoire du Café)

4 and 5) The Black Code

- Jean-François NIORT, *The Black Code*, Dalloz, 2012. (Code Noir,)
- Louis SALA-MOLINS, *The Black Code, or the Ordeal of Canaan*, PUF, 1987. (Le Code noir, ou le calvaire de Canaan,)

6) The Sugar King

- Erick NOEL, *Les Beauharnais, a Caribbean fortune (1756-1796)*, Droz, 2003. (Les Beauharnais, une fortune antillaise (1756-1796))

7) The Servile Condition

- Gabriel DEBIEN, *Slaves in the French West Indies (17th-18th centuries)*, Guadeloupe History Society and Martinique History Society, 1976. (Les esclaves aux Antilles françaises (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles))
- Frédéric REGENT, Gilda GONFIER and Bruno MAILLARD, *Free and Without Irons*, Fayard, (Libres et sans fers,)2015.
- Dominique ROGERS, *Voices of Slaves*, Karthala, 2015. (Voix d'esclaves,)

8) The White Revolution

- Gabriel DEBIEN, *The settlers of Santo Domingo and the Revolution. Essay on the Club Massiac*, Colin, 1954. (Les colons de Saint-Domingue et la Révolution. Essai sur le club Massiac)

9) The Fight of People of Color

- Cyril JAMES, *The Black Jacobins*, reed. Amsterdam, 2017. (Les Jacobins noirs)
- Books of the Rings of Memory No. 17, *Color and Freedom in French Colonial Space*, Karthala, 2017. (Cahiers des Anneaux de la Mémoire n°17, Couleur et Liberté dans l'espace colonial français,)

10) The Black Revolution

- Laurent DUBOIS, *The Avengers of the New World*, The Persetides, 2006. (Les Vengeurs du nouveau monde)
- Bernard GAINOT, *The Slave Revolution*, Vendémiaire, 2017. (La Revolution des Esclaves)

Evaluation

1. Written work: 50%

- Assignments completed at home
- Final Exam

2. Oral presentation: 20%

- Based on the development of a specific topic
- Based on a text analysis

3. Attendance: 30%

- Demonstrating work progress from one class to the next (readings with questions, quizzes, preparation, etc.)
- Participation in the course
- Attendance and punctuality

Bibliography

- Paul Butel, *Histoire des Antilles françaises*, Perrin, 2007. (History of the French Antilles)
- Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau, *Les traites négrières, essai d'histoire globale*, Gallimard, 2006. (The Slave Trade, A Global History Essay)
- Gabriel Debien, *Les esclaves dans les Antilles françaises*, Société d'Histoire de la Guadeloupe, 1974. (The slaves of the French Antilles)
- Frédéric Régent, *La France et ses esclaves*, Grasset, 2007. (France and It's Slaves) Plurial 2012.
- Nelly Schmidt, *Histoire du métissage*, La Martinière, 2003. (The History of Miscegenation)
- Annick Notter et Erick Noël, *Un monde créole*, La Geste, 2017. (A Creole World : Living in the Antilles in the 18th Century)