Postcolonial Francospheres: Memories of Colonialism in the French-Speaking World
Semester A (FRE4041/FRE5041)

French
School of Languages, Linguistics and Film
Queen Mary University of London

Semester: A
Level: Levels 4 and 5
Credit Value: 15

Lecture: online

Seminar: Wednesday, 9am-10am (Bancroft 3.24)

Module Organiser: Dr Rebekah Vince (Arts One Room 1.03)

Contact details:

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Advice and feedback hours: TBA

I may also be available at other times, by appointment. Please pop by my office or message/call me via Teams during my advice and feedback hours if there is anything that you would like to revise from the course, or if you have questions about the work you are preparing for the seminars or for your assignments.
**Content Description**
France’s former colonies are sites of postcolonial memories, explored in works of fiction by French-speaking writers from North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean. These writers often refuse the label of ‘Francophone’ as a colonial hangover, both resisting and engaging with the concept of a world literature in French, as they make the former colonial language their own. In this module, you will analyse novels, short stories, manifestos, and interviews by authors from across the postcolonial French-speaking world.

**Module Aims**
French-speaking writers from across the world have engaged with France’s colonial past through works of fiction. This course enables students to examine how authors across postcolonial francospheres situate themselves in relation to ‘La Francophonie’ and the ‘world literature in French’ debate through examining manifestos and interviews. Students have the opportunity to analyse works of fiction that deal with the legacies of colonialism across North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean, which persist to this day.

**Accessibility**
This module aims to provide an inclusive learning environment for all students through clear learning outcomes linked to set tasks, recorded lectures, and an online reading list, with as many materials as possible made available on QMPlus (using the SensusAccess tool). Individual needs to be met and necessary adjustments to be made as directed by DDS.

**Rationale**
This module will enrich student optionality in French, particularly at Level 4, and contribute to a more general diversification of the curriculum not only in French but in MLC overall, where postcolonial and non-metropolitan cultural productions take on a prominent role in the syllabus. This will also be offered at Level 5 to increase optionality and contribute to decolonising the curriculum across the University.

**Learning Outcomes**

**Academic Content:**
A1 Understanding of history and memory of France’s former colonies  
A2 Understanding of key debates in relation to ‘La Francophonie’  
A3 Familiarity with a range of texts from several French-speaking postcolonial contexts

**Disciplinary Skills** – able to:  
B1 Analyse primary texts with attention to content and style  
B2 Situate authors in relation to key debates regarding world literature in French  
B3 Engage with secondary literature and postcolonial theory

**Attributes:**  
C1 Ability to contextualise and relate texts to wider debates  
C2 Ability to support an argument through convincing evidence  
C3 Increased awareness of the ongoing legacies of colonialism and contemporary activism
Assessment
30% Manifesto (1,000 words) for/against ‘La Francophonie’, ‘Littérature-monde en français’, or ‘Francosphères’, situating one or two authors/texts in relation to one of these concepts – due 24 November 2021
70% Essay (2,000 words) – due Wednesday 5 January 2022

Indicative Reading List

Primary Texts


Secondary Texts


Forsdick, Charles, and David Murphy, *Postcolonial Thought in the French-speaking World* (Liverpool University Press, 2009)


Le Bris, Michel, and Jean Rouaud (eds.), *Pour une littérature-monde en français* (Gallimard, 2007)

Le Bris, Michel, and Jean Rouaud (eds.), *Pour une identité-monde* (Gallimard, 2010)

Martin, Patrick, and Christophe Drevet (eds.), *La Langue française vue des Amériques et de la Caraïbe: Entretiens* (Zellige, 2009)

Martin, Patrick, and Christophe Drevet (eds.), *La Langue française vue de la Méditerranée: Entretiens* (Zellige, 2009)


Provisional Structure

INTRODUCTION
Week 1
La Francophonie
Littérature-monde en français
Francosphères

MANIFESTOS
Week 2
Francophone literature
French and Francophone Studies
World literature (in French)

GUADÉLOUPE
Weeks 3-4
Maryse Condé, Le Cœur à rire et à pleurer
Maryse Condé’s contribution in Pour une littérature monde en français and interview in La Langue française vue des Amériques et de la Caraïbe: Entretiens

CONGO
Weeks 5-6
Alain Mabanckou, Le Sanglot de l’homme noir
Alain Mabanckou’s contribution in Pour une littérature monde en français and interview in La Langue française vue de l’Afrique et de l’océan indien

MAURITIUS
Weeks 8-9
Ananda Devi, Ève de ses décombres
Ananda Devi’s contribution in Pour une littérature monde en français, and interview in La Langue française vie de l’Afrique et de l’océan indien

ALGERIA
Weeks 10-11
Maïssa Bey, Entendez-vous dans les montagnes
‘Pourquoi la Méditerranée?’ in La Langue française vue de la Méditerranée

CONCLUSION
Week 12
Littératures du monde entier
Comparative essay writing