TWENTIETH-CENTURY FRANCE

This course will explore central issues in the history of France from the late nineteenth century to the first decades of the Fifth Republic. We begin with an examination of the Dreyfus Affair, an extraordinary national convulsion over anti-Semitism and a miscarriage of justice that left a powerful legacy for the rest of the twentieth century. We then turn to issues of race, religion, and gender in the French Empire and their implications for how we understand the Third Republic as an imperial regime. With this foundation we then look at the First World War, giving special attention to its effects on the economy, government, social classes, and the relationship between men and women, and between colonial peoples and the French empire. Our focus then shifts to the 1930s, when the country was shaken by the Great Depression and the struggle to forge a “popular front” against fascism. We then spend several weeks exploring the Second World War, its anticipation, the French defeat of 1940, the Occupation, Resistance, Liberation, and postwar reconstruction amid the early years of the Cold War. The Second World War also had an enormous impact on the Empire. We turn our attention to the wars over decolonization after 1945, especially in Algeria. The course concludes with a focus on Gaullism, the rebellion of May 1968, postcolonial immigration, the rise of the anti-immigrant National Front, the French role in the construction of the European Union, and the divisions besetting France in its new fin-de-siècle.

Although the course is organized around a chronological examination of the political history of France, we will stress social, cultural, and economic history as well. After all, the century of total wars also brought France its period of most rapid social and economic change. We will investigate issues that call for crossing the usual boundaries between these several kinds of history. We will also repeatedly consider French developments within three wider international contexts: Europe, the French Empire, and trans-Atlantic relations.

Because this is mainly a discussion course, its quality depends on everyone preparing the material and participating in class. Two papers are also required. The first will address the reading for one week during the course. This short analytical paper should be
five to six pages long. The final paper (due May 12) should be twelve to fifteen pages on
a topic of your own choosing. Grading in the course will be as follows:

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class discussion</td>
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<td>Short paper</td>
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<td>Final paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
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Articles and documents for required reading are available on the NYUClasses website. Books for required reading are available for purchase at the NYU Bookstore and are on reserve at Bobst Library. These books include:


*The Journal of Hélène Berr* (in either the English or French edition).


### Class Schedule

**Week 1 (Jan. 27) – Introduction**

Stoval, *Transnational France*, chs. 3-5.

**Week 2 (Feb. 3) – The Dreyfus Affair**

Stoval, *Transnational France*, ch. 5.

Michael Burns, ed., *France and the Dreyfus Affair*.


**Week 3 (Feb. 10) – The Third Republic as Empire**


**Week 4 (Feb. 17) – The First World War**

Stovall, Transnational France, ch. 7.

Leonard V. Smith, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, and Annette Becker, France and the Great War, 1914-1918.


**Week 5 (Feb. 24) – Gender and Race in Interwar France**

Stovall, Transnational France, ch. 8.


Victor Margueritte, The Bachelor Girl, selected pages.


**Week 6 (Mar. 2) – Fascism and the French Far Right**


René Rémond, The Right Wing in France from 1815 to de Gaulle, 273-99.


Begin reading The Journal of Hélène Berr.

**Week 7 (March 9) – Vichy’s National Revolution and Life in Occupied France**

Stovall, Transnational France, ch. 9.

Finishing reading The Journal of Hélène Berr.


Philippe Burrin, France under the Germans: Collaboration and Compromise, 177-209.


Philippe Pétain’s speeches of 17 June 1940.


Texts of Vichy laws regarding the status of Jews.

**Week 8 (March 23) – Resistance and Liberation**

Charles De Gaulle’s speeches of 18 June 1940, 6 June 1944, 25 August 1944, and 2 February 1945.

Marc Bloch, *Strange Defeat*, 126-78 (“A Frenchman Examines His Conscience”)


Jean-Paul Sartre, “The Republic of Silence.”


**Week 9 (Mar. 30) – Reconstruction: Postwar France as a New Society?**

Stovall, *Transnational France*, ch. 10.


**Week 10 (Apr. 6) – Postwar as Colonial War**


Frantz Fanon, “Unveiling Algeria,” in *A Dying Colonialism* (New York: Grove Press, 1965).


Film: Gillo Pontecorvo, “The Battle of Algiers”

**Week 11 (April 13) – The Algerian War and the Creation of the Fifth Republic**

Stovall, *Transnational France*, ch. 11.


Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*, 229-68.
Week 12 (April 20) – The French Sixties and the Rebellion of May ‘68

Required:

Stovall, Transnational France, ch. 12.


“Rethinking May 68,” in May ’68: Rethinking France’s Last Revolution, ed. Julian Jackson, Anna-Louise Milne, and James S. Williams, 3-16.


Week 13 (Apr. 27) – France after “Les Trente Glorieuses”


Emile Chabal, A Divided Republic: Nation, State and Citizenship in Contemporary France, selected chapters.


Week 14 (May 4) – Research Presentations and Course Wrap-Up
Papers due 5 p.m. Thursday, May 12.