Introduction to Postcolonial Theory

“Before postcolonial studies, Western scholarship was an embarrassment”
Susie O’Brien and Imre Szeman SAQ 100 iii (2001)

By the beginning of the twentieth century, a few European powers had colonized 80% of Asia and Africa. Nationalist movements during the latter half of the century led to territorial, but not necessarily economic, cultural and intellectual decolonization. The continuing cultural, political, and economic effects of colonialism, as well as new forms of colonialism and imperialism sanctioned on the global South constitute the field of postcolonial studies. We will study the ways in which postcolonial theory has intersected with and impacted diverse areas of inquiry such as feminism, historiography, ethnography, political science, and literature. The course will focus on the central concerns of postcolonial studies: the nature of colonial discourse, the articulation of revolutionary national consciousness, questions of subalternity and history, the relationship of postcolonial studies to gender studies, the vexing nature of settler colonialism, and the politics of contemporary colonialism. We will read the works of major revolutionaries and theorists and the debates and arguments about these works. The course will cover writings from and about the major parts of the world affected by imperialism: Europe, Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and the U.S.. A major goal of the course will be to see how postcolonial theory can be instrumental in affecting cultural changes in conditions of oppression today.

This is an intensive discussion course. Please come to class prepared to raise questions about the readings for the day. I am interested in your active responses to the materials you are reading.

Texts: Available at Orange and Blue Textbooks
Edward Said Orientalism
Homi Bhabha The Location of Culture
Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory
Partha Chatterjee The Nation and Its Fragments
Fatima Mernissi Beyond the Veil
Frantz Fanon The Wretched of the Earth
Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri Empire
Nawal El Saadawi Woman at Point Zero
George Lamming The Pleasures of Exile
Joe Sacco Palestine Collection

**Coursepack:** Available at Orange and Blue Textbooks.

**Course Requirements and Grade Distribution**

Eight position papers on the readings (2-3 pages): 15%
These should be critical and evaluative rather than summations of the readings. Raise questions here but be specific. Please do not turn these in late.

Two Oral Presentations (3-4 pages) 15%
* Choose any critical essay and evaluate its method of argumentation, its conclusions etc
* Give a report on a book, part of which we are reading in class. Summarize key chapters/arguments and, most importantly, critically evaluate its conclusions. A one page handout with the thesis and summary is required

Your oral presentation should be about 10-15 minutes.

**Term paper** (20 pages): 70%
These should be analytical papers about 20 pages in length (excluding Notes and Bibliography). They may be extensions of the work you’ve done for the presentation or entirely new papers. You may choose to analyze literary/cultural texts or do a theoretical analysis but the paper should engage heavily with postcolonial theory. Whatever option you choose, you need to do a complete MLA search on your subject and incorporate the research into your paper. Connect your critical angle to current scholarship on the subject.

As part of the requirements for the paper you need to:

1. Find conference with a Spring deadline for the CFP.
2. Write the required abstract for the conference, as well as the letter of submission.
If you are a Ph.D. student, I strongly urge you to think about your paper as a possible publication. You will need to look at some journal issues in order to see how you need to frame your argument.

**Attendance**
It is understood that graduate students do not skip class. If you are presenting a paper at a conference and have a conflict with the weekly meeting, please see me. There will be a grade penalty for missed classes.

**Syllabus:**
Aug 21: Introduction
http://upsidedownworld.org/main/mexico-archives-79/1794-us-military-funded-mapping-project-in-oaxaca-university-geographers-used-to-gather-intelligence
George Frederickson The Arrogance of Race, pp.218-221

The Languages of Postcolonial Theory

1. Colonial Discourse

Aug 28 Edward Said, Orientalism, pp. 1-110; 201-226; 284-328
Edward Said, Culture and Imperialism, pp. xi-31
Dennis Porter “Orientalism and Its Problems” Col. Disc. 150-162

Sept. 4 2. Hybridity and Subjectivity

Frantz Fanon “The Fact of Blackness”
Homi Bhabha “Interrogating Identity”, pp. 40-44 in Location
Homi Bhabha “The Other Question” in Location
Homi Bhabha “Of Mimicry and Man” in Location
Homi Bhabha “Signs Taken for Wonders” in Location
Anne McClintock from Imperial Leather (61-65) Electronic book

Nationalism

Revolutionary Consciousness, Culture, Language

Sept. 11: Aime Cesaire “Discourse on Colonialism” Colonial Discourse
Fanon “On National Culture” and “Concerning Violence” in Wretched
Amilcar Cabral “National Liberation and Culture” Colonial Discourse

Ngugi wa Thiong’o “The Language of African Literature” Colonial Discourse
Chinua Achebe “The African Writer and the English Language” in Colonial Discourse
Leopold Senghor “Negritude” Colonial Discourse

Questions of Subalternity and History

Sept. 18: From Benedict Anderson Imagined Communities
Edward Said “Foreword” from Selected Subaltern Studies
Ranajit Guha “Preface” in Packet
Ranajit Guha “On Some Aspects of Historiography in Colonial India”
Partha Chatterjee from The Nation and Its Fragments, pp. 3-34; 158-172; 220-240
Shahid Amin “Gandhi as Mahatama”

Sept 25 Gayatri Spivak “Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography”
Gayatri Spivak “Can the Subaltern Speak” in Colonial Discourse
** Johannes Fabian from Time and the Other 25-27; 143-144 To be added
Latin American Subaltern Studies Group-Founding Statement
Walter Mignolo from Local Histories/Global Designs, pp. 1-45; 183-192.
Dipesh Chakrabarty from Provincializing Europe, pp. 237-255. Electronic Book

Modes of Writing Back: Appropriation, Creolization

Oct 2 George Lamming The Pleasures of Exile, 9-50; 95-150; 160-230
Antonio Benitez-Rojo The Repeating Island, 1-22.

Postcoloniality and Gender

Feminism and Imperialism

Oct. 9: Chandra Mohanty “Under Western Eyes” Colonial Discourse
Sara Suleri “Woman Skin Deep” Colonial Discourse
Zillah Eisenstein “Feminisms and Afghan Women...”
The Case of the Veil

Fanon “Algeria Unveiled” in A Dying Colonialism
Fatima Mernissi Beyond the Veil pp. vii-64; 148-177
Megda Yegenoglu “Sartorial fabric-ations: The Enlightenment and Western Feminism...” from Colonial Fantasies 95-120
Leila Ahmed “Western Ethnocentrism and Perceptions of the Harem”
Elisabeth Ozdalga from The Veiling Issue. Official Secularism and Popular Islam in Modern Turkey 39-49; 77-85

Gender and Nation

Oct. 16 Ann Laura Stoler from Camal Knowledge and Imperial Power pp. 41-67
Anne McClintock, from Imperial Leather, pp. 1-8; 21-36; 352-388 Electronic Book
Partha Chatterjeee “The Nation and Its Women” in Nation and Its Fragments

Case Study : Nawal Ed Saadawi Woman at Point Zero
Settler Colonialism

Oct 23 from The Empire Writes Back (1-29)
Lorenzo Veracini “Introducing Settler Colonial Studies’ 1 (2011) 1-12

Questions of Indigeneity

Arnold Krupat “Postcolonialism, Ideology and Native American Literature”
Haunani Kay-Trask From a Native Daughter, pp. 1-40; 136-147 (e-book in library)
Taiaiake Alfred “Sovereignty” from Sovereignty Matters pp. 33-49
Leonie Pihama “Asserting Indigenous Theories of Change” from Sovereignty Matters, Pp. 191-209
Elizabeth Furness “Challenging the Myth of Indigenous Peoples...” from Rethinking Settler Colonialism, pp. 172-192
Case Study: William Apess
“Eulogy on King Philip” in Packet
“The Indian’s Looking glass for the White Man”

Settler Colonialism and Occupation: Palestine

Oct 30: Saree Makdisi “Outside In” from Palestine Inside Out 153-207
David Lloyd, “Settler Colonialism and the State of Exception: The Example of Israel/Palestine” Settler Colonial Studies voi 2 i (2012), 39-58
Joe Sacco Palestine

Globalization, Migration, Diaspora

Nov. 6: Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri Empire pp. xi-21; 42-63; 114-201; 407-413
Stuart Hall “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” in Colonial Discourse

The Global as Imperial

Nov. 13: Radhakrishnan “Globalization, Desire and the Politics of Representation”
Omar Dahbour “On Liberal Justifications for Empire”
Wallerstein from The Capitalist World Economy pp. 49-65
Samir Amin from Accumulation on a World Scale pp. 22-27
V.I Lenin from Imperialism pp. 62-67; 76-87

Location and Resistance
Technologies of the New Imperialism

1. Structural Adjustment Programs

Nov 20: David Harvey from The New Imperialism 145-161; 180-182
Bret Benjamin from Invested Interests pp. 46-58
Mike Davis Planet of Slums 11-19; 69-82; 90-94; 151-158
Aihwa Ong from Neoliberalism as Exception, pp. 1-27; 75-96; 241-243; 248-250

Student Presentation on Papers

2. Terror and Security: the future

Dec 4: Samuel Huntington “The Clash of Civilizations” in Packet
Edward Said “The Clash of Ignorance” in Packet
Amy Kaplan “Homeland Insecurities: Transformations of Language and Space”

From September 11 in History
Naomi Klein “The Shock Doctrine” 513-559 (from section no conspiracies required)
To be added
Anne McClintock “The Angel of Progress” Colonial Discourse pp. 291-305

Student Presentations on Papers

Dec 11: Final Papers Due
Reserve Books

Ed. Anthony C. Alessandrini Frantz Fanon: Critical Perspectives 1999
Benedict Anderson Imagined Communities Verso. 1983
Malek Alloula The Colonial Harem 1986
Samir Amin from Accumulation on a World Scale
Arjun Appadurai Modernity at Large Minnesota, 1996
Aravamudan, Srinivas Enlightenment Orientalism: Resisting the Rise of the Novel
Ed. Joanne Barker Sovereignty Matters
Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin The Empire Writes Back 1989
Bret Benjamin Invested Interests: Capital Culture and the World Bank. 2007
Homi Bhabha The Location of Culture. Routledge, 1994
Homi Bhabha Ed.Nation and Narration Routledge. 1990
Brody, David. From Visualizing American Empire: Orientalism and Imperialism in the
Philippines
Dipesh Chakrabarty Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference 2000
Partha Chatterjee The Nation and Its Fragments 1993
John Brown Childs Transcommunality: From the Politics of Conversion to an Ethics of Respect. 2003
Annie Coombes Rethinking Settler Colonialism 2006
Anne McClintock: Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context. Routledge 1995
Mike Davis Planet of Slums 2006
Zillah Eisenstein Against Empire 2004
Johannes Fabian Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object 1983
Frantz Fanon Black Skins White Masks Grove. 1967
Frantz Fanon A Dying Colonialism
Frantz Fanon The Wretched of the Earth Grove. 1963
Eds. Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Spivak Selected Subaltern Studies 1988
David Harvey The New Imperialism 2005
Evelyn Hu-DeHart Across the Pacific: Asian Americans and Globalization, 1999
Kumari Jayawardene Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World
George Lamming The Pleasures of Exile
Neil Lazarus Nationalism and Cultural Practice in the Postcolonial World Cambridge 1999
Reina Lewis Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem. 2005
Fatima Mernissi Beyond the Veil 1987
Albert Memmi The Colonizer and the Colonized Orion, 1965.
Mignolo, Walter. Local Histories/Global Designs
George Mosse Nationalism and Sexuality Wisconsin. 1985
Mary Louise Pratt: Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation Routledge,
1992
R. Radhakrishnan Theory in an Uneven World 2003
Rajeshwari Sunder Raian Real and Imagined Women: Gender, Culture and Postcolonialism 1993
Gayatri Spivak A Critique of Postcolonial Reason 1999
Gayatri Spivak In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics Methuen. 1987
Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman Colonial Discourse and Post- Colonial Theory
Gayatri Spivak The Postcolonial Critic 1990
Eyal Weizman, Eyal. Hollow Land: Israel’s Architecture of Occupation
N'gugi Wa Thiong'O, Decolonizing the Mind 1986