

**Johns Hopkins University
Dean's Teaching Fellowship 2015-2016**

Course number: AS.191.341

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Office hours: TBD and by appointment

**Postcolonialism, Postdevelopment:
Renewing Politics Through Critical Thinking**

You must be wondering: “what on earth is ‘postcolonialism’?” The definition of post colonialism is contentious as we will see in this course. Here I loosely refer to a series of theories and debates developed by intellectuals and activists in the ex-colonies, and also by third world intellectuals in the metropoles, in order to understand the legacies of colonialism in the organization of newly independent nations (in the case of Africa and Asia), or, in the case of Latin America, of nations that had already become politically, but not socially or economically, independent. More recently, postcolonialism has also been understood to include debates over the legacies of colonialism in Western countries (ie, racism, gender and class relations, etc). Many of the texts associated with postcolonial studies often write about alternative social, political, and philosophical concepts to the ones introduced by Western colonialism.

“What about ‘postdevelopment’? Have you gone mad?? And why do I have to read about postcolonialism to think about development?” It’s harder to say what “postdevelopment” is than what it suggests. There is no defined canon called “post development.” Instead, following the critique of Western dominance implied in postcolonial studies, the idea of postdevelopment refers to the work of authors who deconstruct the key concepts in development (by showing, for example, how the one-size-fits-all model has often been detrimental to many communities), and/or suggest that there are and can be alternative ways to organize society, combining both local and international knowledges.

This course is intended to expose you to some tools for thinking critically about life and politics by introducing you, first, to important texts in postcolonial studies, and second, to debates about development and its current criticisms. Critical thinking is not only about questioning the status quo, but understanding the very terms used to speak about the status quo.

This course is a seminar specially intended for more advanced undergraduate students. A good background in the social sciences and humanities is helpful, but not required. If you would like to acquire further background, please consult with me to make appropriate alternative arrangements. Because this is a seminar, we will focus on discussion. However, I will lecture when deemed appropriate, so as to assist you, on the one hand, to grasp the more difficult concepts and theories dealt with in the readings, and on the other, to become acquainted with the general historical and political contexts relevant to each week. You are expected to complete the assigned course material (both readings and videos) in a timely fashion, and to contribute actively to our weekly discussions. Please notify me if, for any reason, you will need to be absent from class. More than one unexcused absence may negatively affect your final grade. Finally, do not hesitate to come to my office hours, or to contact me for an appointment if you would like to discuss any concerns you have regarding the course, or if you would just like to chat.

Assignments:

1) Bi-weekly news posts, starting on the second week: you will be asked to post two different news articles on the same, or related, topic having to do with International Relations, Development, or another topic discussed in class, from two different sources. Please write a (roughly) 150-200 words summary of the news and how the different sources address (or not) them differently. Being concise yet to the point is a valued skill you should practice. The news articles do not have to be diametrically opposed in their views on the topic, sometimes differences are small and nuanced and that is ok too. You are welcome and encouraged (but not required) to read sources from outside of the US, and also in languages other than English. For your reference, below you will find a list of news sources in English from around the globe:

BBC World Service

<http://www.bbcworldservice.com/>

The Guardian

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/>

Al-Jazeera

<http://english.aljazeera.net/>

Al-Arabiya

<http://www.alarabiya.net/english/>

Der Spiegel

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/>

Moscow Times

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/index.htm>

Latin American Press

<http://www.lapress.org/index.asp>

Afrik Daily

<http://en.afrik.com/>

Agence France-Presse

<http://www.afp.com/afpcor/en/>

The Japan Times

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/>

The Times of India

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>

China Daily

<http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/>

2) Seminar presentation: one time during the semester, you will sign up with one of your peers to present on a topic related to that week's material. This can include, but is not limited to:

researching and sharing material relevant to that week's topic, proposing questions for discussion, linking your topic with the assigned readings, facilitating discussion, etc. The format is flexible, but please discuss with me any potential topics and materials you have in mind on the week prior to your presentation.

3) Three 3 page (double-spaced) response papers throughout the semester. These papers are intended for you to reflect more deeply on the class material, i.e., why were you particularly moved by a specific point in the readings? How do different readings speak to each other? This is a chance for you to refine and delve into particular points of discussion, rather than summarizing specific readings. The first response paper is due on Friday of week 4; the second, on Friday of week 7; and the third, on Friday of week 10, all by 5pm (dates are noted on syllabus). Your response papers may be submitted via email.

4) A five to seven pages (double-spaced) final paper. You should discuss the topic of your interest with me. Alternatively you will have the choice of proposing a final project with a different format, and of working in pairs or groups, but if you choose to do so, you need to consult with me before hand to discuss your ideas. This paper will be due on Wednesday, May 4, at 4pm. PLEASE NOTE: for your final I will ask you to submit a hard copy. If you will be out of town when the paper is due, please make alternative arrangements with me.

Grade distribution:

Bi-weekly news posts: 10%
Seminar presentation: 10%
Participation: 20%
Three response papers: 30%
Final paper/project: 30%

Note on the use of laptops:

Studies show that the use of laptops can be distracting to both the user and his/her peers. The use of laptops during the seminar is highly discouraged, particularly because we will focus on discussion and your participation is essential for the success of the course. However, if for personal reasons you must use a laptop, please notify me.

Note on Academic Ethics:

The University's official Ethics Statement: "The Strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery, and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition." For more information, please see <http://ethics.jhu.edu>.

Readings and other materials:

There is no required book purchase for this class. Most of the readings will be either available on the Internet or through a Dropbox folder I have set up for this course.

Part I - What is the Postcolonial?

Week 1 - Introduction

January 26

Getting to know each other

January 28

Galeano, Eduardo. (1997). To be like them. *The Post-Development Reader*, 214-22.

View: TED Talk by Chimamanda Adichie "The Danger of a Single Story," available at http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en

Week 2 - Conceptual Background

February 2

Grovogui, Siba N. (2013). "Postcolonialism." In Dunne, T., Kurki, M., & Smith, S. (Eds.). *International Relations Theories*. Oxford University Press. pp 247-265

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. (2008). *Provincializing Europe : postcolonial thought and historical difference*. New ed. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press. "Introduction: The Idea of Provincializing Europe," pp. 3-23

February 4

Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, Chapter 1 "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History," pp. 27-46.

Young, Robert. (2001). *Postcolonialism : an historical introduction*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers. Chapter 5, "Postcolonialism") pp. 57-69

Week 3 - Post-structuralism and Post-colonialism

February 9

Zehfuss, Maja. (2013). "Critical theory, poststructuralism, and postcolonialism" in W. Carlsnaes, T. Risse, & B. Simmons (Eds.), *Handbook of international relations*. (2nd ed., pp. 145-170). London: SAGE Publications Ltd. pp 145-169.

Edkins, Jenny. (2007). "Poststructuralism" in Griffiths, M. *International relations theory for the twenty-first century : an introduction*. London: Routledge, pp. 88-98.

February 11

Foucault, Michel, and Paul Rabinow. *The Foucault Reader*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984. Read "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," pp. 76-100.

Week 4 – Orientalism

February 16

Said, Edward. W. (2003a). *Orientalism*. 25th Anniversary ed. New York: Vintage Books. Introduction and sections of Ch. 1 (pp. 1-48).

February 18

Said, (2003b). Preface to the twenty fifth anniversary edition, pp xv-xxx. (Also available at "<http://www.counterpunch.org/2003/08/05/orientalism/>") and Afterward, pp 329-352.

Al-Azm, S. J. (1981). Orientalism and Orientalism in reverse. *Khamsin*, 8(1981), 5-26.

REMINDER: First response paper due on Friday, February 19, at 5pm.

Week 5 - Subaltern Studies (1): South Asia

February 23

Guha, R., & Spivak, G. Chakravorty. (1988). *Selected Subaltern Studies*. New York: Oxford University Press. Read "Preface," "Historiography of Colonial India," and "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency" pp 35-84

February 25

Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, Chapter 3 "Translating Life-Worlds into Labor and History," pp. 72-96.

Week 6 - Subaltern Studies (2): Latin America

March 1

Latin American Subaltern Studies Group. (1993). Founding Statement. *Boundary 2*, 20(3), 110–121. <http://doi.org/10.2307/303344>

Rodríguez, Ileana. (2001). "Reading Subalterns Across Texts, Disciplines and Theories: From Representation to Recognition," in *The Latin American subaltern studies reader*. Durham: Duke University Press. pp. 1-34.

March 3

Chanady, Amaryll. (2008). The Latin American Postcolonialism Debate in a Comparative Context, in: Moraña, M., Dussel, E. & Jáuregui, CA. *Coloniality at Large. Latin America and the*

Postcolonial Debate, United States of America: Duke University Press. pp. 417-434.

Coronil, Fernando. (1996). Beyond occidentalism: Toward nonimperial geohistorical categories. *Cultural Anthropology : Journal of the Society for Cultural Anthropology*, 11, 51-87.

Part II - Modernization, Development, Post-Development

Week 7 - Modernization vs. Dependency Theory

March 8

Rostow, W. W. (1990). *The stages of economic growth : a non-communist manifesto*. 3rd ed. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2 "The Five Stages of Growth: a Summary"

Valenzuela and Valenzuela. (1978). "Modernization and Dependency: Alternative Perspectives in the Study of Latin American Underdevelopment," *Comparative Politics* 10:4 (July 1978): 535-57

March 10

Grosfoguel, Ramón (2008). "Developmentalism, Modernity, and Dependency Theory in Latin America." In Moraña, M., Dussel, E. D., & Jáuregui, C. A. *Coloniality at large : Latin America and the postcolonial debate*. Durham: Duke University Press. pp. 307-334.

Sachs, Wolfgang. (2010). *The development dictionary : a guide to knowledge as power*. 2nd ed. London: Zed Books. Read "Introduction"

REMINDER: Second response paper due on Friday, March 11, at 5pm.

Spring Break

Week 8 - Development and its discontents (1): Deconstructing key concepts

March 22

Sachs, Wolfgang. (2010). *The development dictionary*. Read "Helping," "Needs," and "Poverty," pp. 55-73, 95-110, 174-194.

March 24

Ferguson, James (1997) "Development and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho" in *The Post-Development Reader*, ed. Majid Rahnema and Victoria Bawtree. London: Zed Books.

Fleischacker, S. (2004). *A short history of distributive justice*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard

University Press. Read the introduction, pp. 1-16.

View: "The Price of Aid"

Week 9 - Development and its discontents (2): Sustainable Development and Ecology

March 29

Conca, K., & Dabelko, G. D. (2014). *Green Planet Blues: Critical Perspectives on Global Environmental Politics*. 5th ed. New York: Westview Press. Chapter 1 "The Limits to Growth," Ch. 16 "Toward Sustainable Development," and Ch. 18 "Sustainable Development: A Critical Review."

Read E. F. Schumacher, "Buddhist Economics." Available at
<<http://www.centerforneweconomics.org/buddhist-economics>>

March 31

Conca, K., & Dabelko, G. D. (2014). *Green Planet Blues*. Read chapter 18 "Sustainable Development: A Critical Review"

Chakrabarty, D.. (2009). The Climate of History: Four Theses. *Critical Inquiry*, 35(2), 197–222.
<http://doi.org/10.1086/596640>

View: "La Abuela Grillo"

Week 10 - Development and its discontents (3): Postdevelopment?

April 5

Escobar, Arturo. (2012). *Encountering development: the making and unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. Preface to the 2012 edition, ch. 1 and 6, pp. xv-xxxiv, 3-20, 212-226.

April 7

Gibson-Graham, J. K. (2006). *A postcapitalist politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Read the introduction and chapter 3. pp. xix-xxxvii, and 53-78.

View: "The Story of Stuff"

REMINDER: Third response paper due on Friday, April 8, at 5pm.

Part III – Renewing Concepts

Week 11 - Translating between worlds

April 12

Harding, Sandra. (2015). *Objectivity and Diversity: Another Logic of Scientific Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Read Chapter 4, "Do Micronesian Navigators Practice Science?", pp. 80-104.

Sahlins, M. (2013). *Stone Age Economics*. 2nd ed. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis. Selections to be announced.

April 14

Mignolo, Walter. (2012). *Local histories/global designs : coloniality, subaltern knowledges, and border thinking*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. Read Chapter 2, pp. 91-126.

View: "Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change"

Week 12 – (Cont.)

April 19

Avelar, Idelber. (2014). Contemporary Intersections of Ecology and Culture: On Amerindian Perspectivism and the Critique of Anthropocentrism. *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, 48(1), 105-121.

Blaser, Mario. (2010). *Storytelling globalization from the Chaco and beyond*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Selections to be announced.

April 21

Spivak, G. Chakravorty. (2012). *An aesthetic education in the era of globalization*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. Read chapter 3 "How to Read a 'Culturally Different' Book," and "Translation as Culture."

Week 13 - Open

April 26 and April 28 – TBD with class

FINAL PAPER DUE ON WEDNESDAY MAY 4 AT 4PM.

ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!