

English 8386

Topics in Postcolonial Studies:

Postcolonial Theory and “Third World” Intellectuals

section #05019

Spring 06

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Required Texts:

Adonis. *Introduction to Arabic Poetics*.

Chrisman and Williams, eds. *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory*.

Flaubert, Gustave. *Flaubert in Egypt: A Sensibility on Tour*.

Kipling, Rudyard. *Kim*.

Macgoye, Marjorie Oludhe. *Coming to Birth*.

Mernissi, Fatima. *The Veil and the Male Elite*.

Rodney, Walter. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism*.

Salih, Tayib. *Season of Migration to the North*.

Shiva, Vandana. *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development*.

All other readings are available via the “packet” outside my office door.

Course Description: This course has a two-fold agenda. The first unit of the course will devote itself to reading, discussion and analysis of some of the major texts of postcolonial theory. Around midterm, we will turn our attention to the writing of “Third World” intellectuals on the following broad topics: history, gender, poetics, and space. At the most general level, the primary contrast between the two units would be that postcolonialism began as a critique of western thought, with virtually no ambition to describe the thinking, criticism, and cultural production of postcolonial societies, whereas for intellectuals of the “Third World,” the concreteness of history, culture and thought in their local environments is unavoidable. We will trace the development of postcolonial theory from its self-reflexive, West-centered origins through the various evolutions and backlashes that have been going on more recently over the course of Unit 1. Unit 2 will sample the smallest tip of the iceberg of third world intellectual histories in order to present a jumping off point for comparison and contrast between the trendy postcolonial studies movement and the cultural production of the actually existing postcolonial world. At the end of the semester, we will read two novels in order to consider the relevance of the criticism we have read to the literary study that is our primary motivation.

Goals: By the end of the two units we should be (preliminarily) equipped to compare and contrast together the discussion of the Global South produced by postcolonial theorists on the one hand with major themes in the writing of “Third World” intellectuals on the other. The goal is to equip the student to understand, deploy, and/or critique the language of postcolonial theory—a very important skill in literary studies in the United States today—but also to explore the ideas, traditions and histories of the Nonwestern World on their own terms, without having to constantly run these traditions through a Euro-American filter.

Course Requirements: Each student will give two brief oral presentations, write a short paper during the semester, and write a longer paper at the end of the course. Note that the first oral presentation will also require a Friday afternoon conference the previous week.

Grades: Your final grade will be calculated as follows, Final paper 60%, short paper 20%, presentations 10% each.

Absences: Beginning with your third absence, a minus will be added to your final cumulative grade for each class that you miss.

Schedule of Readings:

UNIT 1 POSTCOLONIAL THEORY

1/17 **Backgrounds:**

1/24 Lane, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* Chapters 3, 6, and 14#;
Flaubert, *Flaubert in Egypt*, chapters 1,5,6, 10, and Editor's Epilogue

1/31 **Edward Said:** Foucault, "The Orders of Discourse"#; Said, *Orientalism* pp1-197

2/7 Said, *Orientalism* pp. 199-end; Porter, "*Orientalism* and Its Problems"*; Ahmad, "*Orientalism* and After"*, Kurtz, "Statement of Stanley Kurtz"#

2/14 Kipling, *Kim* †

2/21 **Gayatri Spivak:** Derrida, "Letter to a Japanese Friend"#; Davis and Gross, "GCS and the Ethos of the Subaltern"#; Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak"*; "The Post-colonial Critic"#; "Globalcities: Terror and Its Consequences"#

2/28 **Classics:** Said, "Yeats and Decolonization"#; Bhabha, "Remembering Fanon"*; Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes"*; McClintock, "The Angel of Progress"*; Appadurai, "Playing with Modernity: The Decolonization of Indian Cricket"# †

3/7 **Revisions:** Ramazani, "Introduction" to *The Hybrid Muse*#; Hardt & Negri, "Symptoms of Passage"#; Cleary, "Misplaced Ideas?"#; Shankar, "Midnight's Orphans"#; O'Connor, "Preface for a Post-Post Colonial Criticism"#

3/14 SPRING BREAK

UNIT II THIRD WORLD INTELLECTUALS

3/21 **Poetics:** Rama, "Processes of Transculturation in Latin American Narrative"#; Ngugi, "The Language of African Literature"*; Adonis *Introduction to Arabic Poetics* chapters 2 and 4 †

3/28 **History:** Dos Santos, "The Structure of Dependence"#; Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, chapters 4-6; Guha, "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India"#

4/4 **Gender:** Mernissi, *The Veil and the Male Elite* pages 1-101; Shiva, *Staying Alive* Chapters 1-3 †

4/11 **Space:** Mariátegui, "The Problem of the Land"#; B. Roy (dir.), *Do Bigha Zamin*

4/18 **Novel:** Salih, *Season of Migration to the North*

4/25 Macgoye, *Coming to Birth*

5/7 FINAL PAPER DUE

*see Chrisman and Williams

#see Packet

†presentation panel date