

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Postcolonial Theory - 54356

Last update 25-08-2019

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Cultural Studies-Individual Graduate Prog.

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Louise Bethlehem

Coordinator Email: louise.bethlehem@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesday 15:00-16:00

Teaching Staff:

Prof Louise Bethlehem

Course/Module description:

Post-colonial theory explores the impact of European colonization upon the societies which it subjugated, recognizing that the cultural and political struggles which colonization set in motion continue to influence the present. Central concerns relate to the impact of European languages, institutions and epistemologies on colonized societies. The foundational gesture of postcolonialism consisted in uncovering the link between Western knowledge systems, exemplified in discourses such as Said's "Orientalism," and the maintenance of colonial power. As a historiographical method, postcolonialism orients itself to the struggles of all sectors of colonial society, both elite and popular, in elucidating colonial resistance. It is concerned with forms of resistance on the part of the colonized, and explores the struggles over racialized identity and gender, as well as representations of place and history in a colonial setting. This course seeks to elucidate these intersecting themes through an exploration of cinematic representations of the colonial experience read in relation to formative theoretical texts of the postcolonial paradigm.

Course/Module aims:

The course aims to present central concepts of postcolonial theory and to discuss the historical contexts which gave rise to them. Such concepts include Franz Fanon's phenomenological exploration of "blackness" and his spatialized reading of colonial history; Edward Said's "Orientalism"; Homi Bhabha's notions of "ambivalence," "mimicry" and "hybridity"; the concept of "subalternity" that the Subaltern Studies collective developed on the basis of the work of Antonio Gramsci; the gendering of subalternity in the work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak; as well as the correlation between colonialism and nationalism in the work of Dipesh Chakrabarty.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to apply the postcolonial lexicon to the analysis of literary and cinematic texts. The student will recognize the common analytic basis of a variety of theoretical interventions on the part of such scholars as Fanon, Said, Bhabha, Spivak and Chakrabarty, among others.

Attendance requirements(%):

100%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Weekly seminars based on the

reading of theoretical sources. Analysis of cinematic works. Independent peer evaluation assignments.

Course/Module Content:

Weekly Schedule of Readings

Week 1 29/10 Introduction: Furrows of Modernity

Extracts from Thomas Pynchon, Gravity's Rainbow (1973).

"The White Man's Burden" Rudyard Kipling "The White Man's Burden"

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_White_Man's_Burden

Week 2 5/11 Said's Orientalism

Said, Edward. 2006 (1978). "Orientalism" in The Postcolonial Studies Reader, edited by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, 24-27 (London and New York: Routledge).

Shohat, Ella. 2006. "Travelling 'Postcolonial'," Third Text, 20:3-4, 287-291, DOI:10.1080/09528820600855402

Week 3 12/11

Theme 1 Ontology: Gender and Embodiment

Black Ontologies

Fanon, Frantz. 2008 (1967). "The Fact of Blackness," in Black Skin, White Masks. Trans. C. L. Markmann, (London: Pluto Press).

Mbembe, Achille. 2012 "Metamorphic Thought: The Works of Frantz Fanon," African Studies 71(1): 19-28.

Week 4 19/11

Black Ontologies, continued

Foreword to the 1986 edition of _Black Skin, White Masks_ by Homi K. Bhaba;

Foreword to the 2008 edition by Ziauddin Sardar. (London: Pluto Press).

Week 5 26/11

Fetish, Stereotype, Ambivalence

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. 2007. "Ambivalence"; "Hybridity"; "Mimicry" in Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts (New York and London: Routledge). [Each term listed there separately].

Freud, S. 2001 (1922). "Medusa's head." In The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Trans. under the general editorship of J. Strachey, in collaboration with A. Freud, assisted by A. Strachey and A. Tyson. Vol. 18, 273 -74. London: Vintage, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.

Huddart, David. 2006. "The Stereotype," in Homi K. Bhabha (London and New York: Routledge).

Week 6 3/12

Chocolat Screening of extracts from Claire Denis Chocolat (1988)

Muller, Adam. 2007. "Notes towards a Theory of Nostalgia: Childhood and the Evocation of the Past in Two European 'Heritage' Films. *New Literary History*, 37(4): 739-760.

Watson, Ruth. 2007. "Beholding the Colonial Past in Claire Denis's *Chocolat*" in *Black and White in Color: African History on Screen*, edited by Vivian Beckford-Smith and Richard Mendelsohn, 185-202 (Oxford: James Currey).

Optional Hebrew Reading

רופין, דפנה

2006 "במאיות לבנות ונוסטלגיה קולוניאלית" תיאוריה וביקורת 29: 2006 9-30

Week 7 10/12

Othering and Otherness

Bhabha, Homi K.

1994 "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism" in *The Location of Culture* 66-92 (London and New York: Routledge).
[Extracts]

Theme 2 Epistemology: History and Archive

Week 8 17/12

Being "In" History

Kincaid, Jamaica. 1997. "In History," *Callaloo* 20(1):1-7.

Week 9 24/12

Subaltern Studies

Prakash, Gyan. "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism," in *Cultures of Empire*, edited by Catherine Hall, 120-136. (New York: Routledge).

Week 10 31/12

Sovereignty and History

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 1994. "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for Indian Pasts," in *The New Historicism Reader* edited by H. Aram Veeser, 342-69 (New York and London: Routledge).

Week 11 7/1

Gender and the Nation Screening of extracts from Deepa Mehta Fire (1996)
Desai, Jigna. 2002. "Homo on the Range: Mobile and Global Sexualities," *Social Text* 20(4). http://muse/jhu.edu/journals/social_text/v020/20.4desai.html

Kapur, Ratna. 1999. "Cultural Politics of Fire," *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. 34 , No. 21 (May 22-28, 1999), pp. 1297-1299. URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4407992> DOI 10.2307/4407992

Optional

Patel, Geeta. 2005. "Home, Homo, Hybrid: Translating Gender," in *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, edited by Henry Schwartz and Sageeta Ray. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell).

Week 12 21/1

Subaltern Aporias

Morris, Rosalind. 2010. "Introduction," in *Can the Subaltern Speak: Reflections on the History of an Idea*, edited by Rosalind Morris, 1-17. (New York: Columbia UP).

Week 13 21/1

Can the Subaltern Speak?

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1988 (1985). "Can the subaltern speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, eds. C. Nelson and L. Grossberg, 271 -313. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press).

Optional: Sanders, Mark. 2006. "Literature, Reading and Transnational Literacy," in *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: Live Theory*, 1-29. (London: Continuum).

Week 14 28/1

Can the Subaltern Swank?

Bethlehem, Louise. 2006. "Towards a Different Hybridity." English translation of: בית-לחם, לואיז,

2006 "לקראת היברידיות אחרת", תיאוריה וביקורת 29: 193-204

[http://theory-and-](http://theory-and-criticism.vanleer.org.il/NetisUtils/srvrutil_getPDF.aspx/3CfPMz/%2F%2F29-10.pd)

[criticism.vanleer.org.il/NetisUtils/srvrutil_getPDF.aspx/3CfPMz/%2F%2F29-10.pd](http://theory-and-criticism.vanleer.org.il/NetisUtils/srvrutil_getPDF.aspx/3CfPMz/%2F%2F29-10.pd)

Required Reading:

Anderson, Benedict

1983 "Introduction," and "Cultural Roots," in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso).

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin

2007 "Ambivalence"; "Hybridity"; "Mimicry" in *Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (New York and London: Routledge). [Each term listed there separately].

Bhabha, Homi K.

1994 "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of

Colonialism" in *The Location of Culture* 66-92 (London and New York: Routledge).

Chakrabarty, Dipesh

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Fanon, Frantz

2008 (1967). "The Fact of Blackness," in *Black Skin, White Masks*. Trans. C. L. Markmann, Foreword to the 1986 edition by Homi K. Bhaba; Foreword to the 2008 edition by Ziauddin Sardar. (London: Pluto Press).

Freud, S. 2001 (1922). "Medusa's head." In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Trans. under the general editorship of J. Strachey, in collaboration with A. Freud, assisted by A. Strachey and A. Tyson. Vol. 18, 273 -4. London: Vintage, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.

Huddart, David

2006 "The Stereotype," in Homi K. Bhabha (London and New York: Routledge).

Kincaid, Jamaica

1997 "In History," *Callaloo* 20(1):1-7.

<http://muse.jhu.edu/login?auth&eq;0&type&eq;summary&url&eq;/journals/callaloo/v024/24.2kincaid.pdf>

Landry, Donna and Gerald Maclean

1996 "Introduction: Reading Spivak," in *The Spivak Reader* (London and New York: Routledge).

Mbembe, Achille

2012 "Metamorphic Thought: The Works of Frantz Fanon," *African Studies* 71(1): 19-28.

Morris, Rosalind

2010 "Introduction," in *Can the Subaltern Speak: Reflections on the History of an Idea*, edited by Rosalind Morris, 1-17. (New York: Columbia UP).

Muller, Adam

2007 "Notes towards a Theory of Nostalgia: Childhood and the Evocation of the Past in Two European 'Heritage' Films. *New Literary History*, 37(4): 739-760.

Noyes, John

1989 "The Capture of Space: An Episode in a Colonial Story by Hans Grim," *Pretexts* 1(1): 52-63.

Prakash, Gyan. "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism," in *Cultures of Empire*, edited by Catherine Hall, 120-136. (New York: Routledge).

Rajan, Rajeswari Sunder 2010 "Speaking of (Not) Hearing: Death and the Subaltern," in *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea*," edited by Rosalind C. Morris, 117-138 (New York: Columbia University Press).

Said, Edward

2006 [1978] "Orientalism" in *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*, edited by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth

Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, 24-27 (London and New York: Routledge).

Sanders, Mark. 2006. "Literature, Reading and Transnational Literacy," in Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: *Live Theory*, 1-29. (London: Continuum).

Shohat, Ella

(2006) Travelling 'Postcolonial', *Third Text*, 20:3-4, 287-291, DOI: 10.1080/09528820600855402

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty

1988 (1985). "Can the subaltern speak?" In *Marxism and the interpretation of culture*, eds. C. Nelson and L. Grossberg, 271 -313. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Stoler, Ann Laura

2002 "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender and Morality in the Making of Race" in *Carnal*

Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule (Berkeley: University of California Press).

Watson, Ruth

2007. "Beholding the Colonial Past in Claire Denis's *Chocolat*" in *Black and White in Color*:

African History on Screen, edited by Vivian Beckford-Smith and Richard Mendelsohn,

185-202 (Oxford: James Currey).

Additional Reading Material:

Recommended additional reading

Anderson, Benedict

1983 "Introduction," and "Cultural Roots," in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso).

Quayson, Ato

2000 *Postcolonialism: Theory, Practice or Process* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell).

Said, Edward

1978 *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon).

Young, Robert J.C.

2003 *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 10 %

Project work 60 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 30 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information:

Regular weekly attendance is obligatory. Students are expected to show close familiarity with the primary and theoretical texts under discussion. Completing the annotated bibliography assignment is a precondition for handing in a final paper in the course.