

Political Thought for Colonization and Decolonization

Year: 2023/2024

Semester: Winter-Spring

Credits: 9

Hours: 75 (72 + 3)

Professor: Prof. Tommaso Visone <https://www.unilink.it/en/university/teaching-staff/tommaso-visone>

Level : Graduate

Course Description:

Addressed to International Cooperation students, this course aims to: 1) analyze the main discourses that characterized the self-narration(s) that Europeans (and, since XIX century, also “Americans”) built on their hegemonic world-action after 1492; 2) deepen postcolonial and decolonial discourses, focusing on the use of concepts such as civilization, colonization, sovereignty, hegemony, nationalism, barbarism, identity, etc.; 3) teach students to recognize “colonial”, “post-colonial” and “de-colonial” narrations as products of specific context(s) marked by peculiar conflicts/debates and 4) introduce critically students to a critical theory of geography and cultural representations, analyzing concepts such as The East, the West, Europe, Asia, America, Latin-America, ecc.

Learning outcomes:

The aim is that at the end of this course, the students will:

- 1) Be familiar with some of the most important events, concepts and texts in the history of colonial, post colonial and decolonial thought.
- 2) Have the reflexive and critical ability to engage different historical discourses and contexts.
- 3) Analyze contemporary issues in the light of the critical approaches debated in the course (as “geopolitics of knowledge”; “cancel culture”, etc.).
- 4) Develop their own reasoned views on the theoretical and political issues involved.

Basic Schedule

- 1) Opening Lesson: *Creating the world. Maps, meanings and coloniality*
- 2) *What is colonialism ? History of a concept*
- 3) *-Colonial discourse in the XVI century.*
- 4) *Colonial discourse in the XVII century*
- 5) *Colonial discourse in the XVIII century*
- 6) *Colonial discourse in the XIX century*
- 7) *Colonial discourse in the XX century*
- 8) *What is decolonization ? History of a concept*
- 9) *Thinking against colonialism 1: Cesaire*
- 10) *Thinking against colonialism 2: Fanon*
- 11) *Algerian Debate (Camus, Aron, Sartre, Bennabi, Fanon)*
- 12) *Cuban Debate (Castro, Guevara, Sartre, Franqui)*

- 13) *Post-colonialism classics 1: Said*
- 14) *Post-colonial classics 2: Hall*
- 15) *From Postcolonialism to decolonialism (Spivak, Bernal, Chakrabarty, Mbembe)*
- 16) *Decolonial Thought and Geopolitics of Knowledge: Quijano, Dussel, Mignolo and Dabashi.*
- 17) Special focus: *South American thinkers and the idea of Latin America* (Sarmiento, Alberdi, Torres Caicedo, Bilbao, Marti, Mariategui, Vasconcelos, Kusch, Dussel).
- 18) Special Focus: *Imagining Europe: colonial heritages and decolonial transformations.*
- 19) Special Focus: *“French” vs “Anglo-Saxons” scholars: a 2020’s debate on Islamism and Decolonial studies.*
- 20) Final lesson: *Re-Thinking the World: Decolonial thought and its critics.*

Methodology: Frontal lessons + laboratory (participatory learning and presentations in laboratories).

Grading Policy:

Three possibilities in order to pass the exam: **1) Final Oral exam** (three books, parts A, B, C) or **2) half oral exam** (two books parts A and B) **an assignment 3) one third via oral exam** (one book part A), **one third with an assignment and one third with a laboratory’s presentation.**

Assignment: Essay of 3000 words - equivalent of maximum 10 pages (Times New Roman, size 12) - on a topic chosen from a set of questions shared with you during the course. This is valid for each assignment.

Laboratory’s Presentation: Propose a relevant topic with an abstract and, after the schedule, hold a 30 minutes presentation for all the class. Then answer to colleagues and professor questions. F.A.Q.: You can propose your topic only after the first five class as attending student and at least one months before the end of the course. Remember that there are few slots, thus who arrives first takes it. You can do it in couple with a colleague.

Textbooks (Oral exam) :

Part A, Classics

At least one text from this group

Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Grove Weidenfeld, New York, 1991 <http://abahlali.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Frantz-Fanon-The-Wretched-of-the-Earth-1965.pdf>

Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Penguin Books, London, 2003 [http://www.odsg.org/Said_Edward\(1977\)_Orientalism.pdf](http://www.odsg.org/Said_Edward(1977)_Orientalism.pdf)

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, 2006. http://rebels-library.org/files/imagined_communities.pdf

Anthony Padgen, *Lords of all the World: ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France c.1500-c.1800*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1995

Walter Mignolo, *The idea of Latin America*, Wiley-Blackwell, Hoboken, 2005

Part B, Contemporary Debate

At least one text from this group

Pankaj Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire. The Revolt against the West and the Remaking of Asia*, Picador, London, 2012

Hamid Dabashi, *Can Non-Europeans Think ?*, Zed Books, London, 2015

Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Latin America. The allure and the power of an idea*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2017.

Pierre Andre Taguieff, "Hucksters of the "Postcolonial Business" in Search of Academic Respectability: Reflections on Contemporary Pseudo Anti-Racism in France" in *Telos Paul Piccone Institute Occasional papers*, n.2, December 2020 <http://www.telosinstitute.net/pubs/papers/op2-taguieff.pdf>

Achille Mbembe, *The Earthly Community: Reflections on the Last Utopia*, V2_Publishing, Rotterdam, 2022

Part C, Class Debate or further readings

For attending students :

A text assigned individually.

For non-attending students, at least one text between :

Hamid Dabashi, *The Emperor is Naked. On the inevitable demise of Nation State*, ZED Books, London, 2020

Walter Mignolo and Chaterine Walsh, *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2018 (eventually only for those who choose Taguieff in part B)

Marcelo Gullo Omodeo, *Madre Patria. Desmontando la leyenda negra desde Bartolomé de las Casas hasta el separatismo catalán*, Planeta, Barcelona, 2021

Pierre André Taguieff, *L'imposture décoloniale. Science imaginaire et pseudo-antiracisme*, L'Observatoire, Paris, 2020

Susan Neiman, *Left is not Woke*, Polity Press, London, 2023.