Comparative Literature: Comparative Colonialities (16:195:516)
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey

Professor Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel
Mondays 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Comparative Literature Seminar Room, 195 College Avenue
Office Hours: Mondays 5 to 6 or by arrangement
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Course Description:
This course reviews proposes a comparative study of colonialism by studying examples of Spanish, Anglo, French, Dutch and Japanese colonialism. The course will develop in three complementary directions. First, it will provide a general definition of colonialism, coloniality, postcolonialism and decoloniality (Said, Spivak, Bhabha, Osterhammel, Young, Loomba, Quijano, Mignolo, Sandoval, Maldonado Torres). Then, we will address the ways in which these debates have been inflected in four different geographical areas in which different colonialisms coexist and collide: the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa and the Pacific Islands. Finally, each one of these developments will be examined through cultural representations and symbolical productions to propose an alternative canon of post/de/colonial narratives that can be studied in a comparative framework.

Texts:
Most readings available on Sakai, electronic reserve. Some of the required readings will be available at the Rutgers Bookstore (www.barnesandnoble.com), but you can use any edition available from the library, or from the used books available in amazon.com:

Aimé Césaire, Discourse on Colonialism
Pramoedya Ananta Toer, This Earth of Mankind
Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart
Tsitsi Dangarembga, Nervous Condition
Donato Ndongo, Shadows of Your Black Memory.
Juan Tomas Avila Laurel, By Night the Mountain Burns
Tiphanie Yanique, Land of Love and Drowning
Junot Diaz, The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao

Evaluation:
Class attendance and participation 10%
5 short reaction papers on primary readings 30%
Leading one of the class discussions with a 20-30 minute presentation 10%
Critical review of one of the talks organized by CCA seminar on Archipelagoes 10%
Final paper proposal due on November 16, 2015 10%
Final 20-25 page paper due on January 11, 2016 30%
Requirements for graduates:
1. Participation is vital for this class. Attendance to all class sessions is expected and required. All students should arrive to class prepared to participate fully in class sessions.
2. Five brief “reflexiones” (1-2 pages, double spaced) written in English and typed. Each “reflexión” will be a meditation on the discursive strategies developed in one of the primary texts and their relationship to theorizations of colonialism, postcolonialism or decoloniality. Dates to hand in each Reflexión are included in the syllabus. Students can choose to submit their Reflexión on another week or date, but they should let the professor know in advance.
3. Each student will lead part of one or two of the class sessions by presenting the materials to be discussed that day to the class. Presentations can take place on the days we do not have a guest speaker. Each presentation should include an exposition of the main points of the student’s interpretation of the texts (5-7 pages, written, shared and read at the beginning of the class), followed by a group discussion (15-20 minutes). Each presenter should prepare a handout outlining or summarizing the reading as a collaborative exercise with the other members of the class.
4. Students are expected to attend one of the conferences or panels organized by the seminar on Archipelagoes hosted by the CCA. The program of events is included here: [http://cca.rutgers.edu/](http://cca.rutgers.edu/). The professor will include another copy of the schedule of events in the Resources section of the course’s sakai site. One week after the chosen event or conference has taken place, the student will submit a 2-4 pages critical review of one of the sessions of the conference, linking the presentations with the topics discussed in class.
5. One final paper proposal will be submitted by November 16, 2015 with a preliminary bibliography (10-12 entries) and an exposition of the main thesis that will be explored in the final paper. No final paper will be accepted if this proposal is not presented by the tenth week of classes.
6. An oral presentation of the final paper proposal for discussion in the class to be done during the last session of the course.

Course Program:
**Tuesday September 8:** Introduction to class: Discussion of syllabus. Colonialism, Postcolonialism, (De)coloniality

**Monday September 14:** Colonialism in the 16th and 17th centuries: the Caribbean
Columbus, Letter to Luis de Santangel
Pané, Fray Ramón. *An Account of the Antiquities of the Indians.*
Samuel Champlain, *Narrative of a Voyage to the West Indies and Mexico in the Years 1599-1602.*
Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, *Misfortunes of Alonso Ramírez*

Suggested reading:
Mignolo, Walter, “Coloniality: The Darker Side of Modernity.”

**Monday September 21:** Colonialism in the 16th and 17th centuries: Tierra Firme Cortés, Hernán, *Second Letter*

**REFLEXION #1**

Suggested reading:

**Monday September 28:** Nineteenth Century: The Caribbean and the Philippines
José Rizal, “The Indolence of the Philippino” and “Philippines 100 years Hence”
José Martí, “Our America”
José Martí, “Montecristi Manifesto”
Morillo Alicea, Javier, “Uncharted Landscapes of ‘Latin America:’ The Philippines in the Spanish Imperial Archipelago.

**Monday October 5:** Back to the Caribbean: Colonialism, Postcolonialism and Decoloniality
Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*
Nelson Maldonado Torres, “Césaire’s Gift and the Decolonial Turn.”
Sandoval, Chela. “Introduction” and “Love as Hermenutics of Social Change, a Decolonizing

**REFLEXION #2**

Suggested reading:
http://www.counterpunch.org/2003/08/05/orientalism/print

**Monday October 12: Indonesia**

**Professor Janet Walker, Guest speaker**
Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *This Earth of Mankind* (read half of the novel)
Ann Laura Stoler, from *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, pp. 46-51, 68, 180: on the nyai, or concubine of a Dutch colonizer

Suggested readings:
Epeli Hau’ofa, “Our Sea of Islands,” *We are the Ocean: Selected Works*

**Monday October 19: Indonesia**
Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *This Earth of Mankind* (finish novel)
Jeffrey E. Thomas. “Cultural Imaginary, the Rule of Law, and (Post-) Colonialism in Indonesia: Perspectives from Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s *This Earth of Mankind*” *Law Text Culture*, 18, 2014, 101-126.
Niekerk, Carl. “Modernity, Sexuality and Gender in Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s This Earth of Mankind.” Symposium 65.2 (2011): 77-98.

Suggested Readings:
Monday October 26: Africa: Nigeria
Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

**REFLEXION #3**

Suggested readings:
Chinua Achebe's “An Image of Africa”

Monday November 2: Africa: Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)
**Professor Ousseina Alidou-Guest Speaker**
Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Condition*

Suggested:

Monday November 9: Africa: Equatorial Guinea
Donato Ndongo, *Shadows of Your Black Memory.*

**REFLEXION #4**

Suggested Readings:

**Monday November 16:**
Class postponed—dinner at professor’s home in mid December

**FINAL PAPER PROPOSAL DUE VIA DROPBOX**

**Monday November 23:** Africa: Equatorial Guinea

**Guest Speaker: Yomaira Figueroa, Michigan State University**

Juan Tomas Avila Laurel, *By Night the Mountain Burns*


**Monday November 30:** The Caribbean and the U.S.

**Tiphanie Yanique, *Land of Love and Drowning***


**Monday December 7:** The Caribbean and U.S. Latinos

Guest speaker: Emmanuel Martinez


Monica Hanna, “‘Reassembling the Fragments’: Battling Historiographies, Caribbean Discourse, and Nerd Genres in Junot Diaz’s *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao.*” *Callaloo*, Volume 33, Number 2, Spring 2010, pp. 498-520.


Suggested Readings:
Junot Diaz, "POC vs. MFA" [http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/mfa-vs-poc](http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/mfa-vs-poc)

**REFLEXION #5**

**Extra class:** Dinner at Professor’s home Monday December 14: Presentation of Final Paper Proposals