

BMNAN15700A - Introduction to Postcolonial Theory

Dr. Michael McAteer and Dr. János Barcsák

Wednesday

12.30-14.00

14.15-15.45

Online via MS Teams

The course introduces students to the theoretical aspects of postcolonial studies. In the first part of the semester, we will trace the development of ideas concerning colonial and postcolonial experience from their theoretical foundations in the writings of Frantz Fanon and Edward Said during the 1960s and the 1970s. We will also look at some specific issues around colonialism in an Irish context as well as new forms of imperialism that Naomi Klein identifies in contemporary times with regard to the dynamics of transnational corporate capitalism. The second part of the semester is concerned with the development of new theoretical understandings of postcolonial thought since the 1980s in relation to post-structuralism, feminism and multiculturalism/diaspora studies. The work of Jacques Derrida, Gayatri Spivak and Homi K. Bhaba will be the focus of discussion and analysis in this regard.

The key text is *Beginning Postcolonialism* by John McLeod, copies of which are available in the Secretary's office of the Institute of English and American Studies in BME Z building. Other reading materials are available online or through scanned copies that will be provided by your teachers.

Assessment

Seminar attendance and participation: **20%**; Seminar presentation: **10%**; Final essay (2,500-3,000 words) **70%**.

Note: Students should submit a plan of their essay by email to Dr. McAteer and to Dr. Barcsák by **Monday, April 05**. *If you don't submit this plan, you will lose marks.* Before finalizing this plan, students should take into consideration the topics that you will study **after** the Easter holiday break as possible subjects for your essay, as well as the topics that you will have already studied with Dr. McAteer before the Easter break. If you would like to write your essay on one of the later topics on the course, you can contact Dr. Barcsák about this directly as he will be taking the later seminar classes.

You should upload your essay on MS Teams by **Wednesday, May 5**.

Schedule

Week 1 Wednesday February 10 – Introduction (MMc)

Week 2 Wednesday February 17 – *Beginning Postcolonialism*, Chapter 1: ‘From ‘Commonwealth’ to ‘postcolonial’ (MMc)

Week 3 Wednesday February 24– Edward Said, *Orientalism* (MMc)

Week 4 – Wednesday Mar 3 - *Beginning Postcolonialism*, Chapter 2: ‘Reading colonial discourses’; Joseph Lennon, *Irish Orientalism* (MMc)

Week 5 – Wednesday March 10 – Postcolonialism and violence: Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (MMc)

Week 6 – Wednesday March 17 - Postcolonialism and New Imperialisms – Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine* (MMc)

Week 7 – Wednesday March 24 – Intersections of postcolonialism and theory – Jacques Derrida, “Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences” (JB)

TERM BREAK: Monday MARCH 29 TO Friday APRIL 09

Week 8 – Wednesday April 14 – Postcolonialism and Feminism – *Beginning Postcolonialism*, Chapter 6: ‘Postcolonialism and feminism’, pp. 197-217 (JB)

Week 9 – Wednesday April 21 – Gayatri Spivak, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ *Beginning Postcolonialism*, Chapter 6, pp. 217-233 (JB)

Week 10 – Wednesday April 28 – Diaspora – *Beginning Postcolonialism*, Chapter 7: ‘Diaspora Identities’, 234-250 (JB)

Week 11 – Wednesday May 05 – Diaspora and Hybrid Identities – *Beginning Postcolonialism*, Chapter 7, 251-275; Homi K. Bhaba, *The Location of Culture* (JB) **Upload student essays**

Week 12 – Wednesday May 12 – Postcolonialism: A Review; Return of marks