International Studies & English 367, Macalester College, Fall 2026 (v3, 9/8/26)

Postcolonial Theory

Instructor: David Chioni Moore, International Studies & English
Class: MWF 10:50-11:50 am, Carnegie 404
Office hours: varied options via Google calendar signup, and by appointment, Carnegie 410
Contact: mooredc@macalester.edu

Description: How did the United Nations grow from 51 to 183 member states between 1945 and 1994? Largely through epochal decolonization: the end of direct European rule over vast areas of the earth, and the vexed creation of modern state-forms to replace that. The worlds of cultural and political analysis have both contributed and responded to this shift, producing a forceful body of writings named colonial and postcolonial critique. This course examines key documents, questions, and themes in that vast body of writing. Then, we will meaningfully add to it.

Content: The course begins with classic statements by Fanon, Césaire, Ngugi and Walcott, on psychology, mimicry, and resistance. The mid-point pivot is Edward Said's *Orientalism*. From there we cover diverse postcolonial topics – drawing from among endless possibilities – including gender, indigeneity, the nation-state, drones, enclaves, China, and the international development industry, and others. A novel and a memoir enrich theoretical course materials. We will not attempt full geographic or thematic coverage: in fact, there will be huge holes in our coverage.

Course Recommended For: strong sophomores and above who have already begun serious work in any discipline (political science, literature, history, anthropology, etc.) in which colonial, post-colonial, or first/third world encounters are assessed.

Course Conduct: The class will be run as a seminar – a joint exploration. Close reading and discussion of texts will be mixed with presentations by class members and the instructor.

Evaluation:

Ungraded preliminary paper		required
Postcolonial geo-historical quiz (minimum grade of B)		10%
Two mid-length (5-6 page) papers	15 + 15 =	30%
In-person final exam on Dec 18th: don't leave town before		15%
Active and insightful class participation		20%
A 10-12 page final theory or research paper		25%

Notes: Timely class attendance is integral to the course and its grade. Inform me in advance of conflict with any religious holidays and/or any relevant disabilities; we'll arrange acceptable alternatives and/or accommodations, and your grades will be unaffected. In class, phones and screens off, out of sight, off the body, and out of mind. Read the general trigger warning posted in the course Moodle.

A.I. Statement: I'll circulate A.I. policies with each assignment, and we'll discuss A.I. and education in class. As you may know, I teach a course on A.I., which will inform my approach.

Paper format: See the full roster of paper format requirements and writing advice on the class Moodle. You are responsible for all format requirements. They include, but are not limited to, double-spacing, numbered pages, 1" margins all around, 12-point font, a good title with full

author-date-course information, generous acknowledgements of all helpers, technologies, and works used at the paper's end. Papers are due emailed to me in PDF form by the day and time noted, and drop 1/2 grade per day from that point.

Schedule:

The date listed for each week is the Monday of our MWF class. Unless otherwise noted, complete all the reading for that week by your arrival to Tuesday's class. Adjustments may be made to the semester's schedule; I'll give good advance notice if so.

I. Classic Statements:

1 S9 Wed: Introduction, housekeeping, aims and scope
→ opening assignment on Fanon's "The Lived Experience of the Black (Man)" (aka "The Fact of Blackness") due emailed in PDF form by 8:00 pm Thurs Sept 10th
Fri: Frantz Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness," from *Black Skin, White Masks*, 1952

2 S14 The Empire Writes Back
MWF: Fanon, "Fact," and Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, 1955

3 S21 Fanon
Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1961 (read entire book except for the "Spontaneity" chapter and four case-studies)

4 S28 Questions of Mimicry
James Ngugi, et al, "On the Abolition of the English Department," 1968
Ngugi wa Thiong'o, "The Language of African Literature," 1986
Derek Walcott, "The Caribbean: Culture or Mimicry?" 1974
Talat Sait Halman, "A Monologue on Indifference," 1999
Alexander Kiossev, "The Self Colonizing Metaphor," 2010

5 O5 Literary Interlude – Weapons of the Weak?
M, W: Ferdinand Oyono, *Houseboy*, 1956
F: Oyono worldwide, and DCM lecture on post-structuralism, Foucault, Said

II. Pivot:

6 O12 Said's *Orientalism*
M, W: Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, 1978: whole book except 150-200, 226-283, and the Afterword (please use an edition with the 1994 Afterword)
→ Paper 1 due Tues Oct 13th, via email by 8:00 pm
→ Fall Break, Oct 15-18, 2026: no Friday class

7 O19 The Challenge of *Orientalism*
M: continue with Said's *Orientalism*
W: writing workshop #1
F: → postcolonial geo-historical quiz in class

III. Trajectories:

8 O26 Said … and Gender and Sexuality with Stoler
M: James Clifford, "On *Orientalism*," 1980, and Richard G. Fox, "East of Said," 1993
W: Said, the 1994 Afterword to his *Orientalism*, pp. 329-352

Stephen Howe, "The Traveler and the Exile," obituary of Edward Said, 2003
F: Ann Laura Stoler, essays on sexuality, race, class, and colonialism

9 N2 Sexuality, Indigeneity, Writing
M: Continue with Stoler
→ Paper 2 due, on Said, Tues, Nov 3rd, by 8:00 pm via emailed PDF
W: Byrd, "Cherokee Freedmen, Internal Colonialism, and the Racialization of Citizenship," and Carlson, "Colonial Fictions: Disrupting Narrative of Nordic Exceptionalism and Innocence"
F: Writing workshop #2

10 N9 More on Indigeneity, and New-Style Colonialities
M: Kauanui, Introduction to *Paradoxes of Hawaiian Sovereignty,* and Balaton-Chrimes, "Indigeneity and Kenya's Nubians."
W: Agius, U.S. drone warfare in Afghanistan, 2017
F: Appel, infrastructural violence and oil extraction in Equatorial Guinea, 2012

11 N16 Contradictions of International Development
Dinah Hannaford, *Aid and the Help*, 2023

12 N23 Postcolonial Perspectives According to ChatGPT
M: in-class conversation with ChatGPT on postcolonial questions
→ Thanksgiving break Nov 25-29, 2026: no Wed or Fri class

13 N30 Biafra + Jamaica + Los Angeles
Louis Chude-Sokei, *Floating in a Most Peculiar Way*, 2022

14 D7 China and Postcolonial Questions
M, W: Perdue (history), Callahan (humiliation), Anand (Tibet and Xinjiang), and Zhao (on Chinese neocolonialism in the Global South)
F: open/tbd

15 D14 M: concluding discussion and course evaluation

Mac classes end Monday, Dec 14, 2026. Finals period, Wed-Sat, Dec 16-19

Final papers due Wed Dec 16, by 3:00 pm

Final exam for this class: Friday Dec 18, 8:00-10:00 am. Do not leave town before this exam.

Course Books (in order of reading; all available at the campus bookstore)

Preference for Print: people who read in print rather than e-formats almost always grasp more fully and retain more durably. For this reason, I've specified the books to be available at the bookstore in print form. Those with a strong educational need for e-formats, though, can readily reach out to the bookstore for that; for details, chat with me first.

1. Césaire, Aimé. *Discourse on Colonialism* [1955]. New York: NYU Press, 2000.
→ I will provide this short book in photocopy for anyone who wishes

2. Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth* [1961]. Constance Farrington or Richard Philcox translation. Intr. Jean-Paul Sartre. New York: Grove, 1968 or 2005
3. Oyono, Ferdinand. *Houseboy* [1956]. Trans. John Reed. Oxford: Heinemann, 1990, or Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 2012.
4. Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon, 1978. *Be sure to purchase an edition with the 1994 "Afterword" on pp 329-352*.
5. Hannaford, Dinah. *Aid and the Help: International Development and the Transnational Extraction of Care*. Palo Alto: Stanford UP, 2023.
6. Chude-Sokei, Louis. *Floating in a Most Peculiar Way: A Memoir*. New York: Mariner, 2022.

A Note on Language: It is a postcolonial concern that all the assigned readings for this course are in English, including in translation. Students are encouraged to read Césaire, Fanon, Oyono and any other texts not originally in English in their original languages, and the Ruth in the original or in any translation you command. For reasons why, see the 2017 book *Translating Fanon*, which our library holds. Students are also encouraged, in their individual readings on postcolonial questions, to read widely in any language you know.

Essay Readings
INTL-ENGL 367, Postcolonial Theory, Fall 2026, David Chioni Moore

Foundations:

1. Fanon, Frantz. "The Fact of Blackness." Chapter Five of *Black Skin White Masks* [1952], pp. 109-140. Trans. Charles Lam Markmann. New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1967..
2. Ngugi, James, Henry Owuor-Anyumba, and Taban Lo Liyong. "On the Abolition of the English Department (1968)," from Ngugi's *Homecoming: Essays on African and Caribbean Literature, Culture and Politics*. London, Ibadan, and Nairobi: Heinemann, 1972, pp. 145-150.
3. Ngugi wa Thiong'o. "The Language of African Literature," from his *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. London, Nairobi, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1986. pp. 4-33.
4. Walcott, Derek. "The Caribbean: Culture or Mimicry?" *Journal of InterAmerican Studies and World Affairs* 16 (1974): pp. 3-13.
5. Halman, Talat Sait. "A Monologue on Indifference." *Dialogue and Difference*, ed. Laurence Raw and Ayse Lahur Kirtunc. London: The British Council, 1999. 3-14.
6. Kiossev, Alexander. "The Self-Colonizing Metaphor." *Atlas of Transformation*, ed. Zybnek Baladran and Vit Havranek. Zurich: JRP Ringier/Tranzit, 2010. 567-575.

Orientalism and Edward Said:

7. Clifford, James. "On *Orientalism*." [Originally in *History and Theory* 19 (1980): pp. 204-223.] From his *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ Press, 1988, pp. 255-276.
8. Fox, Richard G. "East of Said," in Michael Sprinker, ed., *Edward Said: A Critical Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992. pp. 144-156.
9. Howe, Stephen. "Edward Said: The Traveller and the Exile." Obituary posted October 2, 2003 on www.opendemocracy.net/node/1516.

Stoler on Sex and Gender (for class, read the two marked with *):

10. Stoler, Ann Laura. "Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundaries of Rule." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31.1 (Jan 1989): 134-161.
11. *Stoler, Ann Laura. "Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in Twentieth-Century Colonial Cultures." In *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives*, ed. McClintock, Mufti, and Shohat. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1997: 344-373.
12. *Stoler, Ann Laura. "Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34.3 (July 1992): 514-551.

Indigeneity:

13. Byrd, Jodi A. (Chickasaw Nation). "Been to the Nation, Lord, but I Couldn't Stay There: Cherokee Freedmen, Internal Colonialism, and the Racialization of Citizenship." In her *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P (2011): 117-146.
14. Carlson, Annika. "Colonial Fictions: Disrupting the Narrative of Nordic Exceptionalism and Innocence in the Postcolonial Sphere." Final paper for INTL 488, May 2023.
15. Kauanui, J. Kehaulani. "Introduction: Contradictory Sovereignty." In her *Paradoxes of Hawaiian Sovereignty: Land, Sex, and the Colonial Politics of State* Nationalism. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2018.
16. Balaton-Chrimes, Samantha. "Indigeneity and Kenya's Nubians: seeking equality in difference or sameness?" *Journal of Modern African Studies* 51.2 (June 2013), pp. 331-354.

New Colonialities:

17. Agius, Christine. "Ordering Without Bordering: Drones, the Unbordering of Late Modern Warfare, and Ontological Insecurity." *Postcolonial Studies* 20.3 (2017): 370-386.
18. Appel, Hannah C. "Walls and White Elephants: Oil Extraction, Responsibility, and Infrastructural Violence in Equatorial Guinea." *Ethnography* 13.4 (2012): 439-465.

Postcoloniality and China:

19. Perdue, Peter C. "China and Other Colonial Empires." *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 16.1/2 (2009): 85-103.
20. Callahan, William A. "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism." *Alternatives* 29.2 (2004): 199-218.
21. Anand, Dibyesh. "Colonization with Chinese Characteristics: Politics of (In)Security in Xinjiang and Tibet." *Central Asian Survey* 38.1 (2019): 1290147.
22. Zhao, Suisheng. "A Neo-Colonialist Predator or Development Partner? China's Engagement and Rebalance in Africa." *Journal of Contemporary China* 23.90 (2014): 1033-1052.