

SOCI 384: Colonialism, Postcoloniality, and Indigenous Resurgence¹

Instructor: Dr. Peyman Vahabzadeh

Course Description:

This course offers an in-depth engagement with the issues of colonialism and postcoloniality, both as a historic phenomenon and epistemological issue, as well as approaches to Aboriginal resurgence with a focus on Canada. We begin with a glance at the original and violent colonial conditions in the “New World,” to set the stage for our explorations into the various responses to colonization: anti-colonial war of liberation, racialization, orientalism, postcolonialism, subalternity, end of postcoloniality, and the First Nations responses to settler colonialism in Canada. The focus is on the epistemological grounds of colonialism and responses to it, but here epistemology involves action and resistance. The works we study are primarily theoretical in nature, but they dwell in historical, geographical, and cultural conditions of the multiplicity experiences of colonization and subalternity. Students are advised that I use the method of “critical pedagogy” in this course, which entails direct and explicit engagement with colonialism and its issues such as violence and racism.

Course Outcomes/Objectives:

The course provides some key readings in the (post-)colonial theoretical literature, theories of subalternity and orientalism, as well as African and indigenous theory. By the end of this course, the students should have a solid footing in “non-European” theoretical contributions with the common denominator of various experiences of colonialism. We will find how the “West” as the self-acclaimed epistemological centre of universe, has been permeated by multiplicity of voices and epistemological subversions.

Course Pre/Co-requisites:

Minimum third-year standing; declared Honours or Major in Sociology; or permission of the department.

Topics May Include:

Colonization, wars of liberation, slavery, racialization and racism, postcoloniality, orientalism, settler colonialism, indigenous resurgence, epistemologies of the boundaries.

Required Resources May Include:

The assigned readings include 4 books and a number of journal articles. The average weekly reading is about 3 article-length texts for 12 weeks.

Grading May Include:

The grading may be based on participation, a critical response paper, take-home exam, and a final exam.

Important Note:

This is fully an in-person class. Attendance is mandatory and evaluated. Classes mix lectures and seminars. No visuals (Power Point) are provided.

¹ This online outline is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. Detailed course outlines will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official.