Post-Colonial Studies

**Colonialism:**

Colonies (Protectorates, Trust Territories, Condominiums) provide raw materials for the industrialized colonial Powers.

Economic, cultural and social exchanges between the colonizer and the colonized are not equitable.

Ideology of race (racism) to justify slave trade since the late 16thC: survival of the fittest race (presented as a natural process).

“Civilizing” task: “The white man’s burden” (Kipling, 1899); also called “development”, “aid”.

Settler colonies: settlers (e.g. white creoles in the West Indies; “gone native”; social and cultural provinciality) vs indigenous population.

Empire: icon of national unity (vs class division and unrest in Britain). The Other (the colonized) defines the colonizer.

Freedom from the colonial system requires the internal struggle for self-determination or violent opposition by the colonized.

**Colonial discourse:**

*How colonizer us the discourse to convince the colonies.*

Discourse: System of statements and practices about colonies, colonizing powers and their relationships.

Dominant groups impose specific knowledges, disciplines and values upon dominated groups.

Conflict in the colonized because of the clash of different types of knowledge about the world.

Representation of the colonizer as “civilized” and the colonized as “primitive”.

Colonial discourse tends to exclude statements about the exploitation of the resources of the colonized.

**Colonial desire:**

Orientalism: sexualized exoticism.

Colonialist discourse is pervaded by sexuality (rape, transgressive sexuality, fantasies of interracial sex).

Colonial inferiority and gender: feminization of the colonized.

**Colonial patronage:**

*Patronage: pain for something*

Cultural manifestations of the colonized are not recognized or are undervalued by the colonizer.

The colonizer validates some forms of culture but not others: privileging of writing over the oral and the performative arts.

Supplanting of local cultural practices by the imported European ones.

Colonial Educational Systems: Forming a class of colonials willing to participate in colonial modes of social and artistic production.

**Hegemony**:

*Hegemony: domination by consent, accepting the colonizer thinking that they would be good for them.*

Domination by consent: power of the ruling class to convince other classes that the former’s interests are the interests of all.

Suppression of the desire of self-determination.

Euro-centric values: accepted as the most natural or valuable.

**Hybridity**:

Transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization.

Colonizer/colonized relations: interdependence and mutual construction of their subjectivites.

The hierarchical “purity” of cultures is untenable.

Imbalance and inequality of power relations in the cross-cultural exchange.

**Post-colonialism:**

After the independence of the colonies, imperial nations must redefine themselves in terms of the new ethnicities created by the influx of peoples from the former colonies.

Nativist practices: no undisputed, national precolonial tradition can adequately represent the multiplicity of ethnicities that make up most modern post-colonial states.

**Black Studies:**

To redress the negative self-image created in many black people by their long history of enslavement and discriminatory treatment.

**Ethnicity**:

Term used increasingly since the 1960s to account for human variation in terms of culture, tradition, language, social patterns and ancestry (vs. race: fixed, genetically determined biological types).

From Greek *ethnos*: nation.

Dynamic identity (prone to change).

The perception of common ancestry, both real and mythical, has been important to ethnic definitions (by outsiders and insiders).

Ethnic identity and political consciousness (class, ideology…).

No ethnic group is completely unified.

**Frantz Fanon:**

“Comprador” class: indigenous élite who exchanged roles with the white colonial dominating class without engaging in any radical restructuring of society.

Critical nationalism: pre-colonial societies were never homogeneous and they contained socially prejudicial class and gender formations.

**Feminism**:

Construction and employment of gender in the practices of imperialism and colonialism.

Double colonization: women subject both to colonial discrimination and gender discrimination.

Nativist constructions may present women as quietist and subordinate.

Woman’s body: just a sexual or a reproductive function.

**Mimicry (**mímica/imitación**)**:

Colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to “mimic” the colonizer by adopting the latter’s habits, assumptions, institutions and values.

Mimicry can be threatening (the colonial project needs this mimicry) and mocking (parody).

The colonizing power needs this class of agents to propagate their values.