

ETHN 289: Topics in Ethnic Studies
"Colonial Modernities"

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Spring 2012

Over fifty years have passed since the 1955 Afro-Asian Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia. And yet, most of the hopes and fears expressed by the intellectuals and activists of the post-World War II era of decolonization remain recognizable in our era of "globalization." Caught between the ambiguous legacy of Stalinism in the Soviet Union and the complete cooptation of democratic republicanism by capitalism in the West, the generation of organic intellectuals from countries and regions marked by the colonial past grappled with the limitations and challenges of both internationalist and nation-state models of international politics and post-colonial development. It is in such a context that the question emerged: what does "modernity" mean in a colonial and post-colonial context? How do cultural definitions of class, race, gender, age, and religion interact with the idea of modernity; and does the post-colonial age usher in a "post-modern" culture?

This course will examine the major statements regarding the colonial legacy for those countries and regions fighting for an understanding of independence and equality that had yet to be invented; one that had to at once borrow and (yet) remain autonomous from local cultural traditions and NATO world hegemony. Concepts like "Third World," "plural societies," "the global South," "coloniality," and "occidentosis" all contributed to this challenge in the attempt to take stock of nationalism in the age of Empire; to imagine globalization otherwise; and to project the role of new nations in a history that had yet to be determined. Readings may include works by John Furnivall, Jamal Al Ahmad, Frantz Fanon, Renato Constantino, Nick Joaquin, Carl Schmitt, and Ashis Nandy, as well as more recent works by Aníbal Quijano, Partha Chatterjee, Mahmood Mamdani, and Kuan-Hsing Chien. Requirements, in addition to attendance and participation, include an oral presentation, three short papers, and a longer essay.