

AMST 622 Research Seminar on Transpacific Studies  
Fall 2021

GFS 210 and online via Zoom (see below)

Professor Viet Nguyen, [vnguyen@usc.edu](mailto:vnguyen@usc.edu)

Office hours by appointment, online and Wednesday 2-3 PM

<https://usc.zoom.us/j/99912682476?pwd=aThBYkNjSGU4OGVDc1V0WkEzZHpkUT09>

This is a course on the intersection of the transpacific, indigeneity, and decolonization. It begins from the premise that colonization has shaped much of the world in the last five hundred years, with wide-ranging ramifications that many people often disconnect from the history of colonization. Decolonization is the political process that must be named and used to address these consequences of colonization, or the fact that from the perspectives of many indigenous peoples in the United States and elsewhere, colonization still continues, including in the U.S.-controlled Pacific and within the United States.

The course begins with an overview of some classic texts in decolonizing thought from French, British, and Spanish contexts of colonization, followed by some important recent works in indigenous political and cultural critique, before moving on to Asian American and Pacific Islander critiques of colonization and the role played by Asian Americans as settlers. We conclude with Achille Mbembe's newest work on decolonization (and, if you so choose, Mahmood Mamdani's).

Part of the premise of the course is that liberation projects coming out of anti-racist and anti-imperialist moments must also take into account their own implication with settler colonialism, and must incorporate indigenous knowledge and critique of colonization. Such an approach highlights some of the limits to approaches based on nations, citizenship, race, multiculturalism, and representation that have been important to American, ethnic, cultural, and Asian studies. But a commitment to decolonization as politics, analytics, and aesthetics can also reinvigorate these fields.

The class will meet in a hybrid manner. Students who wish to attend in person can meet in the classroom. Please bring your laptops or other personal devices capable of using Zoom. The rest of the class will meet on Zoom, including, for at least a few weeks, me. I will reassess early in the semester, given the state of the pandemic, whether I will teach in person. All students have the option of being online throughout the semester. Please keep me updated as to any personal circumstances you might have through the semester that might affect your learning, and I will do my best to be flexible and sensitive to your circumstances.

### **Zoom information**

<https://usc.zoom.us/j/97317064131?pwd=ZW15NEVsWIBVYy9YZHhUZ1FIVWNkQT09>

Meeting ID: 973 1706 4131

Passcode: 154554

Week 1 August 23	Introduction
Week 2 August 30	Aimé Césaire, <i>Discourse on Colonialism</i> ; <i>Notebook of a Return to the Native Land</i> ; <i>A Tempest</i> ; Edward Said, introduction and afterword to <i>Orientalism</i>
Week 3 Sept 6	Labor Day
Week 4 September 13	Albert Memmi, <i>The Colonizer and the Colonized</i> ; Gloria Anzaldúa, <i>Borderlands/La Frontera</i> , first half; Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America”; María Lugones, “Toward a Decolonial Feminism”
Week 5 September 20	Frantz Fanon, <i>Black Skin, White Masks</i> ; Trinh T. Minh-ha, <i>Woman Native Other</i> , excerpts (“Difference” and “Commitment from the Mirror-Writing Box”)
Week 6 September 27	Frantz Fanon, <i>The Wretched of the Earth</i> ; Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument”
Week 7 October 4	Glen Coulthard, <i>Red Skin, White Masks</i> ; Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is not a metaphor”; Tommy Orange, <i>There There</i> , preface
Week 8 October 11	Indigenous Peoples’ Day Jodi Byrd, <i>Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism</i> ; Natalie Diaz, <i>Postcolonial Love Poem</i> ; excerpt Layli Long Soldier, <i>Whereas</i>
Week 9 October 18	Manu Karuka, <i>Empire’s Tracks: Indigenous Nations, Chinese Workers, and the Transcontinental Railroad</i> ; Iyko Day, introduction to <i>Alien Capital: Asian Racialization and the Logic of Settler Colonialism</i>
Week 10 October 25	Quynh Nhu Le, <i>Unsettled Solidarities: Asian and Indigenous Cross-Representations in the Americas</i> ; Roxane Dunbar Ortiz, excerpts, <i>An Indigenous People’s History of the United States*</i>
<b>Week 11 MEETING IS CHANGED FROM MONDAY TO PRECEDING SUNDAY due to my travel plans, but those plans might be canceled based on the pandemic situation</b>	
October 31 (not Nov 1) 3-6PM	Juliana Hu Pegues, <i>Space-Time Colonialism: Alaska’s Indigenous and Asian Entanglements</i>

Class will be recorded for those who can't attend

- Week 12 November 8      Class canceled  
A class to make up November 8 is optional, if the class wants to do it. If so, the reading will be Mahmood Mamdani's *Neither Settler Nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities*
- Week 13 November 15      Erin Suzuki, *Ocean Passages: Navigating Pacific Islander and Asian American Literatures*; Craig Santos Perez, [*guma'*] from his quartet *From Unincorporated Territory*
- Week 14 November 22      Haunani Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawaii* (excerpt); Hōkūlani K. Aikau and Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez, eds., *Detours: A Decolonial Guide to Hawaii*; Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of Islands"
- Week 15 November 29      Achille Mbembe, *Out of the Dark Night: Essays on Decolonization*

December 6: seminar paper due date

Requirements:

10% Attendance and participation; be present and verbally engage with the presentations and readings

40% Seminar presentation; you will present for one half of the seminar and all material in the week's reading is your responsibility. Most presentations will be with one person but some will be with two, depending on the signups. You will present your interpretation/critique/coverage/contextualization of the readings; allow time for class discussion; and design questions, activities, or interactions to promote discussion.

50% Seminar paper. You can, if you wish, directly engage with the reading material or you can use the writing to feed into your research and/or creative concerns. You have three options:

- 1) 10 page conference paper (typically equal to 20 minute conference presentation)
  - 2) 20 page chapter draft for a possible dissertation
  - 3) creative/critical essay/text/prose/genre-experiment (up to you) of up to 20 pages
- The seminar paper is due Friday December 6

Book list (in order of appearance)

Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* and *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land*  
Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*

Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*  
Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*  
Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*  
Jodi Byrd, *Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism*  
Natalie Diaz, *Postcolonial Love Poem*  
Manu Karuka, *Empire's Tracks: Indigenous Nations, Chinese Workers, and the Transcontinental Railroad*  
Quynh Nhu Le, *Unsettled Solidarities: Asian and Indigenous Cross-Representations in the Americas*  
Juliana Hu Pegues, *Space-Time Colonialism: Alaska's Indigenous and Asian Entanglements*  
Erin Suzuki, *Ocean Passages: Navigating Pacific Islander and Asian American Literatures*  
Craig Santos Perez, one book from his quartet *From Unincorporated Territory*  
Hökūlani K. Aikau and Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez, eds., *Detours: A Decolonial Guide to Hawaii*  
Achille Mbembe, *Out of the Dark Night: Essays on Decolonization*

Articles or excerpts (in order of appearance):

Edward Said, introduction and afterword to *Orientalism*  
Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest*  
Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America”  
María Lugones, “Toward a Decolonial Feminism”  
Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Woman Native Other*, excerpts (“Difference” and “Commitment from the Mirror-Writing Box”)  
Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument”  
Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is not a metaphor”  
Tommy Orange, *There There*, preface  
Layli Long Soldier, excerpt from *Whereas*  
Iyko Day, introduction to *Alien Capital: Asian Racialization and the Logic of Settler Colonialism*  
Roxane Dunbar Ortiz, excerpts, *An Indigenous People's History of the United States\**  
Haunani Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawaii* (excerpt)  
Epeli Hau'ofa, “Our Sea of Islands”

All articles and excerpts can be downloaded from

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7qnzhtb43obla7p/AACXKIOtTrqKutWS91swi9OBa?dl=0>

\*these are not yet available and need to be copied and uploaded

## **Pandemic protocols (highlights) from the University**

### **NO EATING OR DRINKING IN THE CLASSROOM**

Students are expected to comply with all aspects of USC's COVID-19 policy. Failure to do so may result in removal from the class and referral to Student Judicial Affairs and Community

Standards. This includes all students wearing masks in the classroom, being vaccinated, and performing their Trojan Check before entering campus daily.

TROJAN CHECK—complete on your phone prior to coming to campus, and it will be verified upon entering campus—this checks for vaccine compliance (everyone), required testing (students), required training (everyone), wellness assessment (everyone)—if you have not done all those things, you cannot pass Trojan Check—will use a QR code for security

COVID ADVICE from Sarah Van Orman, Chief Health Officer, USC Student Health

- stay at home if you're sick, and be tested
- if you test positive outside of USC, you must notify the Covid hotline so they can do the contact tracing: Covid-19 Hotline at (213) 740-6291 or [covid19@usc.edu](mailto:covid19@usc.edu)
- if you are feeling any type of sign or symptom related to covid, be sure to answer the questions correctly on Trojan Check and DO NOT come to campus
- continue to wash your hands regularly
- physical distancing and plexiglass are no longer required on campus

The University is also mandating that Trojan Learn training be required in advance— every faculty, staff, student will have to complete the new Health, Hygiene and Safety Training on Trojan Learn updated in August 2021.

MASKING on campus—Everyone must be masked while indoors and on public transit (USC trams)—LA County and USC policy—Masks are also required outdoors this week and next  
Masks are recommended in crowded outdoor settings right now

- Definition of masks: cloth, disposable, surgical—USC provides  
Cloth masks are best if there are 2 layers, tightly-woven, no holes, covers both nose and mouth—if you do not have them, get them from USC  
Unacceptable masks: bandana, neck gaitor, homemade sewn cloth, scarf, cotton t-shirt
- USC will also provide N95 masks if requested—respirator masks that create more of a seal on your face—make the request [here](#) and you will be contacted and asked some questions, and then they will give you the masks.

BUILDINGS AND CLASSROOMS—in some buildings the inside temperature will be a little higher than what we are used to (they claim it won't be “oppressive”) because of new air circulation and filtration systems that force as much air from outside into buildings to enhance building safety

CLEANING—USC will exceed CDC recommendations

- classrooms will be sanitized twice daily (deep cleaning if necessary, enhanced cleaning if there are positive cases in a classroom)
- sanitizing wipes will be on-hand in classrooms
- offices will be cleaned twice weekly
- high-touch areas will be sanitized twice daily, and sanitizing wipes will be on-hand

PUBLIC INFORMATION—there will be a Daily Digest of information about Covid cases in the USC community at the bottom of the USC Covid website <https://coronavirus.usc.edu>—stay tuned for more information when the Daily Digest goes live

USC CONTACT TRACING AND NOTIFICATION

- when someone tests positive at USC, they will be contacted by Student Health to determine if they have been on campus during their infectious period
  - if you test positive outside of USC, you are required to tell USC
  - anyone who tests positive regardless of symptoms or vaccination is required to self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms or the date of their test (if asymptomatic) regardless of vaccination status.
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- Students, faculty, staff can call the campus Covid-19 Hotline at (213) 740-6291 or [covid19@usc.edu](mailto:covid19@usc.edu) with questions or to report illness or issues.