

Deepika Bahri, English Department, Emory University
Major Topics in Postcolonial Literature and Theory, Graduate Course
Spring 2012

The 2-day workshop on sustainability led by Peggy Barlett was profoundly transformative for me. I plan to use several of the strategies I learned during the course of the workshop in my teaching. A key lesson concerned the importance of retaining a sense of connection to the spaces one inhabits, a sense that this workshop activated using information, dialogue, discussion, walks, and silent reflection. Apart from the general application of ideas and strategies learned during the course of the workshop to my teaching, I plan to incorporate a significant unit on issues related to sustainability, development, and the environment in my graduate course on major topics in postcolonial literature and theory for Spring 2012. The syllabus is included below, and the relevant unit is entitled “**Planetarity, Sustainability, and Ecocriticism**” (Week 10). Discussion of environmental and development issues will not be confined to the duration of the unit.

Tentative Syllabus

Week 1 (1/24) What is Postcolonialism?

Ashcroft et al., "Introduction," *The Empire Writes Back*
Deepika Bahri, "The Practical Discipline," *Native Intelligence*
Stuart Hall, "When was Postcolonialism?"
Anne McClintock, "The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term 'Post-Colonialism,'" *Social Text* 31/32 (1992): 84-98
Ella Shohat, "Notes on the Post-Colonial," *Social Text* 31/32 (1992): 99-113.

Week 2 (1/31) How the Orient was Won

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Selected essays: "Introduction"; "Latent and Manifest Orientalism") *Culture and Imperialism* ("Overlapping Territories")

Week 3 (2/7) Masks of Conquest; Macaulay's Minute on Indian Education

Mnthal, Felix. "The Stranglehold of English Lit." (poem)
Ngugi, Wa Tiong'O. "Literature and Society," *Decolonising the Mind*
Ogundipe-Leslie, Molar. "To a Jane Austen Class at Ibadan University" (poem)
Seth, Vikram. "Diwali" (poem)
Viswanathan, Gauri. "Currying Favor: The Politics of British Educational and Cultural Policy in India, 1813-1854."

Week 4 (2/14) Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*

Week 5 (2/21) Narrating Nation

Benedict Anderson *Imagined communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983)

Bhabha, Nation and Narration. (Selected essays: "Introduction"; "Dissemination"; "The National Longing for Form"--Tim Brennan)

Week 6 (2/28) Salman Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*

Week 7 (3/6) **Psychologies of Colonialism/Postcolonialism**

Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth; Black Skin, White Masks

3/12-3/16: Spring break

Week 8 (3/20) **Third World Women, Feminism, and Postcolonialism**

Chatterjee, Partha. "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question".
Recasting Women.

Mohanty, Chandra. "Under Western Eyes"

Suleri, Sara. "Woman Skin Deep: Feminism and the Postcolonial Condition"

Spivak, Gayatri. "Feminism and Critical Theory"; "Three Women's Texts"

Week 9 (3/27) **Subaltern Studies**

Guha, Ranajit. "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India"

Pandey, Gyan. "In Defense of the Fragment"

Spivak, Gayatri. "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

Week 10 (4/3) **Planetary, Sustainability, and Ecocriticism**

"The Anthropocene: A Man-made World" *The Economist* May 26, 2011.

(Summary: Science is recognising humans as a geological force to be reckoned with)

Alvares, Claude. "Development and Himsa [Violence]" (pdf to be circulated.

Summary: Assessment of the environmental costs of the celebrated Green Revolution in India)

Graham Huggan & Helen Tiffin, "Development," *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment* (Summary: Intersections between colonialism, capitalism & development)

Kincaid, Jamaica. *A Small Place* (Summary: Kincaid's indictment of the costs of tourism, maldevelopment, and corruption in a small place, St. Lucia)

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 2003. "Planetary," *Death of a discipline*. 71-102. New York: Columbia University Press.

(Summary: Spivak argues that the popular conception of globalization as the financialization and computerization of the globe leads to a vicious system of exploitation, whereby it is assumed that the globe [as a kind of imaginary terrain that exists only on our computers] can and should be controlled to produce capitalist gains. Planetary, on the other hand, is a more sensitive and attuned way of understanding the materiality of the world and our collective place and responsibility as humans within it. Spivak suggests that rather than being global agents we should instead imagine ourselves as planetary subjects, inhabiting a planet that is merely "on loan" to us.)

HYBRIDITY: NEH-funded Interdisciplinary Research Seminar

Spring 2012, 4/10, 17, 24; The Bill & Carol Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry

Hybridity, one of the key concepts associated with postcolonial studies, has been enthusiastically appropriated by other fields, surfacing routinely in discussions of globalization and transnationalism, and finding ready place in the disciplines of economics, international business, and public policy. But what is hybridity? Where does the concept come from and how is it used in postcolonial studies? A term that once held distinctly pejorative connotations of sterility and threatening mixture between fixed biological forms, is today something of a celebratory short-hand for the intermingling of cultures, peoples, and indeed seed crops and energy sources.

This NEH-challenge grant funded FCHI mini-seminar will explore the concept of hybridity in a historical framework, include a consideration of racial mixture, and challenge the customary divide between biology and culture in studies of race. The seminar will consist of three 2 and a half hour meetings. Each 180-minute session will center on readings provided to help participants prepare for discussion. The seminar discussions will be interdisciplinary in nature and will feature novels and short stories as well as readings from philosophy, literary theory, and history.

Week 11 (4/10) Hybridity I

Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man"

Young, "Hybridity and Diaspora" from *Colonial Desire*

Conan Doyle, "The Mystery of Uncle Jeremy's Household"

Week 12 (4/17) Hybridity II

Glissant, "Creolisations" *Poetics of Relation*, by Édouard Glissant, Betsy

Wing; Kunzru, *The Impressionist*

Week 13 (4/24) Hybridity III

Bahri, "Sexual/Textual Carnivals: Hybridity Reconsidered"; Barnes, *Arthur and George*

Week 14 (5/1) Hybridity, Ecocriticism, Subalternity, Feminism

Roy, *The God of Small Things*

Bahri, "Geography is not History," *Native Intelligence*