



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI DI BARI  
ALDO MORO

## 8th AISCLI Conference

Bari - 21-22 February 2019

CALL FOR PAPERS



“#eastwest” by Maupal 2016 (Bari)

### Postcolonial/Decolonial: Unpacking the Prefix Literatures and Cultures in English and Beyond

Guest speakers: Prof. MADINA TLOSTANOVA (Linköping University - Sweden)  
Prof. PAOLA ZACCARIA (University of Bari “Aldo Moro”)

Guest artist: NABIL SALAMEH (Radioderwish)  
Guest activist: to be confirmed

Exhibition: La Palestina della convivenza or a photographic history of the Palestinians, 1876-1948

Deadline for abstract submissions: 30 October 2018  
Notification of acceptance: 15 November 2018

Prefixes have always been cause for controversy when it comes to colonialism. On one hand, the “post” in “postcolonial” has famously sparked debate about temporalities and epistemology; on the other, a growing school of thought claims that turning to the term “decolonial” would disambiguate the content and reach deeper to the root power relations at play.

Postcolonial theory is usually considered as reaching back to Edward Said’s pioneering critical work while decolonial theory is a field of studies that started with the works of Anibal Quijano and Enrique Dussel. Postcolonial studies was born within the nexus connecting the Subaltern Studies Group in India with Anglo America (Said-Spivak-Bhabha), while decolonial thought was born thanks to the Latin American Subaltern Studies Group composed primarily by South American scholars in the USA. These (albeit most likely unfixed) points of origin explain the different stress placed on Western colonial history. If, within postcolonial thinking, colonial history mainly starts sometime between the 17th and the 18th centuries, when Orientalism was initially born as a discipline - though, for example, Paul Gilroy Arjun Appadurai and Janet Abu-Lughod speak of much wider temporalities - for decolonial thinkers, that history starts with the conquest of the “New World” and, as Quijano puts it, the rise of the “coloniality of power”. The choice of point of origin is crucial because it sheds light on the historical moment when modern European identity emerged and constructed the Other of Europe.

In this sense, Quijano interestingly operates a distinction between colonialism and coloniality. According to him, if colonialism is the historical product of empires, coloniality (of power) is part of that history but also exceeds it, surviving beyond the colonial period and involving as a (colonial) matrix a range of issues connected with the whole dimension of modernity.

Furthermore, decolonial thinkers work towards replacing the whole notion of the “post-colonial” with the expression “post-occidental”. In other words, “epistemic delinking” would here be the watchword: delinking from occidental Reason. One of the criticisms of postcolonialism is in fact that it relies on too many European master thinkers. According to Mignolo, the radical difference between the postcolonial and the decolonial projects lies in their genealogy. Postcoloniality emerged from the extension of Foucault [Said], Gramsci [Guha], Derrida [Spivak] and Lacan [Bhabha] to the postcolonial situation of the Middle East and India as ex-colonies of the British Empire. Mignolo writes: “We are not the ‘first’ (a claim that reproduced modern chronology rather than de-colonial geographies), we just are in a different track in tracing de-colonial *options* to globalisation since 1500” (emphasis ours). This genealogy of thinkers includes Mahatma Gandhi, Amílcar Cabral, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, W.E.B. Dubois, Rigoberta Menchu and Gloria Anzaldúa, among others. Clearly, some of the thinkers here listed also fully belong to the postcolonial genealogy, as a consequence the dividing lines seem quite blurry and this may probably be a key question to debate.

The common ground between both fields is perhaps epistemological decolonisation: the aim being to decolonise world knowledge from a Eurocentric perspective (Chakrabarty) and search not for a new paradigm but for an alternative paradigm: un *pensamiento otro* or border thinking, pre-fixed, post-fixed, but certainly not fixed.

We invite scholars from the fields of postcolonial and decolonial thought, literary and cultural studies, visual and performance arts, history, gender studies, diaspora studies, media studies, critical race theory, and all related and transdisciplinary areas, to join in the conversation and submit an abstract.

Proposals may deal with the following (or further related) topics:

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| — postcolonial and decolonial literary genealogies                       | — art as critical language overcoming theory (and prefixes) |
| — decolonizing theory and language                                       | — colonial and imperial difference                          |
| — decolonizing the academia  | — colonial discursive formations and (new) media studies    |
| — decolonizing literary canon  | — coloniality and race/class/gender/religion                |
| — artistic works that address issues of postcolonial/decolonial thinking | — coloniality and ARTivism                                  |
| — the postcolonial/decolonial public intellectual                        | — coloniality and migrations                                |
|  | — coloniality and human rights.                             |

Please, submit proposals for 15 minute papers (about 250 words) and a short bio profile to [info@aiscli.it](mailto:info@aiscli.it)

**Conference committee**  
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