

De/Colonization in the Americas:

Continuity and Change

Third Biennial Conference of the International Association of Inter-American Studies

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima, Perú

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The Americas have a long history of colonialism; even the concepts 'America' and 'Americanity' date back to European expansion, invasion and conquest. As the success of the term 'postcolonialism' suggests, the colonial legacy is a relic of the past that is continuously rearticulated and reactivated until today.

In the Americas, colonialism informs nearly all aspects of life. From European invasion onward it established a durable matrix of power based on gender relations, racism and ethnic classifications that defined *white* and *criollo* male superiority over the indigenous and 'Afro American' as well as over Asian, Jewish, Arabic, Muslim and Hindu populations, peoples and nations, in spite of the ambiguity of ethnic and racial frontiers. Moreover, in recent times, the thrust to decolonize has become a major aspiration that implies the rescue and re-evaluation of native and subordinated cultures.

In this sense the battles for recognition and self-determination of disenfranchised groups in the Americas demonstrate the overwhelming burden of colonialism and its connection to gender, ethnicity, racism, and class hierarchies. The state reacted with special procedures of ethnic administration such as exclusion through reservations, haciendas, and slums, or politics of forced inclusion in terms of forced homogenization and assimilation. Recently emerged new politics of recognition have led to a redefinition of nation-states as pluricultural or even plurinational.

Colonialism has deeply informed cultural production and popular culture in the Americas.

Jazz, blues, rock music and hip-hop have given voice to the experience of ethnic and racial exclusion and Latin America's boom literature is informed by 'magic' indigenous-colonial cosmovisions. Ethnic and racial struggles against quota systems and/or auto-ethnographic media productions are integral parts of the fight against

the negative aspects of the colonial legacy. Thus, colonialism is not only a historical burden for American societies but also represents an uneven syncretism that must be deconstructed. The linguistic aspects of colonialism resonate in a high degree of exterminated and endangered autochthonous languages but also in the creation of *creôle* languages and techniques of code-switching.

Colonialism contains important material aspects as concerns the appropriation, reappropriation and redistribution of land, commodities as well as work force and citizenship regimes.

From early colonial land-taking to internal colonialism and imperial politics to the recent forms of neo-extractivism the colonization of space and nature has been an integral part of colonial and postcolonial projects.

The conference will adopt a broad concept of colonialism, which refers not to a single historical period but to a relational mode that creates asymmetric power relations and modes of exploitation. This cross-disciplinary forum of academic exchange invites contributions from all academic disciplines concerned with colonialism in the Americas. It will examine colonization, colonialism, nation building, decolonization, and continuing facets of coloniality as they relate to societies, politics, economy, cultures, and media. The participation of doctoral students is strongly encouraged. Scholars are invited to propose presentations and/or panels on a wide variety of topics including:

- Racism and politics of exclusion
- Multiculturalism, politics of recognition and cultural classification
- Identity politics and social movements
- Literature, film, visual arts and music in contact zones
- Colonial heritage and the politics of memory
- The “Colonial complex” of the young American republics
- Colonial power and resistance
- Colonialism, slavery, and their aftermaths
- Educational reform and the teaching of American histories and cultures

- Economic colonization and neo-extractivism
- The colonization of nature
- Imperialism and neo-imperialism
- The Coloniality and decolonization of media and mediascapes
- Creolization and hybridization in language and culture
- Decolonization, plurinationality and transnationalism
- Decolonization and knowledge production, the geopolitics of knowledge
- Transformations of coloniality
- Coloniality and religion
- Coloniality and gender relations

Please send proposals for individual papers or for panels with a chairperson and 3 to 5 presentations to iaslima2014@uni-graz.at. Please include your name, the title of presentation and/or panel, an abstract (200-400 words per presentation) and email addresses. Presentations can be held in English or in Spanish. The deadline for submissions is October 15, 2013.

Host: Gonzalo Portocarrero (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima, Perú)

Organizing Committee: María Herrera-Sobek (UC Santa Barbara, USA), Olaf Kaltmeier (Bielefeld University, Germany), Heidrun Moertl (University of Graz, Austria)