

Department of Sociology

Sociology 3B -Term 4 2021

SOCIAL THEORY

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Memorandum for Exam- November 2021

1. *Maldonado-Torres argues that 'Modernity as a discourse and as a practice would not be possible without coloniality, and coloniality continues to be an inevitable outcome of modern discourses. Critically discuss what he means by coloniality in the modern discourse. What is coloniality and how is it manifested in modern society? [50]*

Introduction (5 marks)

- First define the concept of coloniality and coloniality of being according to Maldonado –Torres
- Concept of coloniality underlines the dominant power relations in different areas of society
- Colonial system left an indelible mark in our understanding of authority, sexuality and knowledge and the economy
- And more importantly – it left a profound mark on the general understanding of Being
- Being (humanity) and Being (existence)
- **Coloniality of being** emphasizes the lived experience of colonization
- Decolonial scholarship uses this concept to emphasise the importance of bringing the experiences of the colonized to the fore
- And to examine **the effects of coloniality in lived experience** and not only in the mind
- A critique of modernity – which in western literature is presented in terms of development, innovativeness, industrial growth and progress in society
- Modernity has a dark side to it – in that it is tied to colonization, slavery and racism

Modernity and the colonial project (20 marks)

- Modernity, usually considered to be a product of the European Renaissance or the European Enlightenment, has a darker side, which is constitutive of it.
- Modernity as a discourse and as a practice would not be possible without coloniality, and coloniality continues to be an inevitable outcome of modern discourses.
- Here the student must attempt to use the concept of coloniality of being to elaborate on the continued experiences of injustices/inequalities experienced by those in the colonized societies
- Coloniality classifies differences between the conquerors and the conquered using race, adopting a supposedly different biological structure that placed some in a natural situation of inferiority to the others.
- The system of colonization – which centralises race hierarchies – became a globalised project

Coloniality in modern context (20 marks)

- it became a model of power in modern society – students can then refer to different examples such as the race hierarchies in society and how that is perpetuated in different areas of society. They can also refer to violence against black bodies and how that is link to the colonial classifications of humans and non-humans.

Conclusion – summary of the key points and main argument in the essay **(3 marks)**

Stylistic, layout and academic presentation (2 marks)

2. *Critically discuss the concept of decolonial feminism. In your discussion demonstrate how decolonial feminism challenges western feminism in its failure to recognise the experiences of colonized women.*

Introduction (5 marks)

Similarly in this essay, students are still expected to understand the modernity project, colonization and coloniality. However in this essay they must highlight the gendered impact of colonization.

Introduction (5 marks)

- Outline the topic with regards to coloniality of gender
- Colonization on the invisibilisation of colonized women
- Colonial difference and decolonial feminism

Discuss the coloniality of gender (20 marks)

- The **coloniality of gender** is constituted by and constitutive of the coloniality of power, knowledge, being, nature, and language.
- Hierarchies in the classification of humanity, which was also gendered
- Within this colonial system – human beings are civilized white man and women
- Colonial conquest – defining the colonized people as less human – justification for violence, brutality – cruelty against the colonized society
- The colonial “civilizing mission” - concealed the brutal access to people’s bodies through unimaginable exploitation, violent sexual violation, control of reproduction, and systematic terror.
- Under a colonial system – colonized women are non-existent
- The colonial gender system is not just hierarchical but racially differentiated, and the racial differentiation denies humanity, and therefore gender to the colonized

Decolonial feminism vs western feminism (20 marks)

- Lugones argues that - Modernity denies existence of the colonized – it erases the existence of other worlds with different ontological presuppositions.

- that which is not known from the colonial perspective becomes subordinate – therefore unimportant
- erasure of colonised women's knowledge and experiences in colonised society
- critique of western feminism – which emphasised sisterhood – universalising women experiences
- discuss the weakness of western feminism on the politics of difference
- decolonial feminism – in alignment with decolonial theory – critique of modernity and colonial project – but it goes further and emphasises colonial difference in experiences of gender inequality
- decolonial feminism is critical of the conception of progress in gender equality being equated with the attainment of women's rights in Europe and the US

Conclusion (3 marks)

Summary of the key points and main argument in the essay.

Stylistic, layout and academic presentation (2 marks)