

Why is Colonialism Over?

Field Theory, Global Change, and the Subaltern Effect

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Why did colonialism end in the twentieth century? And more broadly, how do global norms change? This talk extends Pierre Bourdieu's field theory to explain how and why colonialism became excised from the repertoire of global power and therefore offer a broader approach for understanding global change. The talk shows that colonial fields generated "subversive" struggles initiated by anti-colonial nationalists (the "challengers") offering a new heterodoxy against the prevailing orthodoxy and rules of the existing global field of empires. Field homologies facilitated the globalization of this struggle. Ultimately, the new pressures compelled dominant empires to adopt anticolonial nationalism as a new form of symbolic capital, leading to a rejection around the world of empire as a viable political form. Postcolonial theory's emphasis upon subaltern agency is complemented here by field theory's relationalism, allowing us to see how colonized peoples initiated this transformation and served to constrain imperial action and profoundly changed the global order.

Julian Go is Professor of Sociology at Boston University. Previously he was an Academy Scholar at the Academy for International and Area Studies of Harvard University. His award-winning scholarship explores the sociology of empires and colonialism, social theory, global sociology, and postcolonial thought. His books include: *Postcolonial Thought and Social Theory* (Oxford, 2016), *Fielding Transnationalism* (co-edited with Monika Krause, Wiley & Sons 2016), *Global Historical Sociology* (co-edited with George Lawson, Cambridge, 2016), *Patterns of Empire: the British and American Empires, 1688 to Present* (Cambridge, 2011), and *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning: Elite Political Cultures in Puerto Rico and the Philippines under US Colonialism* (Duke University Press, 2008). His books have won awards and recognition from the American Sociological Association, the American Political Science Association, the International Studies Association, the Association of National Publishers, and the Philippine National Book Awards.

Language: English / No Prior registration necessary

This talk is organized by Professor James Farrer (FLA)