This course traces images of violence through 16th-century French literature, paying close attention to the transmigration of imagery, stylistic devices and discursive postures across literary forms. We will examine structural and formal conventions as well as historical and political contexts in exploring the conversations between our texts and the turbulent times in which they were created. Authors will include Joachim du Bellay, Marguerite de Navarre, Agrippa d’Aubigné, Michel de Montaigne, François Rabelais and others. Classes will be conducted in English.
The aim of this introductory course is to read with beginning graduate students in French some of the major theoretical texts in colonial and postcolonial studies. While the field is expansive, both temporally and geographically, this course’s focus will be primarily on twentieth century theories with special emphasis on Francophone Africa. The aim is therefore neither to be exhaustive nor representative of all the positions and directions that this vast field has come to cover in recent years. At the heart of the course issues of language and discursive practices that constitute coloniality and postcoloniality, seeking to trace some of the vicissitudes of ideas about the colonial and the postcolonial, the necessities and consequences of these ideas as well as their modes of presentation. Given that several of the theorists on our reading list are also novelists and poets, we will read a number of literary works alongside the theoretical works in order to better trace the articulations of the two genres of thought and writing.