Spring 1-15-2002

ENG 2850-002: Post-Colonial Literatures in English

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English 2850-002: Post-Colonial Literatures in English
Spring 2002

Instructor: Jyoti Panjwani
Office: Ch 3576
Phone #: 581-3615
Section 002 TR 12:30-13:45
Office hours: TR 6:15-7:15 p.m. and by appointment

Course Description:

This course introduces students to narratives from India and Africa, which have defined themselves with and against European cultures, in particular the British culture. By examining these narratives in their historical and cultural contexts, the course will attempt to study them in a framework which may be called "the psychology of decolonization".

Issues pertaining to the processes of colonization, colonial and post-colonial struggles for emancipation, notions of 'home' and 'homelands', conflicts between indigenous traditions and western influences, East-West and inter-cultural responses will be studied; and wherever possible these themes will be compared and contrasted within the Indian and African literatures.

From India, we shall read writings by R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Anita Desai, Mahasweta Devi, Mulk Raj Anand, Girish Karnad, and Vaidehi; and from Africa, we will read works by Chinua Achebe, Thiong'o wa Ngugi and O'kot Bitek.

The course will be divided into three segments:

(i) The first segment will focus on Postcolonial Indian literature and the writers included in this segment are R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Mahasweta Devi, Anita Desai and Raja Rao.

(ii) The second segment will focus on Postcolonial African literature. The writers included in this segment are Chinua Achebe and Thiong'o wa Ngugi.

(iii) The third segment will be a study of transnational, transcultural, and inter-cultural circulation of themes and ideas from a postcolonial point of view. The writers included in this segment include Thomas Mann, Girish Karnad, O'kot Bitek, Kalidasa and Vaidehi.

Texts Required:

India
Mulk Raj Anand. Selected Short Stories
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics
Stephen Alter and Wimal Dissanayake. The Penguin Book of Modern Indian Short Stories
Susie Tharu and K. Lalita. Women Writing in India, vol. 2
Kalidasa. The Loom of Time.
Girish Karnad. Three Plays
Thomas Mann. The Transposed Heads, an Indian Legend.

Africa
Chinua Achebe. Things Fall Apart
Thiong'o wa Ngugi. Weep not Child
O'kot Bitek. Song of Lawino, Song of Ocol.

Course Requirements:
One 4-6 page Response Paper = 35%
Midterm Exam = 40%
Class Presentation = 15%
Active preparation and class participation = 10%

Course Policies:

Discussion (participation) is a major component of this course. Your presence in class is important for everyone, but especially for you. More than three unexcused absences will bring your final grade down by 1%. Three late appearances equal one unexcused absence.

Papers are due at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. For each day that the paper is late, the letter grade will fall by one full grade: an 'A' essay due on Friday will be a 'F' by next Thursday. ALWAYS MAKE COPIES AND BACK UP YOUR WORK!

Plagiarism Policy (English Department)

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism -- "The appropriation or imitation of the language, of ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's own original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) -- has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, upto and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

Information for students with Disabilities:

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the co-ordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Tentative Syllabus.

Week 1

1/8- Introduction to the Course
1/10- Defining 'Postcoloniality' and Introduction to Postcolonial Indian Literature

Week 2: The First Segment

1/15- Discussion: Cultural Diversity in Post-colonial Indian society
1/17- The Guide by R.K. Narayan

Week 3

1/22- continued
1/24- continued, Selected Short Sories of Mulk Raj Anand.

Week 4

1/29- continued
1/31- "Breast-Giver" by Mahasweta Devi from In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics

Week 5

2/5- Anita Desai's "A Devoted Son" from The Penguin Book of Modern Indian Short Stories.
2/7- Raja Rao's "Companions" from The Penguin Book of Modern Indian Short Stories

**Week 6: The Second Segment**

2/12- Introduction to Postcolonial African Literature, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. (Movie: "An Interview with Chinua Achebe")
2/14- continued

**Week 7**

2/19- Thiong'o wa Ngugi's *Weep not Child.*
2/21- continued

**Week 8**

2/26- Review for the Midterm Examination
2/28- Midterm Examination

**Week 9: The Third Segment**

3/5- Thomas Mann's *The Transposed Heads, an Indian Legend*
3/7- Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana* from Three Plays

**Week 10**

3/19- Kalidasa's *Shakuntala* from The Loom of Time
3/21- Vaidehi's "An Afternoon with Shakuntala" from *Women Writing in India, Vol II*

**Week 11**

3/26- O'kot Bitek's *Song of Lawino, Song of Ocol*
3/28- Conferences for the 'Response Paper' and Student Presentations

**Week 12**

4/2- continued
4/4- continued,

**Week 13**

4/9- continued
4/11- Student Presentations

**Week 14**

4/16- Student Presentations
4/18- Student Presentations

**Week 15**

4/23- Student Presentations
4/25 - Response Paper due at the beginning of the class, Review