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ENG 2850-001: Post-colonial literature

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ENGLISH 2850: POST-COLONIAL LITERATURE

Spring 2005
TR 1230-1345, CH3170

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

Although European empires no longer officially exist, political, economic, linguistic, and cultural legacies remain. Imperialism and its aftermath have inspired an impressive array of literature—from naive tales of adventure to ironic fables of disillusionment. In this course, after a preliminary look at Rudyard Kipling, chronicler of British colonial experience, we will read texts by important authors from the Indian Subcontinent, the Arab World, the Caribbean, and Africa—most of whose techniques and themes have been influenced by the encounters of the imperial era.

The course is intended to help students begin to establish familiarity with diverse literatures of the world—to move beyond the Western canon to read, understand, and enjoy poetry, prose, and drama produced in and reflective of diverse cultures. It can help also those who plan to be teachers to develop multi-cultural curricula and to deal more confidently with students who have originally come from countries of the global South.

To varying degrees, the works we will read have been influenced by interactions between European culture and indigenous traditions; some have been translated but many were written originally in English. In learning to appreciate "non-Western" literature, we will also enrich our understanding of the "Western" tradition. We will strive to learn about a number of important authors from various parts of Asia and Africa, to develop an understanding of cultures other than our own, and to enhance our appreciation of language and literature.

This course is writing intensive; written work is an important basis of evaluation.

TEXTS
Achebe, Things Fall Apart; Kipling, Two Tales; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, A Grain of Wheat; Clerk and Siegel, eds., Modern Literatures of the Non-Western World (C&S);
(Each student should also have a handbook of usage and a collegiate desk dictionary.)

DR. Z.'S OFFICE HOURS
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:50-3:20 (1350-1520); 4:50-5:50 (1650-1750);
Additional Hours by Appointment

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

WEEK I

Tuesday, 11 January: Introductions: Class, Course, Assignments
Thursday, 13 January: Rudyard Kipling, "The Man Who Would Be King," Two Tales

WEEK II

Tuesday, 18 January: Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart (Read first five chapters.)
Thursday, 20 January: Things Fall Apart (Complete Part One.)

WEEK III

Tuesday, 25 January: Things Fall Apart (Complete novel for today.)
Thursday, 27 January: Things Fall Apart (concluded)
Assignment of Paper I reviewed
Introduction to "South Asia," C&S 195-200
Tagore, "Where the Mind Is Without Fear," C&S 216
Joshi, "The Universal Man," C&S 233-34
WEEK IV

Tuesday, 1 February: Introduction to "South Asia," C&S 195-200
Tagore, "Where the Mind Is Without Fear," C&S 216
Joshi, "The Universal Man," C&S 233-34
Faiz, "Ghazal," C&S 231-32;


WEEK V

Nuhman, "Murder," C&S 390
Das, "An Introduction," C&S 345-347

Thursday, 10 February: Devi, "Dhowli," C&S 290ff.

WEEK VI

Tuesday, 15 February: Obeyesekere, "Despair," C&S 337ff.


WEEK VII

Tuesday, 22 February: Mid-Term Exam (Bring Test Booklets to class.)
Thursday, 24 February: Paper I due in class on this day.
Be prepared to share your paper with the class.
Introduction to "The Middle East," C&S 417ff.
Gibran, "On Children," 422-23
Baraduni, "Answers to One Question," C&S 458-59
Assignment of Paper II reviewed.
Schedule conferences for next week

WEEK VIII

Tuesday, 1 March: Haqqi, "The Tavern Keeper," C&S 531-533
Idris, "The Chair Carrier," C&S 608-612
Mahfouz, "Half a Day," C&S 536-539
Discussion of Mid-Term

Thursday, 3 March: No class meeting—conferences scheduled.

WEEK IX

Tuesday, 8 March: Kanafani, "The Slave Fort," C&S 479-482
Abd al-Wali, "Abu Rubbiya," 492-96

Thursday, 10 March: Khudayyir, "Clocks Like Horses," C&S 466ff.

WEEK X: SPRING BREAK

WEEK XI

Tuesday, 22 March: Adnan, "In the Heart of Another Country," C&S 450ff.
El Saadawi, "She Has No Place in Paradise," C&S 637ff.

Abu Khalid, "A Pearl," C&S 508
Tuqan, "Song of Becoming," C&S 435-36
Darwish, "Guests on the Sea," C&S 503-505
WEEK XII

Tuesday, 29 March: Introduction to "Africa," C&S 521-525
    Ogot, "The Rains Came," C&S 628ff

Thursday, 31 March: Senghor, "Prayer to Masks," C&S 534-536;
    Rabearivelo, "Flute Players," C&S 529-30;
    Read 699-714 for today.

WEEK XIII

Tuesday, 5 April: Finish reading "The Strong Breed" for today.
    Dramatic readings as assigned.
    One-paragraph Prospectus for Paper II (printed) due on this date.
    Schedule conferences.

Thursday, 7 April: "The Strong Breed" concluded; Introduction to "The Island"

WEEK XIV

    Finish reading the play for today.
    Dramatic readings as assigned.

Thursday, 14 April: "The Island" concluded

WEEK XV

Tuesday, 19 April: Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, A Grain of Wheat; read first eight chapters.

Thursday, 21 April: A Grain of Wheat; read at least first twelve chapters.

WEEK XVI

Tuesday, 26 April: A Grain of Wheat; finish reading the novel for today.

Thursday, 28 April: A Grain of Wheat concluded
    Exam Review
    PAPER II DUE IN CLASS.

CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM:

GRADE CALCULATION

Paper I--15%; Mid-Term Exam--10%;
Class Preparation and Participation (including quizzes)--30%
Paper II (including Prospectus)--25%; Cumulative Final Exam--20%;

NOTES

1. Students who are not in class cannot "participate"; participation presupposes attendance.
2. Papers and written work will be evaluated with reference to Department of English "Standards. . .," a
   copy of which is provided to each student.

ENGLISH 2850: WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

I. JOURNAL: Each student in the class should keep a separate notebook or journal in which you
    write both initial and considered responses to reading assignments and class discussion. From time to
    time, you will be asked to write written responses in class, and you should insert them into your journal
    when they are returned. Additionally, you should keep a list of terms and other words you wish to add to
    your vocabulary. I will not collect or grade your journal—it is a tool for you to use in mastering the work of
    the course. You will find the journal useful in preparing for tests and exams and in planning papers.
II. PAPER I (1000-1500 words/ 4 to 6 typed double-spaced pages) is due in class on 24 February. Paper I is an essay analyzing a specifically focused topic, theme, or technique in a literary text or grouping of shorter texts by an author born and/or resident in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, an Arab country of the Middle East or North Africa, or a country in sub-Saharan Africa. The text(s) may be chosen from among those assigned for the course and should date from some time in the twentieth century. Please check your proposed topic with me.

III. PAPER II, due in class on 28 April, is a comparative critical analysis (1500--2500 words/6 to 10 pages) of some specifically focused topic, theme, or literary technique in two substantial texts (or groupings of shorter texts), both of which must be written in the second half of the twentieth-century and by an author born and/or resident in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, an Arab country, a nation of sub-Saharan Africa, or an island-nation of the Caribbean. Paper topics must be approved by me--please come and consult about what you might wish to write about; topics must be submitted for approval in November. A one-paragraph prospectus (printed or typed and double-spaced) is due on 5 April. The prospectus should indicate the primary works to be discussed, and specify the approach and critical method. The most important secondary sources to be used should also be identified.

ALL PAPERS: For each paper, formulate and develop a clear argumentative thesis and support your critical observations with specific references to and quotations from the text of the work(s) you are discussing. As appropriate, you may consult and cite: other works by the author you are discussing; historical background works; or works of political, philosophical, or literary theory. Be sure to quote accurately, indicate all quotes and paraphrases, and document accurately (use the MLA system). (Paper topics must be approved by me.)

Plan ahead, especially for Paper II, as you may need to order the texts you wish to discuss by Inter-Library Loan.

Papers must be computer- printed or typed (double-spaced); print must be dark and letter-quality, either laser or ink-jet, and pages must be separated and stapled. See course policy statement for details on presentation of papers and on academic honesty.

PRELIMINARY LIST OF NOVELS: Accad, Evelyn, L'Excissee; Chinua Achebe: A Man of the People, Anthills of the Savannah; Etel Adnan, Sitt Marie-Rose; Ayi Kwei Armah, The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born; J. M. Coetzee, Waiting for the Barbarians, Disgrace; Tawfiq Awwad, Death in Beirut; Anita Desai, Fire on the Mountain, Baumgartner's Bombay; Nadine Gordimer: July's People, Burger's Daughter, My Son's Story; Wilson Harris, Palace of the Peacock, Ascent to Omai; Bessie Head, A Question of Power; Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Heat and Dust; Jamaica Kincaid, Annie John; George Lamming, Natives of My Person; Doris Lessing: The Grass Is Singing; Naguib Mahfouz, Midaq Alley, Palace Walk; Bharati Mukherjee, Jasmine; Abdelrahman Munif, Cities of Salt; V.S. Naipaul: The Mimic Men, In a Free State, Guerrillas, A Way in the World; R.K. Narayan, The Vendor of Sweets, The Painter of Signs; Flora Nwapa, Efuru; Ben Okri, The Famished Road; Salman Rushdie, Midnight's Children, Shame, The Moor's Last Sigh, The Ground Beneath Her Feet; Nawal el-Saadawi, God Dies by the Nile, Woman at Point Zero, Two Women in One; Tayeb Salih, Season of Migration to the North; Ken Saro-Wiwa, Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English, Prisoners of Jibs; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Weep Not, Child: Petals of Blood.
ENGLISH 2850--COURSE POLICIES

STANDARDS & POLICIES: Class attendance, punctuality, preparation, and participation are expected and required. Students are responsible for all material covered in class and announcements or assignments made in class as well as for all assignments on the syllabus. Assignments are to have been completed by class time on the date for which they appear on the syllabus; books should be brought to class. Unannounced quizzes on assigned material may be given at any time. There will be no opportunities to "make up" missed quizzes. Daily preparation and participation in class discussion are important and will count significantly in the final grade.

EXAMS: There will be no opportunities to make up a missed exam other than in cases of documented medical emergency; (signing in at Health Service does not constitute documentation of a medical emergency). Midterm and Final Exams should be written on test booklets, available at the Union Book Store. Please write tests in ink and on the appropriate booklets.

ALL PAPERS AND OTHER WRITTEN WORK must be handed in on the date due.
1. Work turned in late without advance clearance will not be accepted.
2. Clearance does not constitute an "excuse." Work turned in late with clearance will be penalized, usually at the rate of 5 points per day of lateness.
3. Any lateness may delay the grading and return of the paper, perhaps until the end of the semester.
BE SURE TO KEEP A COPY OF EVERY PAPER YOU HAND IN. IN THE CASE OF A MISSING PAPER, THE STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPLYING A COPY.
A NOTE ON THE PRESENTATION OF PAPERS: Papers must be legibly printed or typed (double-spaced) on heavy or medium-weight white 9 x 11 paper. Computer print-outs must be letter-quality and dark and clear; continuous-form sheets must be separated and edges removed. There should be adequate margins. Each paper must have a separate title sheet that includes the title of the paper, course title, instructor's name, student's name, and date of submission. Repeat the title at the top of the first page of text. Papers must be numbered and clipped or stapled together in order.

DOCUMENTATION: Use the MLA system to cite both primary and secondary sources used in your papers. Consult the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 6th edition. Inform yourself about documentation conventions for electronic media information and materials. All such materials must be documented, and citation forms are illustrated in recent handbooks; go to the Writing Center for assistance. Electronic-media materials must be evaluated for quality at least as scrupulously as print materials. Please remember that you must absorb and process all materials: downloading is not research.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: All written work (papers, exams, tests, quizzes) must be original and independent. Please make sure that you understand the meaning of plagiarism and the policy of the English Department:
Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of the grade of F for the course.

STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please note that arrangements must be made through the Office of Disability Services; you should, therefore, contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.