

Supriya Goswami
LSHV 406-01
T 6:30-9:30 PM
Spring 2018

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Postcolonial Fiction and Film

In a broad sense, postcolonialism deals with the (after)effects of European colonization on cultures and societies. In this course, we will consider the historical, political, moral, and cultural context of European colonialism and its immense impact on fiction and film from around the world. Although not 'postcolonial,' we will begin by reading Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, a fictional narrative written in the heydays of colonialism, as a means to understand the profound and inescapable effects of colonization. We will then read fiction from Africa and South Asia in order to explore how such historical and political fissures as the Partition of India in 1947, the policy of Apartheid in South Africa, the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya, and the birth of postcolonial nations such as Botswana and Pakistan, among others, have played a significant role in shaping the ethics and values of fictional narratives which have emerged from these diverse locations. In addition, we will also watch films from and about Africa and South Asia as a means to further facilitate our discussions about postcolonialism.

Required Texts

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (9780385474542), Anchor Books
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah* (978-030745592), Anchor
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (978-0-393-92636-1), Norton
Nadine Gordimer *Six Feet of the Country* (on blackboard)
Bessie Head, *The Collector of Treasures and Other Botswana Village Tales* (978-1478607601), Waveland Press
Daniyal Mueenuddin, *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders* (9780393337204), Norton
Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* (9780060977498), Harper Collins
Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan* (9780802132215), Grove Press
Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Dreams in a Time of War: A Childhood Memoir* (978-0099548522), Vintage

Grading and Assignments

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Regular and informed participation is a key component of this class. This means coming to class prepared to express your ideas about the assigned readings and to respond thoughtfully to the opinion of others.

FINAL PAPER: Your final paper will be on a topic chosen by you in which secondary research is required. 20-25 pages, double-spaced, and in MLA style format.

CLASS PRESENTATIONS: You will be required to make two short oral presentations in class.

DAILY RESPONSE PARAGRAPH: You are expected to bring in a short handwritten or typed response to something you found interesting in the assigned reading for the day.

The aim of this assignment is to encourage you to think analytically about the texts that you will encounter in this class.

Course Policies

ATTENDANCE POLICY: As class discussions are integral to the development of critical thinking about our topic, attendance is mandatory. If you miss a class for any reason, please let me know beforehand.

SEEK TO CLARIFY ANY WORD OR CONCEPT THAT YOU HAVE TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING: You will be reading texts that will have words, concepts, and ideas that may be new to you. Do not hesitate ask me for an explanation or clarification during our class discussions.

Reading Schedule

FOCUS ON AFRICA

January

T 16 Introductions; *Heart of Darkness* (Conrad)

T 23 *Things Fall Apart* (Achebe); The following readings can be found in the Norton edition of *Heart of Darkness*: King Leopold II, “The Sacred Mission of Civilization” (119-120); G.W.F. Hegel, “The African Character” (208-12); Chinua Achebe, “An Image of Africa” (336-349)

T 30 *Six Feet of the Country* (Gordimer)

February

T 6 *The Collector of Treasures and Other Botswana Village Tales* (Head)

T 13 *Hotel Rwanda* (film)

T 20 *Dreams in a Time of War: A Childhood Memoir* (Ngũgĩ)

T 27 *Americanah* (Adichie)

FOCUS ON SOUTH ASIA

March

T 6 SPRING BREAK

T 13 *Train to Pakistan* (Singh)

T 20 *Earth* (film)

T 27 *The God of Small Things* (Roy)

April

T 3 *Monsoon Wedding* (film)

T 10 *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders* (Mueenuddin)

T 17 Film from Africa or South Asia (TBD by class consensus)

T 24 Conclusions; FINAL PAPER DUE

HONOR CODE MALS and DLS students are responsible for upholding the Georgetown University Honor System and adhering to the academic standards included in the Honor Code Pledge stated below: In pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor system: To be honest in any academic endeavor: and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

DISABILITIES STATEMENT: If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.