

Carleton University
 Department of English
 Winter 2010-2011

ENGL 3972A: Studies in Postcolonial Literature
 “PoCo Writing Strategies in African Literature”

Time: Wednesday and Friday 2:30pm – 5:00pm
 Location: TB 447, but check Carleton Central

Instructor: David Mastey
 Office: 1905DT
 Email: da.mastey@gmail.com
 Office Hours: Wednesday 1:00pm – 2:00pm

Description:

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to some of the major themes and concepts associated with postcolonial literature. Using African literature as a guide, we will explore the many different ways that postcolonial writers from across the continent (incl. Côte d’Ivoire, Djibouti, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, and Senegal) respond to colonialism and its legacies.

Required Texts:

Armah, Ayi Kwei. *Two Thousand Seasons*. 1973. Popenguine, Senegal: Per Ankh, 2000.
 Achebe, Chinua. *Arrow of God*. 1964. New York: Anchor, 1989.
 Kourouma, Ahmadou *Allah is Not Obligated*. 2000. trans. Frank Wynne. London: Vintage, 2007.
 Haggard, H. Rider. *King Solomon’s Mines*. 1885. Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2002.
 Waberi, Abdourahman. *In the United States of Africa*. 2006. trans. David and Nicole Ball.
 Lincoln, NE: Bison Books, 2009.

Library Coursepack:

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, eds. “Post-colonialism/postcolonialism.” *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*. London; New York: Routledge, 1998. 186-192.
 Loomba, Ania. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. 2nd Ed. New York: Routledge, 2005. [excerpts]
 Shapiro, Norman, ed. *Negritude*. New York: October House, 1970. [excerpts]

Commentaries [6]: 30% (or 5% each)

You will write a one-page commentary for each primary text we read. These commentaries are due at the beginning of the first class we discuss each new book and should follow MLA format as laid out in the latest edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. In each commentary, I want you to explore one issue about the text that you think is significant enough for classroom discussion (the effect of colonialism on persons, families, or cultures; writing strategies the author uses to highlight a particular concern; anything you noticed while reading that seems important) using evidence quoted from that text.

Final Essay [6-8pp]: 30%

You will write a six to eight page essay on one of the pre-defined topics which are attached to this syllabus. Like your commentaries, your essay should follow MLA format as laid out in the latest edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Additionally, you must use at least two secondary sources (not including dictionaries, encyclopedias, Wikipedia, etc.) from peer-reviewed journals or edited collections. Your final paper is due on Friday, 1 April.

Final Exam: 30%

I will give specific details on the format of the final exam in class on 1 April. It will consist of two sections: 1.) short answer: key terms and concepts; and 2.) a written essay. **NOTE:** the final exam is based largely on material we discuss in class.

Class Participation: 10%

I do not have a required attendance policy; if you feel sick please stay home and concentrate on improving your health. I will assess class participation marks based on your contributions to class discussions. Every time you contribute in class, I will make note of your participation.

Late Paper Policy:

All assignments are due on the dates indicated on the schedule and must be turned in at the beginning of each appropriate class. Unless we have an arrangement, I **DO NOT** accept late commentaries, including those submitted by e-mail or to the English Department's drop-box. Late final essays are penalized by five percent for every calendar day, except in extraordinary cases, e.g. a death in the family or severe illness, in which case you must provide me with a doctor's note or other appropriate documentation. Late final essays will receive minimal, if any, comments.

Plagiarism (adapted from the FASS Teaching Regulations 10-11):

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas,*

expression of ideas, or the work of others, as one's own." This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting an essay or commentary written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works, and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offense which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities to complete the necessary Letters of Accommodation. After registering with the PMC, please make an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with me in order to make the necessary arrangements as early in the term as possible, but no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first test requiring accommodations.

Religious Observance:

Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to me for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. You and I will work out accommodation on an individual basis, and I will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to you.

Pregnancy:

Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with me at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Schedule and Readings:

[note: Readings are to be completed for class by the date next to which they are listed]

INTRODUCTION:

- 5 January [W] Overview and syllabus
- 7 January [F] Key terms and concepts, part 1
 Loomba, 7-22
 Ashcroft, et al, 186-192
- 12 January [W] Key terms and concepts, part 2
 Loomba 91-106 and 145-153

COLONIAL NARRATIVE:

- 14 January [F] Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*
[commentary due]
- 19 January [W] Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, cont.
- 21 January [F] Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, cont.
- 26 January [W] Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, cont.

COUNTER-NARRATIVE:

- 28 January [F] Achebe, *Arrow of God*
[commentary due]
- 2 February [W] Achebe, *Arrow of God*, cont.
- 4 February [F] Achebe, *Arrow of God*, cont.

APPROPRIATION:

- 9 February [W] Shapiro, *Negritude*
 Sow, "And so where have they gone?"
[commentary due (any poem listed)]
- 11 February [F] Shapiro, *Negritude*
 Senghor, "Black Woman" and "The Totem"

16 February [W] Shapiro, *Negritude*, cont.
 Diop, “Africa”, “The Renegade”, and “The Vultures”

18 February [F] Final paper review

23 and 25 February [**Winter break - no class**]

POLEMIC:

2 March [W] Armah, *Two Thousand Seasons*

[commentary due]

4 March [F] Armah, *Two Thousand Seasons*, cont.

9 March [W] Armah, *Two Thousand Seasons*, cont.

SATIRE:

11 March [F] Waberi, *In the United States of Africa*

[commentary due]

16 March [W] Waberi, *In the United States of Africa*, cont.

18 March [F] Waberi, *In the United States of Africa*, cont.

SELF-REFLECTION:

23 March [W] Kourouma, *Allah is Not Obligated*

[commentary due]

25 March [F] Kourouma, *Allah is Not Obligated*, cont.

30 March [W] Kourouma, *Allah is Not Obligated*, cont.

CONCLUSION:

1 April [F] Course and exam review

[final paper due]

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FINAL ESSAY GUIDELINES

Final Essay [6-8pp]: 30%

Comparing two of the assigned primary texts, write a six to eight page essay on one of the four broad themes below. Like your commentaries, your essay should follow MLA format as laid out in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Additionally, you must use at least two secondary sources (not including dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.) from peer-reviewed journals or edited collections. Below each topic are specific suggestions on how you might approach one of these broad themes:

Knowledge:

European versus indigenous knowledges; Hierarchies of race; Written versus oral traditions; Understandings of geography and space; etc.

Gender:

The conflation of women and racial 'Others'; Assertions of masculinity/femininity and their relation to colonialism; etc.

Identity or race:

Hybridity; Indigenous conceptions of identity or race; Issues of nationality and belonging; Language and identity; etc.

Forms of imperialism:

Differences between types of colonialism; post-colonial cultural imperialism; political, economic, and/or social legacies of colonialism and/or imperialism; etc.

Need Help?

I am happy to meet with you to discuss your essay during my office hours or by appointment. Please come prepared with a preliminary thesis statement. Alternatively, you can schedule an appointment at the Writing Tutorial Service center. For more info, go to:

<http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/>



Island countries not included:

Mauritius (east of Madagascar)
Seychelles (northeast of Madagascar)

Unrecognized territories:

Somaliland (east of Djibouti)
Sahrawi Republic ('Western Sahara')