

Module Title: Postcolonial Literature: An Introduction to Key Debates and Texts

Year: SF

Coordinator: Melanie Otto

Credits: 5 ECTS

Assessment: Exam

Module Description

This module introduces students to key debates and texts in the field of postcolonial studies. The lectures are grouped together under headings relevant to historical and contemporary engagements with postcoloniality. Each theme consists of two lectures: one that frames the conceptual, critical, and historical debates on the given topic, the other discussing a literary text. The critical and literary works scheduled for each lecture represent the focus of discussion, but related authors, themes, and texts are introduced and discussed alongside them, giving direction for further study. In addition, and where appropriate, visual and audio material is used to illustrate as well as help generate debate.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module students will

- have a sense of key foundational debates in postcolonial studies
- be familiar with key texts in the field
- be able to engage with and critically reflect on postcolonial literatures in a conceptual as well as thematic context
- have a sense of the connections between literature and wider cultural and political debates in a postcolonial context

<<Please consult the weekly folders for class reading and additional material. The Library has eBooks of several course texts and I have made others available as PDF. You have to source your own copies of *Things Fall Apart*, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, *Midnight's Children*, and *The Rabbits*. They are available as hard copies in the Library or in most bookshops in Dublin.>>

The syllabus and weekly folders list all texts I refer to in the lectures. I do not expect you to have read everything ahead of class, especially for the more reading-intensive theory sessions. However, I recommend that you read at least one of the listed texts in preparation for the lectures. For tutorials, you may be asked to read additional material.

Week-by-Week Outline

1: *Postcolonialism: Political Philosophy and Critical Practice*

Under Western Eyes

2: Edward Said, excerpts *Orientalism* (eBook)

3: E M Forster, *A Passage to India* (eBook)

Language and Identity

4: -Chinua Achebe, 'The African Writer and the English Language', in Laura Chrisman and Patrick Williams (eds.), *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader* (Pearson, 1994) **(eBook)**

-Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 'The Language of African Literature' in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader* **(eBook)**

-Kamau Brathwaite, excerpts *History of the Voice* **(copies on Blackboard)**

5: Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

Subaltern Knowledge and Indigeneity

6: -Gayatri C. Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' Laura Chrisman and Patrick Williams (eds.), *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader* (Pearson, 1994) **(eBook)**

-Sarah Hunt, 'Ontologies of Indigeneity: The Politics of Embodying a Concept' **(copies on Blackboard)**

-Walter Mignolo, 'From Cross-Genealogies and Subaltern Knowledges to Nepantla' **(copies on Blackboard)**

7: STUDY WEEK

8: Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Hybridity, Mimicry, and Creolization

9: -Frantz Fanon, 'The Negro and Psychopathology Black Skin, White Masks (eBook)

-Homi Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Man'; 'Signs Taken for Wonders', *The Location of Culture* (Routledge 1994) **(eBook)**

-Édouard Glissant, 'Creolization and the Making of the Americas' **(copies on Blackboard)**

10: Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*

Place and Displacement: Settler Colonialism

11: -Lorenzo Veracini, 'The Settler-Colonial Situation'

-D.E.S. Maxwell, 'Landscape and Theme'

-Margaret Atwood, 'Death by Landscape'

(copies on Blackboard)

12: Shaun Tan/John Marsden, *The Rabbits*