Title of the Course: IED 448 (01) Postcolonial British Culture and Literature

Instructor: Prof. Dr. Serpil Oppermann
Year and Term: Spring 2016
Classrooms and Hours: B2/204 Thursday 13:00-15.50

Aim and Content: The aim of this course is to introduce British postcolonial Studies with regards to the ways in which the legacy of colonialism and imperialism has affected literature and culture in the British context. The global reach of English literature in circulating ideas and shaping cultures will be discussed at the beginning of the course with a focus on the role that literature played in colonial discourse formation and how colonized cultures and natures were transformed during the process of colonization. We will then discuss the emergence of postcolonial discourse after the decolonization process and its impact in motivating new forms of expressions, diversity of voices, cultural traditions, and accompanying ethical concerns. Postcolonial discourse also raises theoretical issues about the representation of non-European cultures and literatures, and about issues of narrative realism and experimental forms.

In studying the emergence of postcolonial discourse, we will investigate cultural, theoretical, narrative, and political issues raised by the selected texts, including the role of imperialism, neocolonialism, and ecological imperialism. By the end of the course the students will be familiar with the key concepts of postcolonial theory and the key issues raised in postcolonial literature. They will also have an understanding of the significance of postcolonial discourse as a way of thinking about cultural production and will be able to apply this understanding to the interpretation of the literary texts discussed in class. Consequently, we will examine the discursive formations, power relations, and social factors in shaping the imperialistic ideologies and their counter ideas by referring to the major colonial and postcolonial concepts and terms being disseminated by the cultural and literary discourses, such as racial prejudices, cultural imperialism, subalternity, orientalism, mimicry, hybridity, identity formations, and binary oppositons embedded within the master narratives of Western epistemology.

Course Outline:

Week I-III: General Introduction to colonialism, imperialism and postcolonial studies.
Key concepts in Postcolonial Theory.
Texts to be discussed:
2. Gregory Castle, ed. Postcolonial Discourses, "Postcolonial critical Theories" 100-116
6. Timothy C. Weskel's "Agents of Empire: Steps Toward an Ecology of Imperialism."

Other Texts that the students are expected to read:
2. Laura Wright's Wilderness into Civilized Shapes: Reading the Postcolonial Environment (Introduction, 1-18)

Week III-IV: Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s “From Decolonizing the Mind,” Kamau Braithwaite’s “Negus” and Okot P’Bitek From“Song of Lavino” in The Arnold Anthology of Post-Colonial Literatures in English. Ed. John Thieme. Angela Carter’s “Black Venus” in Black Venus


Week VII-VIII: Ben Okri's Astonishing the Gods

Week IX: Midterm I

Week X-XII: Buchi Emecheta’s Second Class Citizen with Homi Bhabha's "Of Mimicry and Man" in Location of Culture

Week XIV: Jamaica Kinciad’s A Small Place

Method of Instruction: Interactive: comprised of discussions, student presentations and lectures.

Course Requirements: Attendance is obligatory. More than 12 hours of absence will result in F1. Students must be fully prepared and come on time to class, having read the assigned material.

Assessment: In the grading of oral and written work 25% will be taken off for language mistakes. There will be two midterm exams (50% each. In this will be included 10 % of presentations), and a Final Exam (50%). The passing grade in the Final is 50.

Reading List:

A. Novels:
   Angela Carter. “Black Venus” in Black Venus
   Chinua Achebe. Things Fall Apart
   Ben Okri. Astonishing the Gods
   Buchi Emecheta. Second Class Citizen
   Jamaica Kinciad’s A Small Place
The following short texts are from The Arnold Anthology of Post-Colonial Literatures in English. Ed. John Thieme. London: Arnold, 1996

a. Okot P’ Bitek “From Song of Lavino”
b. Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s “From Decolonizing the Mind”
c. Kamau Braithwaite’s “Negus”

B. Critical texts:
14. Michel Foucault Power and Knowledge
16. Laura Wright. Wilderness into Civilized Shapes: Reading the Postcolonial Environment (2010)

Useful Links:
1. http://faculty.pittstate.edu/~knichols/colonial2.html#terms
3. http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEnglish/imperial/imperial.html
7. http://www.postcolonialstudiesassociation.co.uk/links/
8. http://www.leeds.ac.uk/arts/info/20044/institute_for_colonial_and_postcolonial_studies