Syllabus

J. M COETZEE: POSTcolonial MetaFICTION - 44732

Last update 13-09-2017

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: english

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Louise Bethlehem

Coordinator Email: louise.bethlehem@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Monday 12:30-13:30

Teaching Staff:
Prof Louise Bethlehem
Course/Module description:

Course description

This course offers concentrated insight into the work of Nobel prizewinner, J.M. Coetzee through considering his writings as “postcolonial metafiction.” Post-colonial theory explores the impact of European colonization upon the societies which it subjugated, recognizing that the cultural and political struggles which colonization set in motion continue to influence the present. Postcolonial literary theory investigates these concerns on the basis of texts produced in the colonial setting, whether by colonizers or by colonized subjects. Apartheid, the regime of racial segregation current in South Africa between 1948 to 1990, constituted a special form of colonialism. Coetzee’s texts address the political situation of the country of his birth obliquely, unlike the dominant forms of writing that apartheid South Africa produced. Using the notion of metafiction, we will explore the singularity of J.M. Coetzee’s writing as a response to conditions of racial and political oppression. The corpus to be investigated comprises two apartheid-era texts, _Dusklands_ (1974, with an emphasis on _The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee_) and _Waiting for the Barbarians_ (1980), one transitional or post-apartheid text, _Disgrace_ (1998), and one more recent text, _The Childhood of Jesus_ (2013) that is representative of Coetzee's contemporary output.

Students will have to complete an independent reading assignment on _In the Heart of the Country_ (1977) or _The Schooldays of Jesus_ (2016).

Course/Module aims:

Course aims

This is a text-based course which employs methodologies of close reading and historical analysis, with a significant reading load.

The course seeks to elucidate the paradigm of postcolonialism with special reference to postcolonial literary studies. It aims to apply a postcolonial literary analysis to a determinate instance of racial oppression, apartheid South Africa. It explores how J.M. Coetzee’s early texts, _The Narrative of J.M. Coetzee_ and _Waiting for the Barbarians_ deviate from the rhetoric of urgency (Bethlehem 2006) associated with anti-apartheid literature. It contrasts Coetzee’s texts with short examples of dominant struggle-era writing. It then goes on to explore the singularity of Coetzee’s poetics through mobilizing literary theoretical concepts such as allegory, social realism, metafiction, and situational metafiction (David Attwell, 1993). It turns to Coetzee’s most celebrated, or most notorious, work _Disgrace_ to inquire about the relations of continuity or rupture that hold between it as a post-apartheid text, and its predecessors. In summary, the course investigates the relations between a particular set of literary texts and the political
context in which these texts are embedded. Finally, it considers Coetzee's _The Childhood of Jesus_ and _The Schooldays of Jesus_ to consider the most recent turn in Coetzee's oeuvre.

**Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:**

**Course outcomes**


* To contextualize Coetzee’s work in its historical setting.

* To identify the characteristics of apartheid-era literature in English, and to compare Coetzee’s writing with this corpus.

* To investigate the possible relations between Coetzee’s text and the social and political settings in which they are embedded.

* To historicize works of postcolonial literature.

* To describe the singularity of Coetzee’s poetics in formal terms and to locate these in relation to metropolitan literary theoretical concepts such as "estrangement," "defamiliarization," and "metafiction."

**Attendance requirements(%):**  100

**Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:** Weekly seminars

Regular weekly attendance is obligatory. Roll call will be taken. Students are required to cover selected readings in the theoretical bibliography in accordance with the weekly schedule of readings. Students are expected to show close familiarity with the primary and theoretical texts under discussion. Only students who have submitted two short response papers towards the class participation grade will be permitted to submit term papers or seminar papers in this course.
Course/Module Content:
WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

Week 1
Introduction: Postcolonialism, Metafiction, Apartheid

David Attwell interviews John Coetzee in the wake of the Nobel Prize 2003
http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/an-exclusive-interview-with-j-m-coetzee

Said, Edward

Waugh, Patricia

Morphet, Tony
2004 "Reading Coetzee in South Africa," World Literature Today, 78(1), 14-16.

Phillips, Caryl

Optional:
Attwell, David

Crewe, Jonathan
DOI:htti:&lt;/dx.doi.org/10.4314/cja.v40i1.l

Week 2 Allegory, Metafiction, Struggle Literature.

Primary Texts for Comparison

Gordimer, Nadine
1976 "A Lion on the Freeway," Quarry 1976, edited by Lionel Abrahams and Walter
Week 3
Rivalry or Supplementarity

Primary text:
Coetzee, J. M.
1974 _Dusklands_ (Johannesburg: Ravan Press) ["The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee"]

Secondary Texts
Attwell, David

Easton, Kai

Week 4 Otherness
Attridge, Derek

Week 5
Into the Dark Chamber

Primary Text
Coetzee, J.M.

Coetzee, J.M.

Secondary Texts
Scarry, Elaine
Optional

Craps, Stef

Saunders, Rebecca

Week 6
Valdez Moses, Michael


Optional:

Hill, Shannen

Week 7
Primary Text

Coetzee, J.M.

Secondary Texts
Liberal Funk
Marais, Mike
2001 "Very morbid phenomena: Liberal Funk, the Lucy-syndrome and JM Coetzee's Disgrace" Scrutiny2 6(1):
Optional

McDonald, Peter D.

Marais, Mike

Week 8
Adamastor’s Daughters
Camões, Luis Vaz de

Graham, Lucy

Bethlehem, Louise
2014 “Refusing Adamastor: Lucy Lurie and White Writing in Disgrace,” in Approaches to Teaching Coetzee’s Disgrace and Other Works, edited by Laura Wright, Jane Poyner and Elleke Boehmer, 105-111 (New York: Modern Language Association).

Optional
Ahmed, Sarah

Boehmer, Elleke

Week 9

Gaylard, Gerald

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty

Optional
Sanders, Rebecca

Week 10
Coda: Reeling in Disgrace: Film Screening of Steve Jacobs’ 2008 movie, Disgrace.

Week 11
Primary Text
Coetzee, J. M.

Coetzee's The Childhood of Jesus, Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction, 57:2, 217-227, DOI: 10.1080/00111619.2015.1046589

Week 12
Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty 2014 "Lie Down in the Karoo: An Antidote to the Anthropocene"

Week 13
Presentation of Independent Readings Reviews by course participants

Week 14
Summary and integration
Creative Writing Exercise

Secondary Reading
Paul Williams (2014) Embracing Disgrace: Writing from the Dark Side, New Writing, 11:2, 250-260, DOI: 10.1080/14790726.2014.898661

Required Reading:
Primary Texts: Any edition of the text may be used.

Coetzee, J. M.
1974 _Dusklands_ (Johannesburg: Ravan Press) [The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee[]]

Coetzee, J.M.

Coetzee, J.M.

Coetzee, J. M.

One of the following two texts for the independent reading assignment

Coetzee, J.M.

Coetzee, J.M.

See WEEKLY SCHEDULE in the Course Content bloc for required reading of
SECONDARY or THEORETICAL material.

Additional Reading Material:
Recommended Reading

Coetzee, J.M.
1990 _Age of Iron_ (Harmondsworth: Penguin).


Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 33 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 33 %
Research project 34 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:
Students wishing to write a seminar paper in this course must set a topic with Professor Bethlehem by Week 8 of the course. Students will have to complete an independent reading assignment on _In the Heart of the Country_ (1977) or _The Schooldays of Jesus_ (2016). Students will have to present two response papers towards the class participation grade.