

POST-COLONIAL LITERATURES

Dr. Steven Thomas

office phone: x3193

office: Quad 352-B

office hours: odd days, 12:30—1:30 pm
and by appointment

ENGL 383—01A, spring 2010

time: odd days, 11:20 am—12:30 pm

place: SJU Quad 247

The slumdog never was a millionaire. In this course, we will read and watch some of the most exciting, international-award-winning fiction, film, essays, theory, and poetry from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. All of it falls under the category of post-colonial literature.

What is post-colonial literature? Most of the English literature that we read in school, from William Shakespeare to Virginia Woolf, was written when the European empires were violently colonizing the rest of the world. After the world-wide devastation of the Great Depression and World War II, colonized people across the globe began not only to fight back, but also to write back. However, even after the revolutionary struggles for political independence, the socio-economic and culture structures of the old empires still remained in effect, and so novelists and poets began to think about how to liberate not only their nation states but also their economies, their minds, their souls, and their literary traditions. Therefore, alongside their literary explorations of the postmodern and post-colonial condition, we will read their critical and theoretical essays about how to decolonize the mind.

TEXTS TO BUY

Amitav Ghosh, *The Glass Palace*
Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, 2nd ed.
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*
Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun*
Nguyen Duy, *Distant Road*
Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*
Ariel Dorfman, *Death and the Maiden*
Ariel Dorfman, *Blake's Therapy*
Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*
Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*

EVALUATION

Paper #1 on colonialism and postcolonialism (3-4 pages double spaced).....	15%
Paper #2 on the invention of Africa (5-6 pages double spaced).....	20%
Paper #3 on capitalism and terror (4-6 pages double spaced)	20%
Paper #4 on representation and political action (4-5 pages double spaced).....	20%
In-class essays.....	15%
Attendance and participation.....	10%

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Half of your attendance and participation grade is your attendance. You are allowed three absences. Unless you have a documented excuse, I will reduce your attendance grade by 20% for each absence in excess of those three.

The other half of this grade is your participation. I expect you to be prepared to discuss the reading every day and to listen respectfully to your classmates.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN WORK

All written work should follow standard MLA guidelines for college work. For each assignment, I will provide you with an assignment sheet that explains it in more detail.

POLICIES

Any act of plagiarism can result in an F for the course and can go on your permanent academic record. Please see The College of St. Benedict and St. John's University's official policy on plagiarism here: <http://www.csbsju.edu/catalog/2003-2005/Academic_Programs/Rights_and_Responsibilities/002.htm>.

All students have the right of non-discriminatory access to the programs at the colleges. If you have a disability and require special consideration, you must inform me as soon as possible.

I reserve the right to change this syllabus at any time during the semester and will inform you of all changes in a timely manner.

CALENDAR

Unit One – Re-orientation

Jan. 11 (Mon)	Introduction
Jan. 13 (Wed)	<i>Glass Palace</i> , pp. 1—54 and pp. 471—475
Jan. 15 (Fri)	<i>Glass Palace</i> , pp. 55—76 <i>Colonialism/Postcolonialism</i> , pp. xi—22
Jan. 19 (Tue)	<i>Glass Palace</i> , pp. 76—102 <i>Colonialism/Postcolonialism</i> , 22—90 Martin Luther King, Jr. “A Time to Break the Silence” and “I See the Promised Land” (on-line)
Jan. 21 (Thu)	<i>Glass Palace</i> , pp. 91—215 <i>Colonialism/Postcolonialism</i> , pp. 91—128
Jan. 25 (Mon)	<i>Glass Palace</i> , pp. 217—327 <i>Colonialism/Postcolonialism</i> , pp. 128—192 <i>Distant Road</i> , pp. xv—11

Jan. 27 (Wed) *Glass Palace*, pp. 327—470
Colonialism/Postcolonialism, pp. 192—228
excerpts from Aung San Suu Kyi's *Freedom from Fear*
Distant Road, pp. 23—27, 117—135, 151—55

Jan. 29 (Fri) **Paper #1 due** on colonialism and postcolonialism

Unit Two – The Invention of Africa

Feb. 2 (Tue) *Heart of Darkness*, pp. ix—31
Binyavanga Wainaina, “How to Write about Africa” (on-line)

Feb. 4 (Thu) *Heart of Darkness*, pp. 31—77

Feb. 8 (Mon) Achebe, Hawkins, and Said's essays in *Heart of Darkness*, pp. 336—49;
365—75; and 422—29
in-class essay on *Heart of Darkness*

Tuesday, movie screening: *Apocalypse Now* at 7:20 in Quad 346

Feb. 10 (Wed) *Apocalypse Now* (movie)
Norris's essay in *Heart of Darkness*, pp. 491—99
Distant Road, 15, 37, 253—257

Feb. 12 (Fri) *Things Fall Apart*, pp. 1—51

Feb. 16 (Tue) *Things Fall Apart*, pp. 52—125

Feb. 18 (Thu) *Things Fall Apart*, pp. 129—167
excerpts from Ngugi wa thiongo's *Decolonizing the Mind*

Feb. 22 (Mon) *Things Fall Apart*, 171—209
excerpts from Achebe, Soyinka, and Ngugi about language and literature
in-class essay on *Things Fall Apart*

Feb. 24 (Wed) *Half of a Yellow Sun*, pp. 1—65
excerpts from Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*

Feb. 26 (Fri) *Half of a Yellow Sun*, pp. 66—126
excerpts from Mudimbe's *The Invention of Africa*

Feb. 27—Mar. 7 SPRING BREAK

Mar. 9 (Tue) *Half of a Yellow Sun*, pp. 127—303

Mar. 11 (Thu) *Half of a Yellow Sun*, pp. 304—438

Saturday, CSBSJU Global Studies Conference

Mar. 15 (Mon) *Half of a Yellow Sun*, pp. 439—541

Mar. 17 (Wed) **Paper #2 due** on the invention of Africa

Unit Three -- Capitalism and Terror

Mar. 19 (Fri) *Shock Doctrine*, pp. 1—158
movie: “The Take” in-class

Mar. 23 (Tue) *Death and the Maiden*

Mar. 25 (Thu) *Blake’s Therapy*, 1—82

Mar. 29 (Mon) *Blake’s Therapy*, pp. 83—172
in-class essay

Mar. 31 (Wed) *Reluctant Fundamentalist*, pp. 1—76

Apr. 1—Apr. 5 EASTER RECESS

Apr. 7 (Wed) *Reluctant Fundamentalist*, 77—107
Shock Doctrine, pp. 409—84

Apr. 9 (Fri) *Reluctant Fundamentalist*, pp. 108—84
Mahasweta Devi, “The Hunt” with introduction by Gayatri Spivak

Apr. 13 (Tue) **Paper #3** on capitalism and terror

Unit Four -- Representation and Political Action

Apr. 15 (Thu) *Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 7—106

Apr. 19 (Mon) *Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 107—205

Apr. 21 (Wed) *Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 206—248

Apr. 23 (Fri) *Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 249—316
Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, excerpts

Apr. 27 (Tue) movie: *Slumdog Millionaire*
Ajay Gehlawat, "Slumdog Comprador," *CineAction* 78 (2009)
Salman Rushdie, "Attenborough's *Ghandi*"

Wednesday, Scholarship and Creativity Day

Apr. 30 (Fri) Salman Rushdie, excerpts

Finals Week **Essay #4 due** on representation and political action