

HUMA 4250

Masterpieces of Modern Literature:

Fall 2018

World Literature and Literary Theory

Time:	Tuesday and Thursday:	15:00 – 16:20
Venue:	LSK 1033	
Instructor:	Xiaolu Ma	Rm.3377; hmxlma@ust.hk
Office hours:	Tuesday and Thursday:	16:30 – 17:30 (Or by appointment)

Course Description

“The age of world literature is at hand,” the 77-year-old Johann Wolfgang von Goethe proclaimed to his young disciple Eckermann in 1827. No national literature has ever grown up in isolation from the cultures around it, and this is especially true for modern literature. This course focuses on masterpieces of modern literature. Texts will be read in English. This course will also introduce you to the field of literary theory, a central component of modern world literature. As you progress through this course, you will gain knowledge of the various premises and methods available to you as a critical reader of literature. You will identify and engage with key questions including ideology, cultural value, the patriarchal and colonial biases, travel/diaspora, and literary reconfiguration.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to

- a. do an in-depth analysis of the ideas in each work;
- b. examine how the modernist techniques and post-modern writing help convey an author’s thoughts and feelings;
- c. compare how an author’s religious and cultural background has affected his/her intellectual perception and aesthetic treatment of a particular theme;
- d. use textual evidence to formulate and communicate their ideas in a critical and effective manner.
- e. identify, discuss, and define some of the key theories of major literary and cultural critics and theorists

Schedule

World Literature

Unit 1 (Week 1-2)

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Conversation with Eckermann on Weltliteratur," in *World Literature in Theory*.

Jorge Luis Borges, "The Library of Babel" (1941); "Book of Sand" (1975)

Unit 2 (Week 2-3)

Gordimer, *Jump*, "Once Upon a Time"

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and David Damrosch, "Comparative Literature/World Literature: A Discussion" in *World Literature in Theory*.

Constructing/Dismantling Nationality

Unit 3 (Week 4)

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictée* (Intro and Chapter 1,2)

Homi Bhabha, "Introduction," in *Location of Culture*

Unit 4 (Week 5-6)

Adichie, *The Thing Around Your Neck*, "Imitation" & "A Private Experience"

Franz Fanon, "On National Culture," in *Postcolonial Criticism*.

Exiles and Diasporas

Unit 5 (Week 7-8)

Leung Ping-kwan, "Borders" in *Islands and Continents: Short Stories by Leung Ping-kwan*.

Shu-mei Shi, "After National Allegory" in *Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific*

Unit 6 (Week 9)

Kingston, "No Name Woman" in *The Woman Warrior*.

"Exile as Romance and as Tragedy," in *Exile and Creativity: Signposts, Travelers, Outsiders, Backward Glances*.

Writing in/for Translation

Unit 7 (Week 10)

Bei Dao's poem

Stephen Owen, "What is World Poetry?: The Anxiety of Global Influence" (*The New Republic*, November 19, 1990, pp. 28-32)

Intertextual Rewriting

Unit 8 (Week 11)

Kawabata Yasunari, "The Flowers of Spring" "The Convent Temple and the Lattice Door" in *The Old Capital*

Sandra Bermann and Michael Wood, "Introduction" in *Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation*

Unit 9 (Week 12)

Zhu Tianxin, "The Old Capital" in *The Old Capital*

Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (pp. 1-32)

Week 13 Presentation

Course Assessment

Class Participation	30%
Midterm Paper (Oct 8)	20%
Final Presentation (Week 13)	20%
Final Paper (Dec 15)	30%

Course Requirements

Class participation

This is a seminar course. You are expected to attend all classes and stay for the entire class. You are allowed two absences without penalty. Each additional absence lowers your final grade by 2%. Any student with 5 absences or more will fail this course.

There will be close reading of selected passages and thorough analysis of critical issues related to the texts. Students should read the assigned materials before class. I measure class participation based on the following criteria: arriving to class on time, completing required reading, engaging in class discussion, and respectfully listening when your classmates speak.

Midterm paper

3 pp in length. Times New Roman size 12 font, double line spacing, 1-inch margins, and half-inch indentations at the beginning of each paragraph. Critical analysis of one or more of our readings. Please submit it by 8pm of the due date. Please submit it in Word format and make sure that the file is readable. Unreadable files will not be counted as successful submission. Late submission will be accepted as late as two days after the due date but will receive half credit unless permission from the instructor is obtained before the due date.

Final presentation

A presentation on a topic of your choice. It should be on at least one of the readings we cover in this class.

Final paper

5 pp in length. Times New Roman size 12 font, double line spacing, 1-inch margins, and half-inch indentations at the beginning of each paragraph. Critical analysis of one or more of our readings. Please submit it by 8pm of the due date. Please submit it in Word format and make sure that the file is readable. Unreadable files will not be counted as successful submission. Late submission will be accepted as late as two days after the due date but will receive half credit unless permission from the instructor is obtained before the due date.

Academic Honesty

Acts of academic dishonesty are prohibited. Please go to our university webpage on academic dishonesty policy (<http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/index.html>), and read definitions of plagiarism and acts of dishonesty. Acts of dishonesty will lead to a failing grade in this course.