

Postcolonial Literature

In general, postcolonial literature refers to works written in the former colonies of Europe following the dissolution of colonial rule during the latter half of the twentieth century. In English this primarily means Anglophone literature from Africa, the Caribbean, and India since about 1947 (Indian independence), though some works from before this period are relevant. Texts from North and South America, Australasia, and Europe may also be described as postcolonial when they address issues of imperialism and its aftermath, such as nation building, race relations, diaspora, emigration, and exile.

Students taking the postcolonial qualifying exam must exhibit a careful understanding of all literature and criticism on the **Core List** below. Each student must also develop a **Specialty List** that includes at least ten additional texts chosen to reflect an area of interest to that student. Such areas of interest might include (but are not limited to):

- Literature of a particular nation or continent (African, Australian, Canadian, Irish, Indian, Latin American, Middle Eastern, Native American)
- British or European imperial literature (by authors like Kipling, Conrad, etc.)
- Translated postcolonial literature (in Arabic, French, Spanish, etc.)
- A thematic focus (like gender, diasporic identity, forced exile)
- A genre-based focus (poetry, travel writing, children's or adolescent literature)
- Postcolonial theory

While students are encouraged to devise their own specialty area and reading list, they may use the sample **Specialty Lists** below the **Core List** to develop their ideas. Specialty areas are developed in consultation with, and subject to the approval of, a professor of postcolonial literature. A specialty list should not have substantial overlap (i.e., more than two or three texts) with another comprehensive exam the student is taking.

A. Core List

Africa and its Diaspora (10)

| | |
|--|--------|
| Chinua Achebe, <i>Things Fall Apart</i> | (1959) |
| Ama Ata Aidoo, <i>Our Sister Killjoy</i> | (1977) |
| J. M. Coetzee, <i>Waiting for the Barbarians</i> | (1980) |
| Buchi Emecheta, <i>The Joys of Motherhood</i> | (1979) |
| Nadine Gordimer, <i>July's People</i> | (1981) |
| Ben Okri, <i>The Famished Road</i> | (1991) |
| Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, <i>Devil on the Cross</i> | (1980) |
| Flora Nwapa, <i>Efuru</i> | (1966) |
| Wole Soyinka, "Death and the King's Horseman" | |
| Amos Tutuola, <i>The Palm Wine Drunkard</i> | (1952) |

Australasia and its Diaspora (2)

Peter Carey, *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith* (1994)
David Malouf, *Remembering Babylon* (1993)

Caribbean and its Diaspora (5)

Michelle Cliff, *No Telephone to Heaven* (1987)
George Lamming, *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953)
V. S. Naipaul, *The Mimic Men* (1967)
Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966)
Derek Walcott, *Collected Poems* (1986)

European (Choose 3 from the following)

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899)
Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (1719)
E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India* (1924)
Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (1901)
William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (1610)

South Asia and its Diaspora (8)

Ruth Jhabvala, *Heat and Dust* (1975)
Kamala Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve*
Rohinton Mistry, *A Fine Balance* (1995)
R. K. Narayan, *Man-Eater of Malgudi*
Michael Ondaatje, *The English Patient* (1992)
Raja Rao, *Kanthapura* (1938)
Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* (1997)
Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (1981)

Criticism and Theory (3 books, 9 articles / chapters)

- Ahmad, Aijaz. "Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and the 'National Allegory.'" *Social Text* 17 (Fall 1987): 3-25. [Read after Jameson]
- Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Write Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*. New York: Routledge, 1989.
- Bhabha, Homi K. Two of the following: "Of Mimicry and Man," "Sly Civility," "Signs Taken for Wonders," "DissemiNation." In *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Fanon, Frantz. "The Fact of Blackness." *Black Skin, White Masks*. [1952.] Trans. Charles Lam Markmann. New York: Grove, 1967.
- —. *The Wretched of the Earth*. [1961.] Trans. Constance Farrington. New York: Grove, 1977.

- Hall, Stuart. "New Ethnicities." *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*. Ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen. London: Routledge, 1996. 441-49.
- Jameson, Fredric. "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism." *Social Text* 15 (Fall 1986): 65-88.
- Mohanty, Chandra. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses." *Boundary 2* (Spring-Fall 1984): 333-58.
- Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Knopf, 1993.
- —. "Introduction." *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1979.
- Spivak, Gayatri. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. U of Illinois P, 1988.

B. Sample Specialty Lists

Australian Literature

| | |
|---|--------|
| Murray Bail. <i>Homesickness</i> | (1980) |
| Peter Carey. <i>The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith</i> | (1994) |
| — . <i>Jack Maggs</i> | (1997) |
| Janette Turner Hospital. <i>Collected Stories</i> | (1995) |
| Thomas Keneally. <i>The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith</i> | (1972) |
| David Malouf. <i>Remembering Babylon</i> | (1993) |
| Mudrooroo (Colin Johnson). <i>Doctor Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World</i> | (1983) |
| Gerald Murnane. <i>The Plains</i> | (1982) |
| Randolph Stowe. <i>To the Islands</i> | (1958) |
| Patrick White. <i>A Fringe of Leaves</i> | (1976) |

Canadian Literature

| | |
|--|--------|
| Maria Campbell. <i>Half-Breed</i> | (1982) |
| Hiromi Goto. <i>Chorus of Mushrooms</i> | (1993) |
| Tomson Highway. <i>Kiss of the Fur Queen</i> | (1998) |
| — . <i>Dry Lips Oughta Move To Kapuskasing</i> | (1999) |
| — . <i>The Rez Sisters</i> | (1992) |
| Thomas King. <i>Green Grass Running Water</i> | (1993) |
| Joy Kogawa. <i>Obasan</i> | (1983) |
| Margaret Lawrence. <i>The Diviners</i> | (1998) |
| Sky Lee. <i>Disappearing Moon Café</i> | (1990) |
| Daphne Marlatt. <i>Ana Historic</i> | (1997) |
| Susanna Moody. <i>Roughing it in the Bush</i> | (1987) |
| Shani Mootoo. <i>Cereus Blooms at Night</i> | (1996) |

Sub-Saharan African Francophone Literature

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Mariama Ba. <i>So Long a Letter</i> | (1980) |
| Mongo Beti. <i>Mission to Kala</i> | (1982) |

| | |
|---|--------|
| Aminata Sow Fall. <i>The Beggar's Strike</i> | (1979) |
| Cheikh Hamidou Kane. <i>Ambiguous Adventure</i> | (1962) |
| Ahmadou Kourouma. <i>The Suns of Independence</i> | (1981) |
| Camara Laye. <i>The Dark Child</i> | (1954) |
| Werewere Liking. <i>It Shall be of Jasper and Coral</i> | (2000) |
| Rene Maran. <i>Batoula</i> | (1921) |
| Ousmane Sembene. <i>God's Bits of Wood</i> | (1971) |
| —. <i>Xala</i> | (1974) |
| Leopold Senghor. <i>Collected Poetry</i> | (1948) |

Victorian and Modern British Fiction of Empire

| | |
|--|--------|
| Joyce Cary. <i>Aissa Saved</i> | (1932) |
| —. <i>The African Witch</i> | (1936) |
| —. <i>Mister Johnson</i> | (1939) |
| Joseph Conrad. <i>Almayer's Folly</i> | (1895) |
| —. <i>The Nigger of the Narcissus</i> | (1898) |
| —. <i>Lord Jim</i> | (1900) |
| —. <i>Nostramo</i> | (1904) |
| —. <i>Victory</i> | (1915) |
| Graham Greene. <i>The Heart of the Matter</i> | (1948) |
| H. Rider Haggard. <i>King Solomon's Mines</i> | (1885) |
| —. <i>She</i> | (1887) |
| Rudyard Kipling. <i>Plain Tales from the Hills</i> | (1888) |
| D. H. Lawrence. <i>Kangaroo</i> | (1923) |
| George Orwell. <i>Burmese Days</i> | (1934) |
| Evelyn Waugh. <i>Black Mischief</i> | (1932) |
| Virginia Woolf. <i>The Voyage Out</i> | (1915) |

Victorian and Modern British Travel Writing

| | |
|--|--------|
| Joseph Conrad. <i>The Mirror of the Sea</i> | (1906) |
| —. <i>Last Essays</i> | (1924) |
| Charles Wentworth Dilke. <i>Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries During 1866 and 1867</i> | (1868) |
| E. M. Forster. <i>The Hill of Devi</i> | (1953) |
| —. <i>Alexandria: A History and Guide</i> | (1922) |
| —. <i>Pharos and Pharillon</i> | (1923) |
| J. A. Froude. <i>Oceana, or England and Her Colonies</i> | (1887) |
| Graham Greene. <i>Journey Without Maps</i> | (1936) |
| Mary Kingsley. <i>Travels in West Africa</i> | (1897) |
| Henry Morton Stanley. <i>Through the Dark Continent</i> | (1878) |
| Evelyn Waugh. <i>Remote People</i> | (1931) |