

**Special Topics in Post-Colonial Literature:  
Post-Colonial Literature and the Classics  
ANG-3110  
Winter 2021**

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**General Course Description:**

This course offers an examination of the relationship between the classical literary tradition and post-colonial literatures.

**Objectives:**

- explore an array of critical theories regarding classical literary forms (particularly tragedy and epic poetry) and examine how these forms relate to modern literary traditions in the aftermath of colonialism
- situate empirical and theoretical aspects of the concepts of the classical and the post-colonial in a wider context
- consider the historical and social contexts of the ancient and modern works

**Pedagogical Approach:**

In light of the distance-learning model imposed by the on-going COVID-19 public-health crisis, the course will be organized around a hybrid class structure consisting of weekly synchronous and asynchronous learning modules. Synchronous interactive sessions will be conducted via the Zoom video-conferencing platform. These meetings will be structured as open discussions where the works will be explored in relation to assigned critical readings. Asynchronous learning modules in the form of video recordings, narrated PowerPoint files, lecture notes, supplemental readings, and question sets will be posted regularly. The class will center on the discussion and analysis of assigned primary and secondary texts that students will be expected to have read in advance of each weekly meeting.

**Evaluation:**

Reading Quizzes	10%
Individual Project	20%
Essay (1500-2000 words: approximately 6-8 double-spaced pages in 12 point print, <u>not</u> including your references and bibliography)	30%
Final Exam (cumulative)	30%
Class Participation (weekly, active, and knowledgeable participation is expected)	10%

Quality of English will be one of the factors in the evaluation of written work. Class discussions will be held in English. Essays must be handed in on time and adhere to MLA guidelines. Penalties of 10% per day (not per class period) apply to late essays. Make-up tests will only be given at the discretion of the instructor.

### **Grade Breakdown for Written Work**

Content	60%
Grammar	20%
Argumentation	20%

### **Proper Citation Form:**

Please be aware that this is an upper-level course and written work will be held to a high standard. Improper citation of source material in written work, whether willful or otherwise, will not be tolerated and will result in a grade of zero on the assignment in question. If you are unaware of M.L.A. reference standards please consult Joseph Gibaldi's *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarized assignments, where the student attempts to pass off someone else's work as his or her own, with or without that person's consent, will mean a deferred grade and sanctions taken against the student as set out in the *Règlements disciplinaires*.

### **Required Texts:**

- Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*
- Seamus Heaney, *The Cure at Troy*
- Derek Walcott, *Omeros*
- Michael Ondaatje, *In the Skin of a Lion*

\*These books are in stock at Librairie La Maison Anglaise, Place de la Cité, 2600, boul. Laurier, Sainte-Foy, Québec, Canada G1V 4T3.  
(418) 654-9523 or  
(800) 228-5818

Students can utilize the following link to access the webpage for the textbooks for the course:

[https://www.lamaisonanglaise.com/?q=h.tvviewer&e\\_def\\_id=mRIjAXylzSM](https://www.lamaisonanglaise.com/?q=h.tvviewer&e_def_id=mRIjAXylzSM)

## Tentative Lecture Schedule

### **Week I: (January 20)**

Introduction  
Classical Literary Forms  
-Epic Poetry  
-Tragic Drama  
Post-Colonial Critical Contexts

Reading Assignment for next class:

- Aristotle, *Politics*, (Book I) (pp. 3-21)
- Amar Acheraiou, "Impact of Classical Discourse of Barbarism on Modern Colonial Taxonomies" (pp. 55-70)
- Lorna Hardwick, "Greek Drama and Anti-Colonialism: De-colonizing the Classics" (pp. 219-242)
- Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*

### **Week II: (January 27)**

Tragedy and the Festival of Dionysus  
The Theban Cycle  
Barbarians

Reading Assignment for next class:

- Rita Dove, *The Darker Face of Earth*
- Lorna Hardwick, "Greek Drama and Anti-Colonialism: De-colonizing the Classics" (pp. 219-242)

### **Week III: (February 3)**

Sophocles and the Limits of Human Knowledge  
Rita Dove's Antebellum Oedipus

Reading Assignment for next class:

- Anthony Easthope, "Bhabha, Hybridity, and Identity"
- Seamus Heaney, *Burial at Thebes*
- Athol Fugard, *The Island*

### **Week IV: (February 10)**

Antigone, Justice, & Human Law  
Post-Colonial Social and Political Contexts (Ireland and South Africa)

Reading Assignment for next class:

- Femi Osofian, *Tègonni: An African Antigone*

### **Week V: (February 17)**

Femi Osofian's Nigerian Antigone

Reading Assignment for next class:

- Homer, *The Odyssey*, Book IX (Cyclops) (pp.101-115 [pdf pagination]) or (pp. 373-387 [original document pagination])
- John Keats, "On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer"
- Margaret Atwood, "Helen of Troy Does Countertop Dancing" and "Siren Song"

**Week VI: (February 24)**

Homer and the Greeks

Reading Assignment for Next Class:

- James Joyce, *Ulysses*, Book XII (Cyclops)

**Week VII: (March 3)**

**READING WEEK – NO CLASS**

**Week VIII: (March 10)**

Joyce and the Irish

Irish Nationalism and Anti-Semitism

The Coen Brothers' "O Brother Where Art Thou?"

Reading Assignment for next class:

- Seamus Heaney, *The Cure at Troy*
- Derek Walcott, *Omeros*, (Books I & II, pp. 3-131)

**Week IX: (March 17)**

Theater of War: Battling PTSD with Sophocles

Philoctetes's Wound

Reading Assignment for next class:

- Derek Walcott, "The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memory"
- Derek Walcott, "Ruins of a Great House"
- Derek Walcott, *Omeros*, (Books III & IV, pp. 133-188)

**Week X: (March 24)**

Walcott's Antilles

Reading Assignment for next class:

- Homer, *The Iliad* (excerpts, pp. 229-276 [original pagination])
- Derek Walcott, *Omeros*, (Books V-VII, pp. 189-325)

**Week XI: (March 31)**

Walcott's Fragments and Epic Memory

Reading Assignment for next class:

- The Epic of Gilgamesh*, (pp. 115-130 [pdf pagination]) or (pp. 54-69 [original document pagination])
- Michael Ondaatje, *In the Skin of a Lion*, (pp. 1-100)

**Week XII: (April 7)**

Immortality Ideology  
Epic Builders

Reading Assignment for next class:

-Michael Ondaatje, *In the Skin of a Lion*, (pp. 105-244)

**(Term Paper Due)**

**Week XIII: (April 14)**

Ondaatje's Multi-cultural Toronto  
Continued Relevance of the Classics

**Week XIV: (April 21)**

**FINAL EXAMINATION**