

COURSE CONTENT

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| Course Code & Title | : | HL 4034 British-Asian Literature |
| Academic Unit | : | 4 AU |
| Co-requisite | : | HL101 |

Course Description

This course will examine some of the narratives that dominate but also transcend the field of British-Asian literature. In the first three novels, we will look at how writers depict double-consciousness, how they negotiate subject positions within and between different socio-cultural traditions/formations. With the last two novels, we will engage definitional concerns, that is, we will look at how writers try to escape the perennial absorptionism versus enclavism debate that constrains “minority writing.” How minority cultural production unsettles an assumed homology between race, culture and nation will be examined, as well as the sense in which British-Asian writing widens the cultural and semantic parameters of “Britishness.” At the same time, contemporaneous issues such as “post-nationalism” and “super-diversity” will also be addressed. Links with postcolonial studies and globalisation studies will be made where appropriate.

Learning Objectives

1. Students will read five novels in the area and utilise close reading skills to discuss issues raised by the texts. Major writers in the field will be covered.
2. Students will engage with and debate *some* of the topics raised, viz.:
general features of minority / diasporic / exilic writing,
cultural syncretism and relativism,
metropolitan reception of minority / migrant writing.
Orientalism / exoticism versus cultural contact / re-imagination.

Content

Course Outline

| Weeks | Text/topic | Readings | Misc |
|-------|--------------|----------|------|
| 01 | Introduction | | |
| 02 | Anita and Me | | |

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| 03 | Anita and Me | | |
| 04 | Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee | | |
| 05 | Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee | | |
| 06 | Sour Sweet | | |
| 07 | Sour Sweet | | |
| | <u>RECESS</u> | | |
| 08 | ESSAY CONSULTATION | | |
| 09 | A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers | | |
| 10 | A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers | | |
| 11 | The Match | | |
| 12 | The Match | | |
| 13 | Summary | | |

Learning Outcome

Students will obtain a grounding in the sub-field as well as knowledge of its recurrent concerns and debates.

Student Assessment

Students will be assessed by:

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|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| One written assignment | 30% |
| Course presentation & participation | 20% |
| Final Examination: | <u>50%</u> |
| | <u>100%</u> |

An essay of around 2,200 words is required for the written assignment component of the course.

NOTE - Both hard and soft copies must be submitted.

Textbooks/References

Primary readings:

1. Meera Syal. Anita and Me (1996)
2. Meera Syal. Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee (1999)
3. Timothy Mo. Sour Sweet (1982)
4. Xiaolu Guo. A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers (2008)
5. Romesh Gunesequera. The Match (2006)

Secondary readings:

These will be confirmed later.