

HL 3013 Postmodernism

(AY 2019/2020, Semester 2)

Assistant Professor Michelle Wang
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Class meets Tuesday 9.30am – 12.30pm SHHK Seminar Room 9
(School of Humanities)

Office hours Tuesday 12.30pm – 1.30pm SHHK 03-57
Wednesday 12.30pm – 1.30pm SHHK 03-57

Course Description and Objectives

HL 3013 examines the development of twentieth-century literary postmodernism by examining the work of postmodern writers and filmmakers from diverse backgrounds and nationalities, including Ireland, United Kingdom, Colombia, Italy, United States, and others. Drawing on the work of key postmodern theorists like Patricia Waugh (*Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* [1984]), Brian McHale (*Postmodernist Fiction* [1987]), Linda Hutcheon (*A Poetics of Postmodernism* [1988]), Fredric Jameson (*Postmodernism; or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* [1991]), and others, we explore constructions of temporality and spatiality in postmodern literature, attending to issues such as representations of reality, form and fragmentation, metafictionality, narrative, and aesthetics.

Assessment

<i>Continuous assessment</i>	50%
<i>Final exam</i>	50%

Academic Integrity Policy

Good academic work depends on honesty and ethical behaviour. The quality of your work as a student relies on adhering to the principles of academic integrity and to the NTU Honour Code, a set of values shared by the whole university community. Truth, Trust and Justice are at the core of NTU's shared values.

As a student, it is important that you recognize your responsibilities in understanding and applying the principles of academic integrity in all the work you do at NTU. Not knowing what is involved in maintaining academic integrity does not excuse academic dishonesty. You need to actively equip yourself with strategies to avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, academic fraud, collusion and cheating. If you are uncertain of the definitions of any of these terms, you should go to [the academic integrity website \(https://www.ntu.edu.sg/ai/Pages/academic-integrity-policy.aspx\)](https://www.ntu.edu.sg/ai/Pages/academic-integrity-policy.aspx) for more information. Consult your instructor(s) if you need any clarification about the requirements of academic integrity in the course.

Late Work Policy

All graded assignments are due in hard *and* soft copy by the start of class on the due dates. Late work will be accepted within twenty-four hours for a reduced grade, but will receive no instructor comments.

Attendance Policy

Your prepared and active participation is crucial to your success in the course. You may only do a make-up quiz/test for reasons that relate to an excused absence, with proper documentation such as a medical certificate, etc. Please note that it is your responsibility to get in touch with the instructor within five days of the missed class in order to arrange for a make-up.

Technology Policy

I welcome students to actively use technology to facilitate learning in the classroom, so long as it is being used on task and with one exception: no audio or video recording is allowed at any point during the lectures, seminars, and/or tutorials. All quizzes and exams are closed-book, unless otherwise stated; please ensure all electronic devices including cellphones, tablets, computers, etc. are put away into your bags at that point.

Note: This preliminary syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

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Texts

Amis, Martin. *Time's Arrow*. Vintage International, 1991.
 Calvino, Italo. *Invisible Cities*. 1972/1974. Vintage, 1997.
 García Márquez, Gabriel. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. 1967/1970. Trans. Gregory Rabassa. Penguin, 1972.
 (TBA) Ingalls, Rachel. *Mrs. Caliban*. 1982. New Directions, 2018.
 Kushner, Tony. *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches*. 1991. Nick Hern Books, 2017.
 O'Brien, Flann. *The Third Policeman*. Dalkey Archive Press, 1967.
 ———. "John Duffy's Brother." [available on NTU Learn]
 ——— (Brother Barnabas). "Scenes in a Novel." [available on NTU Learn]
Selection of theory, poetry, and short stories will be available on NTU Learn.

Films

Fight Club (1999). Dir. David Fincher.
Inception (2010). Dir. Christopher Nolan.
Lola Rennt, also known as *Run Lola Run* (1998). Dir. Tom Tykwer.
 (TBA) *The Shape of Water* (2017). Dir. Guillermo del Toro.

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Schedule

Week 01 – 14 Jan	Introduction to Postmodernism
Week 02 – 21 Jan	Temporality and Fragmentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Amis, <i>Time's Arrow</i> (1991)
Week 03 – 28 Jan	TBA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachel Ingalls, <i>Mrs. Caliban</i> • <i>The Shape of Water</i> (2017) • Selection of extracts
Week 04 – 04 Feb	Circularity and the Assault on Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flann O'Brien, <i>The Third Policeman</i> (up to end of chapter VII)
Week 05 – 11 Feb	From the Epistemological to the Ontological <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flann O'Brien, <i>The Third Policeman</i> • Brother Barnabas, "Scenes in a Novel"
Week 06 – 18 Feb	Postmodern Poetry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extracts from Bernadette Mayer, Lyn Hejinian, Kathleen Fraser, Susan Howe, and Tina Darragh (NTU Learn)
Week 07 – 25 Feb	Postmodern Short Fiction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extracts from Angela Carter, Margaret Atwood, Jennifer Egan (NTU Learn) <p style="text-align: center;">—03 Mar—RECESS—</p>
Week 08 – 10 Mar	Spatiality and Intangible Realities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italo Calvino, <i>Invisible Cities</i> (1972/1974)
Week 09 – 17 Mar	Postmodern Aesthetics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gabriel García Márquez, <i>One Hundred Years of Solitude</i> (1967/1970) (up to chapter that ends with Aureliano Segundo's marriage)
Week 10 – 24 Mar	Historiographic Metafiction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gabriel García Márquez, <i>One Hundred Years of Solitude</i> (1967/1970)
Week 11 – 31 Mar	Postmodern Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Run Lola Run</i> (1998) • <i>Fight Club</i> (1999) • <i>Inception</i> (2010)
Week 12 – 07 Apr	Postmodern Film and Drama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tony Kushner, <i>Angels in America: Millennium Approaches</i> (1991)
Week 13 – 14 Apr	Beyond Postmodernism