

HL 4043 Postmodernism

(AY 2020/2021, Semester 2)

Assistant Professor Michelle Wang
michelle.wang@ntu.edu.sg

Class meets	Monday	2.30pm – 5.30pm	LHS-TR-44 (Hive)
Office hours	Monday	5.30pm – 6.30pm	SHHK 03-57 (School of Humanities)
	Wednesday	12.30pm – 1.30pm	SHHK 03-57

Course Description and Objectives

HL 4043 examines the development of twentieth-century literary postmodernism by examining the work of postmodern writers and filmmakers from diverse backgrounds and nationalities. Drawing on the work of key postmodern theorists—including Patricia Waugh, Brian McHale, Linda Hutcheon, Fredric Jameson, 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.

Continuous Assessment

100%

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. Should you feel unwell, please *do not* attend class and seek medical advice instead, and follow up with me in an email. If a member of your household or family has acute respiratory illness, you should stay home to reduce the risk of community transmission; the School will accept the medical certificate of your family/household member as valid documentation for missing the class/assessment/test. You may only do a make-up quiz/test/presentation (where applicable) 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. In line with national and university public health policies, please note that this class may transition to online synchronous learning as and when necessary.

Technology Policy

I welcome students' active use of 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. The classroom is meant to be a space where students feel comfortable to respectfully, critically, and constructively exchange ideas about the texts discussed. All quizzes and exams are closed-book, unless otherwise stated; please ensure all electronic devices including cell phones, 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.

SYLLABUS*

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.
 Kushner, Tony. *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches*. 1991. Nick Hern Books, 2017.
 O'Brien, Flann. *The Third Policeman*. Dalkey Archive Press, 1967.

Selection of theory, poetry, and short stories will be available on NTU Learn and NTU Libraries.

Films (available at NTU Library Outpost)

- Angels in America* (2003). Dir. Mike Nichols.
Lola Rennt, also known as *Run Lola Run* (1998). Dir. Tom Tykwer.
Fight Club (1999). Dir. David Fincher.
Inception (2010). Dir. Christopher Nolan.

Schedule

Week 01 – 11 Jan	Introduction to Postmodernism
Week 02 – 18 Jan	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 03 – 25 Jan	From the Epistemological to the Ontological <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flann O’Brien, <i>The Third Policeman</i>
Week 04 – 01 Feb	Spatiality and Intangible Realities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italo Calvino, <i>Invisible Cities</i>
Week 05 – 08 Feb	Temporality and Fragmentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Amis, <i>Time’s Arrow</i>
Week 06 – 15 Feb	Postmodern Poetry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of poetry and theory
Week 07 – 22 Feb	Postmodern Short Fiction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of short fiction and theory
—01 Mar—RECESS—	
Week 08 – 08 Mar	Historiographic Metafiction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gabriel García Márquez, <i>One Hundred Years of Solitude</i> (up to chapter that ends with Aureliano Segundo’s marriage) • Selection of theory
Week 09 – 15 Mar	Postmodern Aesthetics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gabriel García Márquez, <i>One Hundred Years of Solitude</i> • Selection of theory
Week 10 – 22 Mar	Postmodern Drama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tony Kushner, <i>Angels in America: Millennium Approaches</i> (1991) • Selection of theory • Final essays due
Week 11 – 29 Mar	Postmodern Drama and Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Angels in America</i> (2003) • <i>Fight Club</i> (1999) • Selection of theory
Week 12 – 05 Apr	Postmodern Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Run Lola Run</i> (1998) • <i>Inception</i> (2010) • Selection of theory
Week 13 – 12 Apr	Final in-class test