

HL 4043 Postmodernism

(AY 2022/2023, Semester 2)

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Class meets Monday 2.30pm – 5.30pm HSS Seminar Room 6

Office hours – please make an appointment –
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, multiplicity and plurality, metafictionality, and more.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify the key concepts and strategies common to literary-critical forms relevant to the period, including postmodernism, intertextuality, metafiction and self-reflexivity.
2. Explain how specific literary/filmic texts lend themselves to a demonstration of the key philosophical ideas inherent to postmodernism.
3. Evaluate literary and critical sources in a rigorous and sophisticated manner.
4. Raise critically informed questions that demonstrate original thinking.

Continuous Assessment	100%
Participation	10%
Annotated reading (incl. presentation)	20%
Research essay	40%
Final in-class test	30%

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 NTU's Academic Integrity policy page on the Student Intranet

(<https://ts.ntu.edu.sg/sites/intranet/student/dept/tlpd/ai/Pages/NTU-Academic-Integrity-Policy.aspx>) for more information.

Please be reminded that in line with clause 4.1:

- repeating the work submitted to another course (whether at NTU or another institution, in part or in whole); and/or
- reusing material taught or submitted in another course ***without properly crediting source/s***

all constitute a violation of NTU's academic integrity policy and are subject to relevant penalties.

In line with NTU's Academic Integrity Policy, please attach the "Declaration of Authorship" form when you submit written assignments (available on NTU Learn). Consult your instructor(s) if you need any clarification about the requirements of academic integrity in the course.

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 the instructor via email. You may only do a make-up quiz/test/presentation (where applicable) for reasons relating to an excused absence with proper documentation such as a medical certificate, which needs to be submitted to the school (with a copy of email to the instructor). Please note that it is your responsibility to get in touch with the instructor within five days of the missed session to order to arrange for a make-up quiz/test/presentation.

Late Work Policy

All graded assignments are due in hard copy ***and*** soft copy (to be submitted electronically on NTU Learn through the Turnitin dropbox) 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.

Technology Policy

Students are welcome to actively use technology to facilitate learning in the classroom (e.g. ebooks), so long as it is being used on task and with one exception: no audio, video, and/or screen recording is allowed at any point during the lectures, seminars, and/or tutorials. This also applies to online classes (where applicable). 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, tests, and exams—where applicable—are closed-book, unless otherwise stated; please ensure all electronic devices including cellphones, tablets, computers, smart watches, etc. are put away into your bags at that point.

University Copyright Statement

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Appropriate action(s) will be taken against you (including and not limited to disciplinary proceedings and/or legal action) if you are found to have committed any of the above or infringed copyright.

Note: This 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.

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 & Miniseries (NTU Library Reserves)

Angels in America (2003). 6 episodes. Written by Tony Kushner. Dir. Mike Nichols. 352 minutes.

Fight Club (1999). Dir. David Fincher. 139 minutes.

Inception (2010). Dir. Christopher Nolan. 148 minutes.

Run Lola Run (also known as *Lola Rennt* [1998]). Dir. Tom Tykwer. 80 minutes.

Secondary reading list (cf. annotated reading and presentation)

—NTU Library electronic resources—

Bray, Joe, Alison Gibbons, and Brian McHale. *Routledge Companion to Experimental Literature*. Routledge, 2014.

Connor, Steven. *Cambridge Companion to Postmodernism*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Hutcheon, Linda. *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction*. Routledge, 1988.

McHale, Brian. "What was Postmodernism." 2007.

<<http://electronicbookreview.com/essay/what-was-postmodernism/>>.

Waugh, Patricia. *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*. Methuen, 1984.

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Schedule

Week 01 – 09 Jan	Introduction to Postmodernism
Week 02 – 16 Jan	Circularity and the Assault on Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flann O’Brien, <i>The Third Policeman</i> (1939–40/1967) (up to end of chapter VII)
Week 03 – 23 Jan	—PUBLIC HOLIDAY—
Week 04 – 30 Jan	From the Epistemological to the Ontological <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flann O’Brien, <i>The Third Policeman</i> <i>Assignment prompts</i>
Week 05 – 06 Feb	Spatiality and Intangible Realities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italo Calvino, <i>Invisible Cities</i> (1972)
Week 06 – 13 Feb	Postmodern Poetry and Short Fiction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Selection of poetry and short fiction</i> (NTU Learn)
Week 07 – 20 Feb	Temporality and Fragmentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Amis, <i>Time’s Arrow</i> (1991) <i>Annotated readings due</i>
	—RECI S—
Week 08 – 06 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 09 – 13 Mar	Historiographic Metafiction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gabriel García Márquez, <i>One Hundred Years of Solitude</i>
Week 10 – 20 Mar	Postmodern Drama and Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tony Kushner and Mike Nichols, <i>Angels in America</i> (2003) <i>Research essays due</i>
Week 11 – 27 Mar	Postmodern Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tony Kushner and Mike Nichols, <i>Angels in America</i> (2003) • <i>Run Lola Run</i> (1998)
Week 12 – 03 Apr	Postmodern Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fight Club</i> (1999) • <i>Inception</i> (2010)
Week 13 – 10 Apr	Final in-class test