

AFFIRMATIONS OF FEMALE STRENGTH IN SELECTED LITERARY WORKS FROM POST-COLONIAL INDIA, AFRICA (NIGERIA) AND AUSTRALIA

Overview

Women's experience, women's voices, women's literary and textual strategies in the literary artefacts they produce, in short, women's contribution to the national narratives of their varied cultures have now begun to filter through into the discerning reader's consciousness. These have widely expanded awareness and understanding of the socio-cultural issues and themes which underpin all literary works and which constitute their importance in fostering understanding of the global experience of humanity. **History** itself is no longer interpreted as being only male history; *herstory* is also recognised as part of the national and human narrative.

This course does not limit itself only to female writers but also explores how occasionally, male writers have also registered this awareness of the primacy of issues related to women in selected works. A mode of reading against the grain, of exploring the interstices of the text – resistant readings – will show how often women are represented as marginalised beings, deprived of both voice and agency in the societies in which they live. Paradoxically, even while the surface of the text may appear indifferent to, or unaware of its presence – the resonances of female strength refuse to be submerged. There is a need to expand awareness amongst readers everywhere, of the social and the political dynamics operative within the cultures from which a work emerges. It is also important to acquire awareness of the key theoretical and critical concepts related to postcolonial writing as well as to feminist studies from different regions of the world.

Modules	Module 1: India and Africa: October 24 – 28, 2017 Module 2: Australia : October 30 – November 3, 2017 Number of participants for the course will be limited to fifty.
Who Can Attend	Academicians and Writers interested in Postcolonial and Women's Studies Students at levels of M.A / M.Phil. / PhD Researchers from the Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty from academic institutions. Freelancing scholars with an active interest in Marginality Studies

Fees	The participation fees for taking the course is as follows:	
	Postgraduate Students of Mangalore University	Rs.1000/-
	Research Scholars)	Rs.1500/-
	Faculty/ Freelancer Scholars	Rs.2000/-
	International Participants	250/- USD
The participants will be provided with accommodation on payment basis.		

Lecture schedule

Module 1: Day 1 (October 24, 2017)

LECTURE 1: CONTEXT AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

10.30 am – 11.30 am: This lecture introduces participants to the socio-historical background, theoretical and critical concepts underpinning the Course.

Male Writing: CHINUA ACHEBE *Things Fall Apart*

This lecture will introduce participants to the literary achievement of Africa's first - published novelist who placed African writing on the map of world literature in English. It will focus on the historical themes of protest against the domination of Western imperialism and the erasure of the African culture. The 'invisibility' of women in the Ibo world portrayed may not seem readily perceptible, but a resistant reading will establish the survival of matriarchal strains in Ibo society that work against the patriarchal features which have been exacerbated by colonial rule.

LECTURE 2

11.45 am - 12.45 pm: [Later Work] *Anthills of the Savannah*

This lecture will focus on the changed emphasis on the role of woman in Achebe's laterwork. Beatrice is represented as a goddess-like being and women are acknowledged as possibly holding the key to the revival of a culture which has been negatively impacted upon by internal dissension and foreign conquest.

TUTORIAL

2.45 pm - 3.45 pm.

This session will encourage participants to identify theoretical concepts central to understandings of feminist perspectives and how these may be identified in the texts studied.

DAY 2 (October 25, 2017)

LECTURE 3

10.30 am - 11.30 am

Female writing; Black Feminism - FLORA NWAPA - *Efuru* [Idu]

This lecture explores the work of the first published Nigerian female writer whose subject matter and themes differ markedly from that of Achebe and other male writers of the time. Women's experience, women characters, varying structural and narrative strategies and emphasis on female strength are illustrative of 'black feminism'. Her works show the development of a new female voice in African writing which, ironically, did not seem to register at that time in the literary world.

LECTURE 4

11.45 am - 12.45 pm - BUCHI EMECHETA *Second-Class Citizen* [*The Joys of Motherhood*]

This lecture shows Emecheta's building on the tradition established by Nwapa. This and the next novel discussed show how resistant readings show the African female's capacity for asserting her strength against the pressures of a patriarchal society and affirming the matriarchal underpinnings of the Ibo culture.

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm TUTORIAL

DAY 3 (October 26, 2017)

THE INDIAN SCENE

LECTURE 5

10.30 am - 11.30 am INDIA - CONTEXT AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

[Male Writing] RKNARAYAN.-*The Guide*—This novel traces the capacity for survival of the female against the exploitative scheming of the male protagonist.

LECTURE 6

11.45 am - 12.45 pm *Waiting for the Mahatma; The Grandmother's Tale*

Set against the background of Gandhi- inspired passive resistance to British rule; the first novel explores the heroism of the female character as juxtaposed against the nervous hesitations of the male protagonist of the novel; the second novel traces the courage of a woman of an earlier age embarking on a search to recapture a recalcitrant husband and her success in the exploit.

2.45pm-3.45 pm **TUTORIAL**

DAY 4 (October 27, 2017)

In this section, the first lecture scheduled (Lecture 7) will trace the motifs of female resilience and resistance in the work of an older writer (Deshpande).It will include some preliminary comments on Indian feminism as well.. Lecture 8 explores the novel by the internationally known Booker prize winner (Roy) *The God of Small Things* as a work of affirmation of female strength.

LECTURE 7

10.30 am- 11.30 am

CONTEXT – Indian Feminism.

SASHE DESHPANDE –*The Dark Holds No Terrors*. [*That Long Silence*]

LECTURE 8

11.45am – 12.45 pm ARUNDHATI ROY –*The God of Small Things*

2.45pm-3.45 pm **TUTORIAL**

DAY 5 (October 28, 2017)

LECTURE 9

10.30 am -11.30 am - MEIRA CHAND–*Celestial Waters* (New Publication)

Note: Meira Chand is of Indian-Swiss heritage and was born and educated in London. She has lived for many years in Japan and India. In 1997 she moved to Singapore, and became a citizen. Her multi-cultural heritage is reflected in her eight novels. In the UK, her latest novel, *A Different Sky* was chosen as Book of the Month by the bookshop chain Waterstones, and was also long listed for the IMPAC Dublin literary award 2012. In the US, it was on Oprah Winfrey's recommended reading list. She has a PhD in Creative Writing from the University of Western Australia. She is involved in many programmes in Singapore to develop the literary arts and to nurture and promote young writers. She wrote the book from which the hit production, *The LKY Musical*, was developed. Hopefully, this will be an Address by the novelist in person - on her forthcoming publication (her 10th book) and its exploration of Indian woman as the embodiment female strength, *Shakti*. (See www.meirachand.com)

LECTURE 10

11.45 am -12.45 pm SUMMARY

EVALUATION - MODULE 1 : 2.45 pm-3.45pm

MODULE 2 - AUSTRALIA

DAY 6 (October 30, 2017)

LECTURE 11

10.30am -11.30 am. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES - AUSTRALIAN FEMINISM

This lecture explores the work of the prominent Australian female theorists who have contributed to the development of a distinctive strain of Australian feminism over the last one-hundred years.

LECTURE 12

11.45am – 12.45pm. BARBARA BAYNTON

This lecture will focus on the work of 19th century female writer, Baynton which presents a radical re-interpretation of the iconic figure of the heroic Australian bushman and the virtues of life in the Australian bush. The bush is, for women, the most destructive of environments - one which is a supreme test of her vulnerability and her capacity for survival

2.45 pm - 3.45 pm **TUTORIAL.**

DAY 7 (October 31, 2017)

LECTURE 13

10.30 am – 11.30 am. HENRY LAWSON – Selected Short Stories, "Drover's Wife," "Telling Mrs. Baker; BANJO PATERSON - Selected Poems. Film – "The Man From Snowy River"

These writers who helped create the myth of the Australian bushman as an iconic figure of heroism and contributed to the masculinist ethos of Australian writing

LECTURE 14

11.45 am - 12.45 pm MILES FRANKLIN - *My Brilliant Career*

The lecture explores an autobiographical novel by one of Australia's best-known female writers presenting the trials and tribulations of a young female artist and her attempts to break free of the restrictions of a patriarchal society.

2.45 pm - 3.45 pm **TUTORIAL**

DAY 8 (November 01, 2017)

LECTURE 15

10.30 am - 11.30 am KATHARINE SUSANNAH PRICHARD – *Coonardo*

[Replaces Ethel Turner - Seven Little Australians] – A woman writer takes on the challenge of depicting the taboo subject (at the time) of a sexual relationship between an Indigenous woman and a Caucasian man. This study allows for exploration of a range of aspects of the situation of women in the Australian society of the time.

LECTURE 16

11.45 am - 12.45 pm - PATRICK WHITE: *A Fringe of Leaves*

This work by Australian Nobel Prize Winner, Patrick White is based on a historical episode of an Englishwoman marooned amongst Aboriginal captors. The novel explores her resourcefulness and capacity for survival. -

2.45 – 3.45 **TUTORIAL**

DAY 9 (November 02, 2017)

LECTURE 17

10.30 am - 11.30 am PATRICK WHITE - *The Eye of the Storm*. /FILM-

Traces the enormous resilience – both physical and spiritual of the female protagonist Elizabeth Hunter

LECTURE 18

11.45 am – 12.45 pm

FRANKMORE HOUSE - 'From a Bush Log-Book'

MURRAY BAIL – 'The Drover's Wife.'

(Male Writing continued) - These short stories are illustrative of the continuing ambivalences in Australian male attitudes towards women

2.45 – 3.45 **TUTORIAL**

DAY 10 (November 03, 2017)

LECTURE 19

10.30 am – 11.30 am KATE GRENVILLE - *Lilian's Story*

Grenville recreates the story of a woman (based on a real-life model) who deliberately lives on the streets, an outcaste from society and its patriarchal rules and emerges as a heroic figure in her own right.

LECTURE 20

11.45 am – 12.45 pm **JOLLEY**, 'Wednesdays and Fridays' Paper Children
JEAN BEDFORD 'Isabella' (Short Stories)

EVALUATION – MODULE 2 2.45 pm - 3.45 pm

Foreign Faculty: Dr Cynthia vanden Driesen



Dr. Cynthia vanden Driesen was born in Sri Lanka and completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Ceylon. Her Master's and Doctoral Studies were completed at the University of Western Australia and a Diploma in Education at Murdoch University WA. She has taught at Universities in Sri Lanka, Nigeria and S.Korea and in Australia, taught at Edith Cowan University for a period of twenty-two years.

She was a founder-member of ASAA (Assn. for the Study of Australasia in Asia) established in 1994, served as its Australian President till 2015; and is currently on its advisory board. She is a Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia. Research Interests: post-colonial literatures in English – particularly Indian, African Australian; postcolonial theory; Women's Writing.

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Host Faculty: Prof Parinitha Shetty



Dr. Parinitha is Professor of English and is currently head of the Department of English at Mangalore University. Her Research interests are 'Gender Studies' and Missionary Studies.

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