

Syllabus:

English 369, African Literature, Macalester College, Fall 2004

South African Literature

Instructor: David Chioni Moore
Class: T-Th 10:10-11:40, Carnegie 208
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For fall 2004, English 369, African Literature, will focus on the literature of a single nation among Africa's fifty-three: South Africa. Like the United States, South Africa was long populated by indigenous peoples, and was then colonized by the Dutch and then the British. Like the United States, the early European colonists, finding the native peoples (who embodied rich diversity and substantial history) highly resistant, brought slaves from abroad. In South Africa they were mainly from Malaysia and Indonesia, and their descendants live on there today. As in the United States, South Africa's European colonists fought long wars against the native peoples, and an internal war between themselves, and this was followed by apartheid-like conditions, further immigration of foreign peoples, struggles against apartheid, and eventual partial, still incompleting resolution.

Against this backdrop, this course will survey South African writing from the 1940s to the present. We will read novels, letters, memoirs, and political tracts, and screen one film and several television shows. The texts, drawn from all major South African population groups, are powerful and compelling. They include writings by Paton, Rive, La Guma, Biko, Mda and Moodley, as well as by four Nobel laureates: two for literature – Gordimer and Coetzee – and two for peace – Mandela and, in the introduction to Biko, Tutu.

Ideal preparation for this course would include good background in both literary and African (most specifically South African) studies. Since this is a rare combination, students with one or the other (or with comparative background in American race and ethnic studies and literature) are welcomed. Students with neither prior preparation should consult the instructor before finalizing enrollment

Books:

1. Alan Paton, *Cry the Beloved Country* [1948]. New York: Simon & Schuster/Scribner, 1995.
2. Richard Rive [1964]. *Emergency*. Cape Town: New Africa Books, 2000.
3. Alex La Guma, *In the Fog of the Seasons' End* [1972]. Oxford: Heinemann, 1992.
4. Steve Biko, *I Write What I Like* [1978]. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2002.
5. J. M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians* [1980]. New York: Penguin, 1999.
6. Nadine Gordimer, *July's People* [1981]. New York: Penguin, 1982.

7. Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1995.
8. Zakes Mda, *The Madonna of Excelsior*, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002.
9. Praba Moodley, *The Heart Knows No Colour*. Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2003.

separately supplied:

- Geographic information packet on South Africa
- Oliver Schmitz and Thomas Mogotlane, dirs., the film *Mapantsula*, 1988
- South African Broadcasting Inc., *Prime Time South Africa*. Five television programs originally broadcast 1995-1996. San Francisco, CA : California Newsreel, 1997