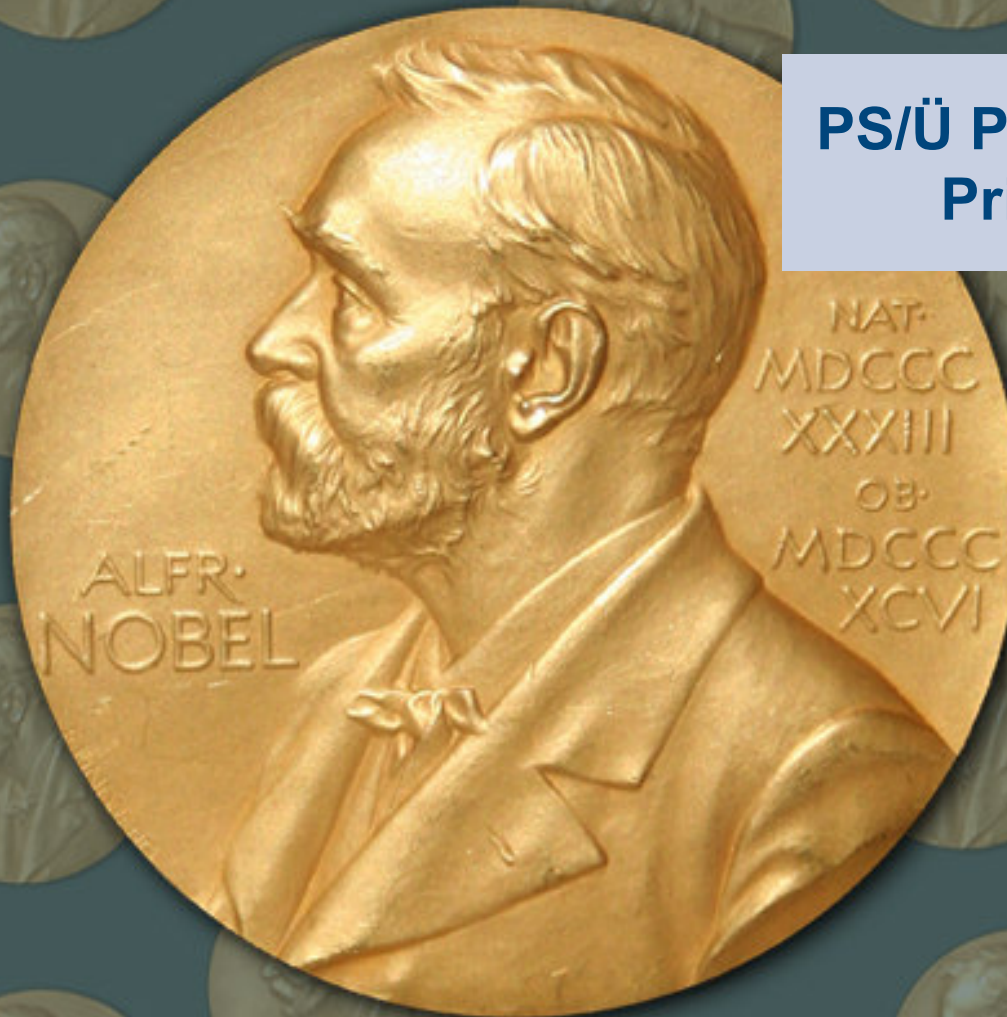


**PS/Ü Postcolonial Nobel
Prize Laureates**



PS/Ü Postcolonial Nobel Prize Laureates

Session 10: Counter-Narratives Literatures of Exiles

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Time: Wed 12:00 – 14:00

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Office Hours: Wed 16:00 – 17:00, U9, 202 (register via VC)



Travel Literatures and Counter-Narratives



Genres	Themes
Writing Back	Intertextuality
Life Writing	Tourism
Place Writing	Feminism
History Writing	Migration / Nomadism
Rewriting	Postmodernism
Counter Travel Writing	Identity
Fictions of Migration	Transculturalism / Globalisation

Rewriting

- Postcolonial studies are concerned with the so-called English canon and question how classical English texts have contributed to the construction of imperial world-views and stereotypes
- Texts such as William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611), Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) or Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) deal with the culture of the Empire and involve some figure of the colonised other.
- Writers from formerly colonized countries placed their books in programmatic opposition to English books
- E.g. M. George Lamming, *The Pleasure of Exile* (1960); Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966); J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986); David Dabydeen's *The Intended* (1991); T.C. Boyle's *Water Music* (1993)
- *V.S. Naipaul's A Bend in the River (1979)* – “Naipaul is Conrad's heir as the annalist of the destinies of empires in the moral sense: what they do to human beings.” (Nobel Prize Press Release 2001)

Rewriting

- **Intertextuality:** intertextual references to an explicit target
 - **Engagement with the hypotext:** critical, creative, constructive, deconstructive
 - **Repeats aspects to redraw premises:** repetition and resistance, reliance on and reversal of given structures
 - **Methods:** reverse narrative perspective, reconsider the plot, reposition marginalized characters, redress symbolic structures
 - **Contestation:** forms used in different context to establish different meaning
 - **Continuation:** very forms of language are inherited
-
- Rewritings reveal the extent to which English literature contributed to promoting imperialist and racist attitudes.
 - “vanguard text suggesting different meanings and giving renewed critical force to English Studies” (Döring 67)

Life Writing

- **Autobiographical Texts:** memoirs, diaries, journals,, letters, testimonials
- **Texts:** Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano* (1789); George Lamming, *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953); Sally Morgan, *My Place* (1987); Glenyse Ward, *Wandering Girl* (1988); Doris Pilkington, *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (1996); Caryl Phillips, *Cambridge* (1991); Michael Ondaatje, *The Cat's Table* (2011)
- **Life Stories of the Oppressed:** reversing familiar points of view, providing insights into unrecognised or unrecorded fields of experience
- **Strategies:** self-orientation, distance from home and loss, narrative procedure of language used
- **Result:** way to move from self-mutilation to self-mending, self-creation, self-assertion; “subjects *of* discourse” to “subjects *in* discourse” (Swindells qtd. in Döring 67); from object to subject; but, commodification of alterity
- **Reconstruction of subjecthood:** truth value, authenticity, fact/fiction divide, nationalist struggle

Life Writing

- **Life Writing as Writing Back:** writing back to the Enlightenment archetype of autobiography; versus essentialist and romantic notion of selfhood
- **Subgenres:** slave narratives, testimonials (mobilised by South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Inquiry into Stolen Generations in Australia)
- **Questions of Humanitarianism and Social Activism:** accounts of social injustice, oppression, violence, suffering; apartheid, slavery, indigenous dispossession, genocide, decolonisation; abolitionism and emancipation
- **Dialogical:** dynamic and interactive about testimonial discourse – search for witness; effects of empathy, compassion; ethics of recognition; transnational and transcultural passages
- “All this is to show that postcolonial life writing is a threshold genre. It traces and crosses boundaries between fact and fiction, memory and history, selves and others, home and exile – sometimes drawing these distinctions but more often blurring them.” (Döring 69)

Place Writing

- Postcolonial writers create a sense of place in poetry, narrative, drama
- Engagement with nature, culture, history, name and language
- Writing back to mapping, naming, taking possession
- Self and Place: personal identity through spatial location, topographies and life-cycles, writing back to toponymical dispossession, third space
- Particularly Australian Writing: e.g. Patrick White's *Voss* (1957), Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987); Paul Carter's *The Road to Botany Bay* (1987); Bruce Chatwin's *The Songlines* (1987); Doris Pilkington, *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (1996)
- Black Atlantic: Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place* (1988), etc.
- Europe: Caryl Phillips, *The European Tribe* (1987), Bernadine Evaristo, *Soul Tourists* (2005),
- But not only nature, also cities, see Black (British) *Bildungsroman*

History Writing

- **History as Masternarrative:** mastery and domination; self-demonstration of power; engagement with use of history and involvement in use of power
- **History as Made:** produced and fabricated; history shapes and begets past by continuous act of interpretation and invention; act of writing history has actual, worldly consequences
- **Texts:** Patrick White's *Voss* (1957), Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988), Carly Philips' *Cambridge* (1991), Amitav Ghosh's *In an Antique Land* (1992), T.C. Boyle's *Water Music* (1993), Doris Pilkington's *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (1996), Fred D'Aguiar's *Feeding the Ghosts* (1997), Caryl Phillips's *The Atlantic Sound* (2000), Bernadine Evaristo's *Soul Tourists* (2005), Matthew Kneale's *English Passengers* (2000)
- **Historiographical Metafiction:** critique of historiography: construct fictional worlds in order to reveal and question how history is written, made, perpetuated, interpreted
- **Style:** metafiction, breaking illusions, intertextuality, anachronic narration, fragmented narration, multiperspectivity, unreliable narrators, hybrid genres,

Counter Travel Writing

- “Rehearsing the traditional rhetoric of discovery and adventure, they turn its trajectory around and shift the contact zones of cultural encounter to familiar territory such as England or the metropolis, whose outlines become defamiliarized as a result.”
- **Inverted Direction of Travel:** Ham Mukasa, *Uganda’s Katikiro in England* (1904), Nirad Chaudhuri’s *Passage to England* (1959), R.K. Narayan’s *My Dateless Diary* (1964), Caryl Phillips’s *The European Tribe* (1987), V.S. Naipaul’s *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987)
- **Home Travel/Touring:** Edgar Mittelholzer, *With a Carib Eye* (1958); Peter Abrahams, *An Island Mosaic* (1959); V.S. Naipaul, *The Middle Passage* (1962); V.S. Naipaul, *An Area of Darkness* (1964); Alex Haley’s *Roots* (1976); V.S. Naipaul, *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977); Doris Lessing, *African Laughter* (1982); Ferdinand Dennis, *Behind the Frontlines* (1988); Amryl Johnson’s *Sequins for a Ragged Hem* (1988); Thomas Keneally, *Now and in Time to Be* (1991); Ferdinand Dennis, *Back to Africa* (1992); Christopher Ondaatje, *The Man-Eater of Punanai* (1992); Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place* (1988)

Counter Travel Writing

- **Postcolonial Travelogues:** V.S. Naipaul, *Among the Believers* (1981); Vikram Seth, *From Heaven Lake* (1983); Salman Rushdie, *The Jaguar Smile* (1987); Pico Iyer, *Video Nights in Kathmandu* (1988); Tahir Shah, *Beyond the Devil's Teeth* (1995); Amitav Ghosh, *In an Antique Land* (1992); Caryl Phillips, *The Atlantic Sound* (2000); V.S. Naipaul, *The Masque of Africa* (2010)
- **Questioning Travel Writing:** inverse patterns of travel; pastiche, collage, juxtaposition, irony, playfulness, change perspective; questions modes of literary production and deconstructs narrative formulas and standards, conventions
- **Rewriting of Sub-Genre:** heroic epic, grand tour, merchant's travels, home tour, boy's own, romance, robinsonade, etc.; e.g. Derek Walcott, *Omeros* (1990); Led Murray, *Fredy Neptune* (1998)

Fictions of Migration

- **Topics:** Migration, e.g. from Africa/Caribbean, etc. to Europe and Great Britain, “colonisation in reverse”; Dislocation: e.g. of Afro-Caribbeans in Great Britain and Canada; Return e.g. to Africa and the Caribbean; Transcultural Movements, e.g. cosmopolitanism
- **Texts:** Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* (1956); V.S. Naipaul, *In a Free State* (1971); Buchi Emecheta, *Second Class Citizen* (1974); Bessie Head, *A Question of Power* (1974); Sam Selvon, *Moses Ascending* (1975); V.S. Naipaul, *A Bend in the River* (1979); Caryl Phillips, *The Final Passage* (1985); Hanif Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990); Caryl Phillips, *Crossing the River* (1993); V.S. Naipaul, *Half a Life* (2001); Yann Martel, *Life of Pi* (2001); Bernadine Evaristo, *Soul Tourists* (2005); Bernadine Evaristo, *Blonde Roots* (2008); Michael Ondaatje, *The Cat’s Table* (2011); Michelle De Kretser, *Questions of Travel* (2012)
- **Sub-Genres:** Novels of Development, e.g. Black British *Bildungsroman*; Multicultural Novel; Transcultural Novel; “fictions of inbetweenness”



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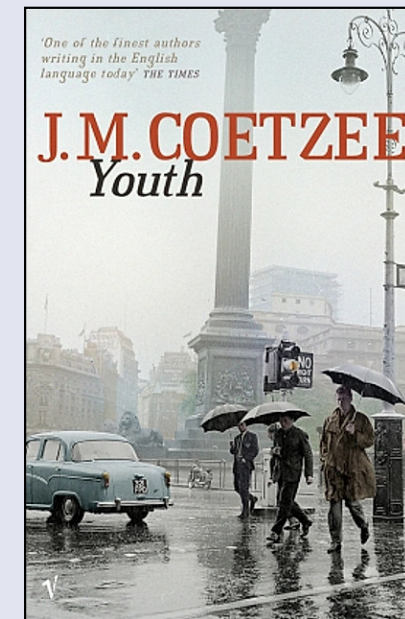
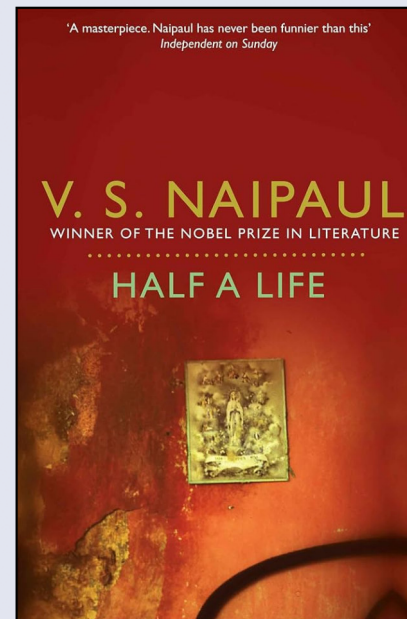
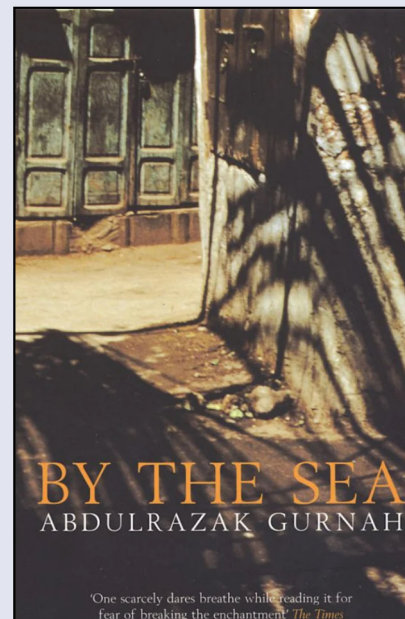
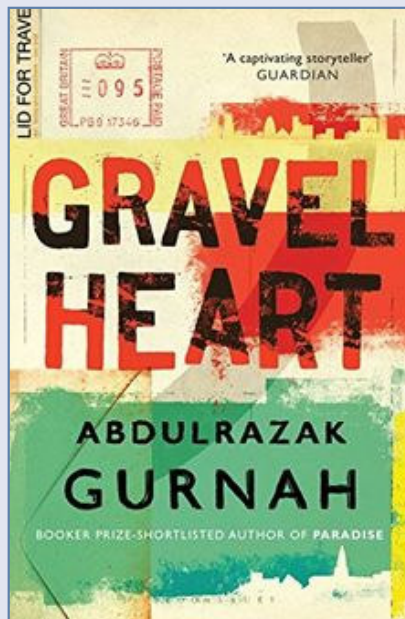
The Enigma of the Arrival (1987)

“Fifty years ago there would have been no room for me on the estate; even now my presence was a little unlikely. But more than accident had brought me here. Or rather, in the series of accidents that had brought me to the manor cottage, with a view of the restored church, there was a clear historical line. The migration, within the British Empire, from India to Trinidad had given me the English language as my own, and a particular kind of education. This had partly seeded my wish to be a writer in a particular mode, and had committed me to the literary career I had been following in England for twenty years. The history I carried with me, together with the self-awareness that had come with my education and ambition, had sent me into the world with a sense of glory dead; and in England had given me the rawest stranger’s nerves.” (Naipaul 17-18)



Literatures of Exile

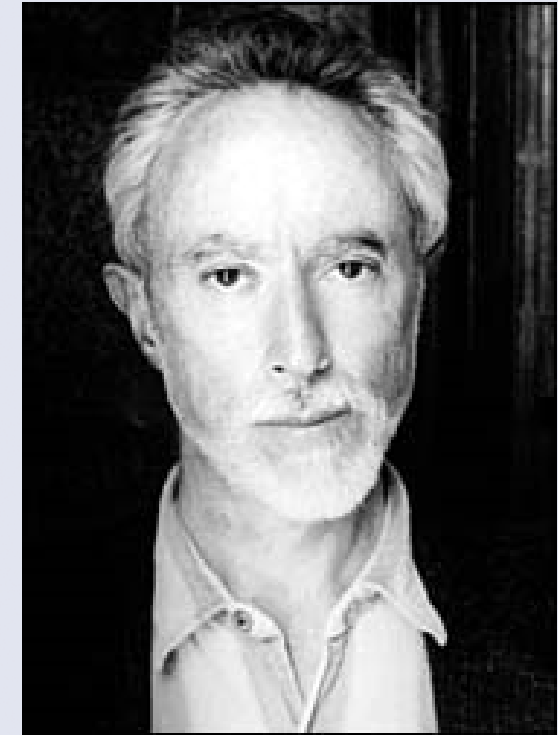
Literatures of Exile





J.M. Coetzee

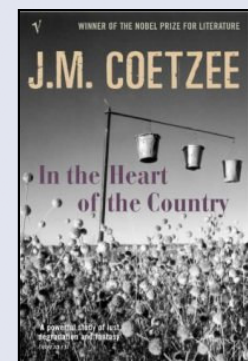
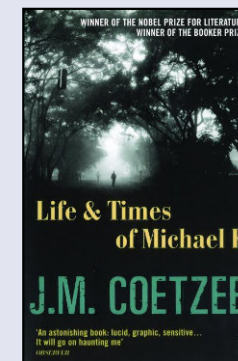
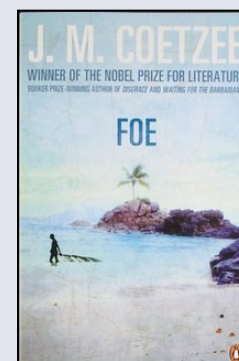
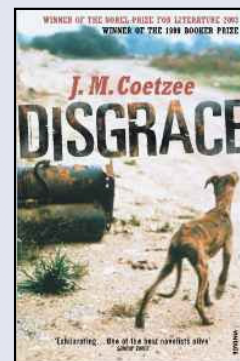
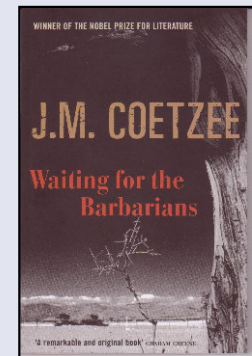
1940	Born in Cape Town
1961	Graduated from University of Cape Town
1961-1965	Computer Programmer in London
1965-1969	M.A. in Linguistics and Literature from the University of Texas Austin
1972-2000	University of Cape Town
1974	<i>Dusklands</i>
1978	<i>In the Heart of the Country</i>
1980	<i>Waiting for the Barbarians</i>
1983	<i>Life and Times of Michael K</i> , Booker Prize
1986	<i>Foe</i>
1990	<i>Age of Iron</i>
1997	<i>Boyhood</i>
1994	<i>The Master of St Petersburg</i>
1999	<i>Disgrace</i> , Booker Prize
2002	<i>Youth</i> , emigrates to Australia
2003	Nobel Prize
2005	<i>Elizabeth Costello: Eight Lessons</i>
2006	<i>Slow Man</i> , becomes Australian citizen
2007	<i>Diary of a Bad Year</i>
2009	<i>Summertime</i>



J.M. Coetzee's Work

- “The novels and non-fiction of Nobel-laureate J.M. Coetzee are characterized by an intense though oblique involvement with the political, intellectual, aesthetic and philosophical issues of our times.”
- “powerful critic and intellectual historian of colonialism and the history of racist thinking, apartheid, and censorship”
- “the first South African writer to produce overtly self-conscious fictions drawing explicitly on international postmodernism.”
- “colonialism and its legacy of racial, sexual, and economic oppression.”

- South African History
- Postcolonial
- Postmodernism
- Gender and Sexuality



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