English 532: Literature and Place
Postcolonial Ecocriticism

Session: Fall 2018
Thursdays 5:30-8:00 pm
Room: SI 214
Instructor: Dr. Shazia Rahman

Email: s-rahman@wiu.edu
Mailbox: Simpkins 122, M-F 8:30 am-4:30 pm
Office: Simpkins 224
Office hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10-11 am, and Thursday 4-5 pm

Course Objectives
The purpose of this course is to bring together the concerns of postcolonial critics and environmental humanists. Why do postcolonial writers sometimes focus on the non-human environment such as land, water and animals? In what ways are environmental issues inseparable from social issues? In order to answer these questions, we will use the strides made in postcolonial criticism and ecocriticism to better understand the context of texts from Nigeria, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. First, we will read and analyze a major text in postcolonial ecocriticism to map out the major concerns of the field. Then we will consider its implications for our understanding of postcolonial texts. We will end the course by considering the implications of zoocriticism and ecofeminism for postcolonial ecocriticism. Throughout this course we will be relating and comparing works of theory to works of the imagination in order to facilitate our understanding.

Texts:

- *The Storyworld Accord* by Erin James
- *Sozaboy* by Ken Saro-Wiwa
- *The Blind Man's Garden* by Nadeem Aslam
- *Noor* by Sorayya Khan (on reserve at Malpass library)
- *Ramchand Pakistani* directed by Mehreen Jabbar
- *Khamosh Pani* directed by Sabiha Sumar
- Various materials on reserve at the library

Methods of Teaching and Learning
The primary method of teaching and learning in this course will be class discussion. Student presentations will frame and produce these discussions, which will require careful reading in advance by all members of the class. The success and quality of this course is in your hands. I will expect you to raise questions, make comments, agree and disagree with each other in a respectful manner. Our discussions will help you think more deeply about the texts and eventually write better papers.

- Take readings notes, marking areas to help you understand and engage the material.
- Consider not only the texts but also the larger issues they raise.
- Interrogate the concepts and assumptions made by the reading.
- **Bring 2-3 critical comments/ discussion questions to class every class meeting.** *(Though I will not regularly collect these, I will spot check depending on class discussion.)*
Good discussion questions should be open-ended, have multiple answers, and provoke discussion that helps us understand not only the work in question but also how the work shapes our understanding of the topic at hand. Avoid questions that can be answered with yes, no, or some other simple sentence.

**Required Work**

The major writing requirement of this course will be a 12-15-page final research essay. This longer essay will come out of an oral presentation, 6-8 pages which you will hand in the day you make your presentation to the class. Both the shorter and longer papers will grapple with at least one of the theoretical texts in relation to one of the imaginative texts. In addition, you will teach one or two of the theoretical texts to the class by summarizing it/them and leading class discussion (4-5 pages) in a way that enables everyone to learn. You will hand in this 4-5-page paper on the day that you lead class discussion. Organize this presentation by keeping in mind that your peers will have read the work/s you are discussing and will want to know its/their major theoretical contributions and the effectiveness of those contributions.

The rough draft for your final essay will be peer reviewed before it is due. I will expect you to hand in your rough draft and your peer’s comments along with your final research paper so that I can track your improvement as well as your peer’s reading of your paper. **I will not accept an essay without a rough draft and peer’s comments.**

I require that you **read before class**. Expect to reread in order to understand enough to comment in class and ask questions. Your reading grade will comprise not only in-class discussion based on your reading for that day but also the quality of the feedback you provide for your peers based on your reading of their paper. Consider yourself a part of an intellectual community that requires thoughtful advance reading, regular and punctual attendance, and your active and engaged involvement in class discussion that showcases your reading.

**Breakdown of grades:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation on theoretical texts</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Paper</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Essay</td>
<td>12-15</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Class Policies**

- I am happy to accommodate special learning needs. Contact me ASAP.
- Reading, attendance and active participation are required. If you are absent more than once, or if you do not take part in class discussion in a way that shows me that you have done the reading, your reading grade will suffer.
- Under-prepared students may be asked to leave class. Reading and bringing course texts is part of preparation.
- Ethical and professional conduct is required. I expect academic honesty and collegiality in class.
- Feedback from you regarding the course is welcome at any time. Contact me, put a note in my mailbox, or speak to Dr. David Banash, the Director of Graduate Studies in English.
- Keep all graded assignments. Keep track of grades.
Late work is not accepted unless you have prior permission from me.

A U grade means that you have earned less than a C on your work. If you earn a U grade, you must meet with me to discuss how to improve and resubmit your work for regrading within one week. If you do not do so, your original F or D grade will stand.

WIU Policies

- **Students with disabilities**: In accordance with University values and disability law, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations where there are aspects of a course that result in barriers to inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement. To file an official request for disability-related accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center at 309-298-2512, disability@wiu.edu or in 143 Memorial Hall. Please notify the instructor as soon as possible to ensure that this course is accessible to you in a timely manner.

- **Sex discrimination**: University values, Title IX, and other federal and state laws prohibit sex discrimination, including sexual assault/misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. If you, or someone you know, has been the victim of any of these offences, we encourage you to report this to the Title IX Coordinator at 309-298-1977 or anonymously online at: http://www.wiu.edu/equal_opportunity_and_access/request_form/index.php. If you disclose an incident to a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator. The complete Title IX policy is available at: http://www.wiu.edu/vpas/policies/titleIX.php.

- **Student Rights and Responsibilities**: [http://www.wiu.edu/provost/students.php](http://www.wiu.edu/provost/students.php)

- **Academic Integrity Policy**: Scholastic dishonesty of any kind with respect to course assignments will result in an F in the course and will be reported to CAGAS. I am happy to answer any questions you may have about this. You should also consult the University policy at [http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php](http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php)

- **Disruptive Student in Class Procedure**: [http://www.wiu.edu/policies/disruptst.php](http://www.wiu.edu/policies/disruptst.php)

Tentative Schedule

**Week 1: 23 August 2018**


**Week 2: 30 August 2018**

James, “Preface” pages ix-xvi

James, “Toward Econarratology” pages 1-43

Presenter: ________________________________

Saro-Wiwa, *Soxoboy*

Paper: ________________________________
Week 3: 6 September 2018
James, “Rotten English and Orality” pages 90-121.

Presenter: ______________________
Saro-Wiwa, Sozaboy

Paper: _______________________

Week 4: 13 September 2018
Huggan and Tiffin. “Agency, sex and emotion.” pages 202-223 (reserve)

Presenter: ______________________
Aslam, The Blind Man’s Garden

Paper: _______________________

Week 5: 20 September 2018

Presenter: ______________________
Aslam, The Blind Man’s Garden

Paper: _______________________

Week 6: 27 September 2018

Presenter: ______________________
Khan, Noor

Paper: _______________________

Week 7: 4 October 2018
Gaard, Greta. “Ecofeminism Revisited” Feminist Formations vol. 23, no. 2, Summer 2011,
Week 8: 11 October 2018
No class

Week 9: 18 October 2018
Screen Ramchand Pakistani directed by Mehreen Jabbar

Week 10: 25 October 2018

Week 11: 1 November 2018
Screen Khamosh Pani directed by Sabiha Sumar

Week 12: 8 November 2018
Khan, Shahnaz. “Floating on Silent Waters” Meridians vol. 9, no. 2, 2009, pp. 130-152. (library)

Week 13: 15 November 2018
Peer Review; Bring completed 12-page draft of final research paper

Thanksgiving Break
Week 14: **29 November 2018: Final Essay Due**  

Presenter:  _____________________________________________

Lousley, Cheryl. “Narrating a Global Future” pages 245-267 (ereserve)  

Presenter:  ________________________________

Week 15: **6 December 2018**  
James, “Toward Storyworld Accords” pages 204-225  

Presenter:  ________________________________
Further Reading in Postcolonial Ecocriticism


Further Reading in Ecocriticism


Further Reading in Zoocriticism


Further Reading in Ecofeminism


