

Major Field Exam in Post Colonial Literature

(UPDATED FALL 2024)
YORK UNIVERSITY

For the purposes of the examination, post colonial literature is divided into the following fields:

- African Diaspora
- Indigenous
- Middle East
- East and Southeast Asian Diaspora
- South Asia (primarily India and Pakistan)
- The Global South Asian Diaspora
- Caribbean (still under development; refer to previous exam)
- African (still under development; refer to previous exam)

The aim of studying post colonial as a specialisation is to gain as broad understanding of the field, its literary production, and critical debates as possible. The field, however, is vast and is growing. Students must work with their supervisor to develop a list that includes texts from the Golden Theory list and either two or three fields for a total of 60 texts. In other words, students may decide to divide their exam according to either of the following organizations:

- **3 lists of 20 texts:** Golden Theory + Two Regions; **or,**
- **4 lists of 15 texts:** Golden Theory + Three Regions

In composing their lists, students are encouraged to read across genres and be prepared to discuss poetry, drama, and prose for their major field exam. In finalizing their lists, students are allowed to substitute up to 20% of the texts from this document; in exceptional cases more substitutions may be made, but they must be accompanied by a clear rationale.

Golden Theory

Choose twenty texts. Full-length books of theory: choose any three chapters to read.

- 1. B. R. Ambedkar, *Annihilation of Caste* (1936)
- 2. Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse* (1981) or *Poetics of Relation* (1990)
- 3. Homi Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man" (1984), "Sly Civility" (1985)
- 4. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (1986) or *Globalectics: Theory and the Politics of Knowing* (2012)
- 5. Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988)
- 6. Trinh T. Minh Ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (1989)

- › 7. Rey Chow, *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies* (1993) or *Not Like a Native Speaker: On Language as a Postcolonial Experience* (2014)
- › 8. Partha Chatterjee, “The Nationalist Resolution of the Women’s Question”, in *The Nation and its Fragments* (1994)
- › 9. Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness* (1995)
- › 10. Vijay Mishra, “The Diasporic Imaginary: Theorizing the Indian Diaspora” (1996)
- › 11. Hazel Carby, *Race Men* (1998)
- › 12. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999)
- › 13. Smaro Kamboureli, *Scandalous Bodies: Diasporic Literature in English Canada* (2000)
- › 14. Kandice Chuh and Karen Shimakawa, ed., *Orientations: Mapping Studies in the Asian Diaspora* (2001)
- › 15. Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (2003)
- › 16. Kandice Chuh, *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique* (2003)
- › 17. Sharankumar Limbale, *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies and Considerations* (2004)
- › 18. David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (2004)
- › 19. Alys Weinbaum, *Wayward Reproductions: Genealogies of Race and nation in Transatlantic Modern Thought* (2004)
- › 20. Benita Parry, *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique* (2004)
- › 21. Gayatri Gopinath, Introduction, *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Culture* (2005)
- › 22. Michelle Ann Stephens, *Black Empire: The Masculine Global Imaginary of Caribbean Intellectuals in the United States, 1914-1962* (2005)
- › 23. Leela Gandhi, *Affective Communities* (2006)
- › 24. Benedict Anderson, *The Age of Globalization: Anarchists and the Anticolonial Imagination* (2006; 2013)
- › 25. Shu-mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations Across the Pacific* (2007)
- › 26. Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (2007)
- › 27. Candace Fujikane, *Asian Settler Colonialism: From Local Governance to the Habits of Everyday Life in Hawaii* (2008)
- › 28. Colleen Lye, *America’s Asia: Racial Form and American Literature* (2009)
- › 29. Christina Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects* (2010)
- › 30. Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (2011)
- › 31. Joseph Jonghyun Jeon, *Racial Things, Racial Forms: Objecthood in Avant-Garde Asian American Poetry* (2012)
- › 32. Alice Te Punga Somerville, *Once Were Pacific: Māori Connections to Oceania* (2012)
- › 33. Alexander Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (2014)
- › 34. Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (2014)

- › 35. Larissa Lai, Slanting I, *Imagining We: Asian Canadian Literary Production in the 1980s and 1990s* (2014)
- › 36. Francesca Orsini, “The Multilingual Local in World Literature” (2015)
- › 37. Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (2015) or *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (1996)
- › 38. Jasbir Puar, *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability* (2017)
- › 39. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance* (2017)
- › 40. Ahmed Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Duke University Press 2017
- › 41. Goldie Osuri, “Imperialism, Colonialism and Sovereignty in the (post)colony: India and Kashmir” (2017)
- › 42. Aamir Mufti, *Forget English! Orientalisms and World Literature* (2018)
- › 43. Anne Anlin Cheng, *Ornamentalism* (2018)
- › 44. Nick Estes, *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (2019)
- › 45. Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiracist World* (2020)
- › 46. Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (2020).
- › 47. Edward Said et al., *The Selected Works of Edward Said 1966-2006* (2021)
- › 48. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (2021)
- › 49. Thy Phu, *Warring Visions* (2021)
- › 50. Alfian Sa’at, Faris Joraimi, and Sai Siew Min, ed., *Raffles Renounced: Towards a Merdeka History* (2021)
- › 51. Neferti X. M. Tadiar, *Remaindered Life* (2022) or *Things Fall Away: Philippine Historical Experience and the Making of Globalization* (2009)
- › 52. Pheng Cheah and Caroline S. Hau, ed., *Siting Postcoloniality: Critical Perspectives from the East Asian Sinosphere* (2022)
- › 53. Gayatri Chakravorty, Spivak. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (1999)

African Diaspora

- › 1. Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)
- › 2. C. L. R. James, *Black Jacobins* (1938)
- › 3. *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land*, translated by Clayton Eshleman and Annette Smith (1939) Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, translated by Richard Philcox (1952)
- › 4. George Lamming, *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953)
- › 5. Samuel Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* (1956)
- › 6. Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (1958)
- › 7. Sylvia Wynter, *The Hills of Hebron* (1962)
- › 8. Wole Soyinka, *The Interpreters* (1964)
- › 9. Bessie Head, *A Question of Power* (1973)

- 10. Edward Kamau Brathwaite, *The Arrivants: A New World Trilogy* (1973)
- 11. Gayl Jones, *Corregidora* (1975)
- 12. Ama Ata Aidoo, *Our Sister Killjoy or Reflections from a Black-Eyed Squint* (1977)
- 13. Audre Lorde, *The Black Unicorn* (1978)
- 14. Octavia Butler, *Kindred* (1979)
- 15. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Devil on the Cross* (1982)
- 16. Paule Marshall, *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People* (1984)
- 17. Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (1987)
- 18. M. NourbeSe Philip, *She Tries Her Tongue, Her Silence Softly Breaks* (1988)
- 19. Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions* (1988)
- 20. Jamaica Kincaid, *Lucy* (1990)
- 21. Patrick Chamoiseau, *Texaco* (1992)
- 22. Edwidge Danticat, *Farming of Bones* (1994)
- 23. Patricia Powell, *A Small Gathering of Bones* (1994)
- 24. Michelle Cliff, *No Telephone to Heaven* (1996)
- 25. Dionne Brand, *Land to Light On* (1997)
- 26. Marlon James, *Book of Night Women* (2009)
- 27. Marie NDiaye, *Three Strong Women*, translated by John Fletcher (2012)
- 28. Jesmyn Ward, *Salvage the Bones* (2012)

Indigenous

Turtle Island

- 1. Pauline Johnson *Selected Poetry and Prose*
- 2. Tomson Highway *The Rez Sisters* (play)
- 3. Thomas King *Green Grass Running Water* (novel)
- 4. Billy-Rae Belcourt *This Wound is a World* (poetry)
- 5. Eden Robinson *Son of a Trickster* (novel)
- 6. Richard Wagamese *Indian Horse* (novel)
- 7. Monique Mojica *Princess Pocohantas and the Blue Spots* (play)
- 8. Daniel David Moses. *Almighty Voice and His wife* (play)
- 9. Michelle Good *Five Little Indians* (novel)
- 10. Tomson Highway, *Kiss of the Fur Queen* (novel)
- 11. Linda Hogan, *Solar Storms* (novel)
- 12. *This Place: 150 Years Retold* (graphic novel)
- 13. Sacco, Joe. *Paying the Land*. (graphic novel)
- 14. Layli Long Soldier, *Whereas* (poetry)

Samoa

- 1. Albert Wendt *Sons for the Return Home* (novel)

- › 2. Sia Fiegel *Where We Once Belonged* (novel)

Guam

- › 1. Craig Santos Perez, *from unincorporated territory [hacha]* (poetry)

New Zealand

- › 1. Witi Ihimaera. *Pounamu Pounamu* (short stories)
- › 2. Tina Makerati *The Imaginary Lives of James Poneke* (novel)

Hawai'i

- › 1. Lili 'uokalani *Hawai'i's Story by Hawai'i's Queen*. (memoir)

Australia

- › 1. Alexis Wright, *Carpentaria* (novel)
- › 2. Tara June Winch, *The Yield* (novel)
- › 3. Tony Birch, *Common People*, (short stories).
- › 4. Sally Morgan *My Place*. (memoir)
- › 5. Evelyn Araluen, *Dropbear* (poetry)
- › 6. Jimmy Chi *Bran Nue Dae*, (play)
- › 7. Oodgeroo Noonuncal *My People* (poetry)

Middle East

- › 1. Naghibi, Nima. *Rethinking Global Sisterhood: Western Feminism and Iran*. Minneapolis: London 2007.
- › 2. Butler, Judith. "'What shall we do without exile?': Said and Darwish address the future." *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, no. 32, annual 2012, pp. 30
- › 3. Bihbihani, Simin et al. *A Cup of Sin Selected Poems*. Syracuse University Press 2023
- › 4. Rahimi, Babak. *Theater in the Middle East: Between Performance and Politics*. Anthem Press 2020.
- › 5. Sliwinski, Sharon. *Human Rights in Camera*. University of Chicago Press 2011
- › 6. Chomsky Noam. *Perspectives on Power: Reflections on Human Nature and the Social Order*.
- › 7. Darwish, Maḥmud, et al. *Unfortunately, It Was Paradise: Selected Poems*. University of California Press, 2013.
- › 8. Saunders, Doug. *The Myth of the Muslim Tide*. Vintage Canada ed. Vintage Canada 2013
- › 9. Farrokhzad, Forough. *Let Us Believe in the Beginning of the Cold Season: Selected Poems*. Name of poet is written with several different spellings. Any is fine.

- 10. Gibran, Kahlil. *The Prophet*. BN Pub., 2009.
- 11. Satrapi, Marjane and Gerald Peary. *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*. First American ed. Pantheon Books 2003
- 12. -- *Persepolis 2: The Story of a Return*. Pantheon Books 2004
- 13. Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*. 20th anniversary ed. Doubleday Canada 2023
- 14. Boochani, Behrouz et al. *No Friend but the Mountains: Writing from Manus Prison*. Anansi International/House of Anansi Press 2019
- 15. Georgis, Dina. "Hearing the Better Story: Learning and the Aesthetics of Loss and Expulsion." *The Review of Education/Pedagogy/Cultural Studies*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2006, pp. 165–78
- 16. Milani, Farzaneh. *Veils and Words: The Emerging Voices of Iranian Women Writers*. 1st ed. Syracuse University Press 1992
- 17. --- *Words Not Swords: Iranian Women Writers and the Freedom of Movement*. 1st ed 1st ed. Syracuse University Press 2011
- 18. Nguyen Viet Thanh et al. *The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives*. Abrams Press 2018
- 20. Sacco, Joe and Edward Said. *Palestine*. Complete ed. Fantagraphics Books 2017
- 21. Ghahraman, Golriz. *Know Your Place*. HarperCollins 2020
- 22. Dumas, Firoozeh. *Laughing Without an Accent*, Villard 2008
- 23. Neshat, Shirin et al. *Shirin Neshat*. Rizzoli 2010
- 24. Ranciere, Jacques et al. *Distributions of the Sensible Rancière between Aesthetics and Politics*. Northwestern University Press 2019.
- 25. Abdelrazaq, Leila. *Baddawi*. Just World Books 2015.
- 26. Puar, Jasbir. *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability*. Duke University Press 2017

East and Southeast Asian Diaspora

This list may change according to the needs of the students

East Asian Diaspora

- 1. John Okada, *No-No Boy* (1957)
- 2. Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior* (1976)
- 3. Joy Kogawa, *Obasan* (1981)
- 4. Fred Wah, *Waiting for Saskatchewan* (1985)
- 5. Ronyoung Kim, *Clay Walls* (1986)
- 6. Sky Lee, *Disappearing Moon Café* (1990)
- 7. David Henry Hwang, M. *Butterfly* (1988, 1993) or *Chinglish* (2011, 2012)
- 8. Hiromi Goto, *Chorus of Mushrooms* (1994)
- 9. Chang-Rae Lee, *Native Speaker* (1995) or *A Gesture Life* (1999) or *On Such a Full Sea* (2014)
- 10. Karen Tei Yamashita, *Tropic of Orange* (1997)

- 11. Kerri Sakamoto, *The Electrical Field* (1998)
- 12. Patricia Powell, *The Pagoda* (1998)
- 13. Lydia Kwa, *This Place Called Absence* (2000)
- 14. Kwai-Yun Li, *The Palm Leaf Fan and Other Stories* (2006)
- 15. Madeleine Thien, *Certainty* (2006)
- 16. Cathy Park Hong, *Dance Dance Revolution* (2007)
- 17. David Yee, *Lady in the Red Dress* (2009, 2010)
- 18. Kerry Young, *Pao* (2011)
- 19. C Pam Zhang, *How Much of These Hills is Gold* (2020)
- 20. Jessica J. Lee, *Two Trees Make A Forest* (2020)
- 21. Larissa Lai, *Iron Goddess of Mercy* (2021)
- 22. Joseph Han, *Nuclear Family* (2022)

Southeast Asian Diaspora Literature

- 1. José Rizal, *Noli Me Tángere* (1887)
- 2. Carlos Bulosan, *America is in the Heart* (1946)
- 3. Han Suyin, *And the Rain My Drink* (1956)
- 4. N.V.M. Gonzales *A Season of Grace* (1956)
- 5. Nick Joaquin, *The Portrait of the Artist as Filipino or The Woman Who had Two Navels* (1961)
- 6. Suchen Christine Lim, *Fistful of Colours* (1993)
- 7. K. S. Maniam, *In a Far Country* (1993)
- 8. Tash Aw, *The Harmony Silk Factory* (2005)
- 9. Kim Thúy, *Ru* (2009)
- 10. Monique Truong, *Bitter in the Mouth* (2010)
- 11. Alfian Sa'at, *Malay Sketches* (2012)
- 12. Balli Kaur Jaswal, *Inheritance* (2013) or *Erotic Stories for Punjabi Widows* (2017)
- 13. Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The Sympathizer* (2015)
- 14. Sonny Liew, *The Art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye* (2015)
- 15. Ocean Vuong, *Night Sky with Exit Wounds* (2016)
- 16. Jeremy Tiang, *State of Emergency* (2017)
- 17. Elaine Castillo, *America is Not the Heart* (2018)
- 18. Gina Apostol, *Insurrecto* (2018)
- 19. Pitchaya Sudbanthad, *Bangkok Wakes to Rain* (2019)
- 20. Souvankham Thammavongsa, *How to Pronounce Knife* (2020)
- 21. Danny Jalil, *Enrique the Black* (2021)
- 22. Natalie Wee, *Beast at Every Threshold* (2022)

South Asia

Select any twenty texts, aiming for a healthy balance across genres. At least half of your selection must be texts originally written in English. You can substitute another work by the same author for a text in this list, in consultation with your examiners.

Poetry

- 1. Selections from A.K. Ramanujan, *Poems of Love and War* (English translation, 1985)
- 2. Maki Kureishi, *The Far Thing* (1997)
- 3. Agha Shahid Ali, *The Country Without a Post Office* (1997)
- 4. Selections from the *Penguin Book of Indian Poets*, ed. Jeet Thayil (2022)
- 5. Selections from *Out of Sri Lanka: Tamil, Sinhala and English poetry from Sri Lanka and its diasporas*, ed. Vidyan Ravinthiran, Seni Seneviratne and Shash Trevett (2023)

Prose (short-stories, novels, memoirs)

- 1. Mirza Sheikh I'tesamuddin, *The Wonders of Vilayat; Being the Translation, Originally in Persian, of a Visit to France and Britain*, tr. Kaisar Haq (1765, English translation 2002)
- 2. Rokeya Hossain, "Sultana's Dream" (1905)
- 3. Rabindranath Tagore, *The Home and the World*, tr. Surendranath Tagore (1917, English translation 1918)
- 4. E.M. Forster, *A Passage to India* (1924)
- 5. Mulk Raj Anand, *Untouchable* (1935)
- 6. B. R. Ambedkar, *Waiting for a Visa* (written 1935-36, published 1990)
- 7. Ismat Chughtai, *The Quilt*, tr. from Urdu by Syeda Hameed and Tahira Naqvir (1942)
- 8. Munshi Premchand, "Intoxication", "My Big Brother", "The Shroud", "The Nature and Purpose of Literature", in *The Oxford India Premchand*, ed. Francesca Orsini (1910s-1930s, English translation 2004).
- 9. Sadat Hasan Manto, "Toba Tek Singh" and "Open It", tr. from the Urdu by Khalid Hasan (1955, English translation 1997)
- 10. RK Narayan, *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955)
- 11. Qurratulain Hyder, *River of Fire*, tr. from Urdu by Qurratulain Hyder (1959)
- 12. Attia Hossain, *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961)
- 13. Intizar Husain, *Basti*, tr. from the Urdu by Frances Pritchett (1979, English translation 1995)
- 14. Mahasweta Devi, *Breast Stories* tr. from the Bengali (English translation 1997)
- 15. Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (1981)
- 16. Rohinton Mistry, *Swimming Lessons* (1987)
- 17. Sara Suleri, *Meatless Days* (1991)
- 18. Shyam Selvadurai, *Funny Boy* (1994)
- 19. Yasmine Gooneratne, *Pleasures of Conquest* (1995)
- 20. Jean Arasanayagam, *All is Burning* (1996)

- › 21. Pankaj Mishra, “Edmund Wilson in Benares” (1998)
- › 22. Githa Hariharan, *When Dreams Travel* (1998)
- › 23. Amitav Ghosh, *The Hungry Tide* (2004)
- › 24. Manjushree Thapa, *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy for Democracy* (2005)
- › 25. Parijat, *Under the Sleepless Mountain*, tr. from the Nepali by Nara Pallav (2007)
- › 26. Tahmina Anam, *A Golden Age* (2007)
- › 27. Basharat Peer, *Curfewed Night* (2008)
- › 28. Daniyal Mueenuddin, *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders* (2009)
- › 29. Gautra Bahadur, *Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Adventure* (2014)
- › 30. Meena Kandasamy, *The Gypsy Goddess* (2014)
- › 31. Zia Haider Khan, *In Light of What We Know* (2014)
- › 32. Daya Pawar, *Baluta*, tr. from the Marathi by Jerry Pinto (2015)
- › 33. Devanoora Mahadeva *Kusumabale*, tr. from Kannada by Susan Daniel (2015)
- › 34. Anuk Arudpragasam, *A Passage North* (2021)

Drama

- › 1. Habib Tanvir, *Agra Bazaar*, tr. from Urdu by Javed Malick (1954)
- › 2. Hanif Kureishi, *Borderline* (1981)
- › 3. Girish Karnad, *Nagamandala* (1988/1990)
- › 4. Mahesh Dattani, *Final Solutions* (1992)
- › 5. Manjula Padmanabhan, *Harvest* (1997)
- › 6. Abhishek Majumdar, *The Djinn of Eidgah* (2021)

The Global South Asian Diaspora

The Caribbean, Mauritius, and Fiji

- › 1. Totaram Sanadhya, *My Twenty-One Years in the Fiji Islands; And, The Story of the Haunted Line* (1923, English edition 1991)
- › 2. V.S. Naipaul, *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961)
- › 3. David Dabydeen and Brinsley Samaroo (eds.), *India in the Caribbean* (1987)
- › 4. Shani Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night* (1996)

Africa and the Middle-East

- › 1. M.G. Vassanji, *The Gunny Sack* (1989)
- › 2. Agnes Sam, *Jesus is Indian and Other Stories* (1989)
- › 3. Selections from Cynthia Salvadori (ed.), *We Came in Dhows* (1996)
- › 4. Jameela Siddiqi, *The Feast of Nine Virgins* (2001)
- › 5. Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, *The Settler's Cookbook: Tales of Love, Migration, and Food* (2008)
- › 6. Benyamin, *Goat Days*, tr. by Joseph Koyippally (2012)

Europe

- › 1. Selections from David Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War: Soldier's Letters, 1914-1918* (1996)
- › 2. M.K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (1929)
- › 3. Anita Desai, *Bye Bye Blackbird* (1971)
- › 4. Hanif Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990)
- › 5. Zia Haider Khan, *In Light of What We Know* (2014)

North America

- › 1. Michael Ondaatje, *Running in the Family* (1982)
- › 2. Sadhu Binning, *No More Watno Dur* (1994)
- › 3. Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999)
- › 4. Dada Amir Haider Khan, *Chains to Lose: Life and Struggles of a Revolutionary*, vol 1., ed. Hassan N. Gardezi (2007)
- › 5. Shyam Selvadurai, *The Hungry Ghosts* (2013)
- › 6. Akhil Sharma, *Family Life* (2014)
- › 7. Jivesh Parasram, *Take d Milk, Nah?* (2021)
- › 8. Janika Oza, *A History of Burning* (2023)