

Major Field Exam in Postcolonial Literature

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

- African Diaspora
- Canada
- Global South
- South Asia (primarily India and Pakistan)
- The Middle East
- East Asia
- Caribbean (still under development)

The aim of studying postcolonial as a specialisation is to gain a 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 select at least three fields in order to best inhabit the intent of the aim. These three fields will consist of approximately sixty texts. Then there will be twenty compulsory texts that provide a general introduction to the theoretical concerns of the field.

To pass your postcolonial major field exam, **choose twenty texts from the golden theory lists**, in addition to **selecting 3 fields** from the list of fields, below. Make sure that you choose twenty texts in each of these fields, for a total of 80 texts. The remaining twenty texts will be decided by the student in consultation with their supervisor.

So, to summarize:

Golden theory list: 20 texts – all students must read and select twenty texts from this list.

Fields: pick three different fields – choose 20 texts in each field – for a total of 60 texts

The remaining twenty texts are selected by the student themselves.

The students will be questioned on the theory lists, the three selected fields, and their own suggested texts.

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Golden Theory

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

1. Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (2003)
2. David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (2004)
3. Christina Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects* (2010)
4. Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiblack World* (2020)
5. Homi Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man" (1984), "Sly Civility" (1985)
6. Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988)
7. Partha Chatterjee, "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question", in *The Nation and its Fragments* (1994)
8. Sharankumar Limbale, *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies and Considerations* (2004)
9. Gayatri Gopinath, Introduction, *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Culture* (2005)
10. Leela Gandhi, *Affective Communities* (2006)
11. Francesca Orsini, "The Multilingual Local in World Literature" (2015)
12. Goldie Osuri, "Imperialism, Colonialism and Sovereignty in the (post)colony: India and Kashmir" (2017)
13. Aamir Mufti, *Forget English! Orientalisms and World Literature* (2018)
14. Said Edward W et al. *The Selected Works of Edward Said 1966-2006*. Bloomsbury 2021.
15. Butler Judith. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. Verso 2020.
16. Ahmed Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Duke University Press 2017
17. Fanon Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Grove Press, 2021
18. Kandice Chuh and Karen Shimakawa, ed., *Orientations: Mapping Studies in the Asian Diaspora*
19. Pheng Cheah and Caroline S. Hau, ed., *Siting Postcoloniality: Critical Perspectives from the East Asian Sinosphere*
20. Larissa Lai, *Slanting I, Imagining We: Asian Canadian Literary Production in the 1980s and 1990s*
21. Kandice Chuh, *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique*
22. Rey Chow, *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies* or *Not Like a Native Speaker: On Language as a Postcolonial Experience*
23. Anne Anlin Cheng, *Ornamentalism*
24. Neferti X. M. Tadiar, *Things Fall Away: Philippine Historical Experience and the Makings of Globalization* or *Remaindered Life*
25. Colleen Lye, *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature*
26. David Palumbo-Liu, *Asian/American: Historical Crossings of a Racial Frontier*
27. Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*

28. Benedict Anderson, *The Age of Globalization: Anarchists and the Anticolonial Imagination*
29. Shu-mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations Across the Pacific*
30. Vijay Prashad, "The Diasporic Imaginary: Theorizing the Indian Diaspora"
31. Francesca Orsini, "The Multilingual Local in World Literature"
32. Aamir Mufti, *Forget English! Orientalisms and World Literature* (Introduction plus any one chapter)
33. Thy Phu, *Warring Visions* (2021)
34. - Joseph Jonghyun Jeon, *Racial Things, Racial Forms: Objecthood in Avant-Garde Asian American Poetry* (2012)
35. Benita Parry, *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique* -
36. - Smaro Kamboureli, *Scandalous Bodies: Diasporic Literature in English Canada* (2000)
37. - *Raffles Renounced: Towards a Merdeka History* (2021)
38. - Candace Fujikane, *Asian Settler Colonialism: From local governance to the habits of everyday life in Hawaii* (2008)
39. - Trinh T. Minh Ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (1989)

African Diaspora

Critical work

1. Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (2003)
2. David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (2004)
3. Christina Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects* (2010)
4. Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiblack World* (2020)

Literatures of the African Diaspora

1. CLR James, *Black Jacobins* (1938)
2. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952)
3. George Lamming, *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953)
4. Samuel Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* (1956)
5. Sylvia Wynter, *The Hills of Hebron* (1962)
6. Bessie Head, *A Question of Power* (1973)
7. Edward Kamau Brathwaite, *The Arrivants: A New World Trilogy* (1973)
8. Ama Ata Aidoo, *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977)
9. Audre Lorde, *The Black Unicorn* (1978)
10. Maryse Condé, *Moi, Tituba, sorcière...noire de Salem* (1986)
11. Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (1987)
12. M. NourbeSe Philip, *She Tries Her Tongue, Her Silence Softly Breaks* (1988)
13. Jamaica Kincaid, *Lucy* (1990)
14. Patrick Chamoiseau, *Texaco* (1992)

15. Edwidge Danticat, *Farming of Bones* (1994)
16. Michelle Cliff, *No Telephone to Heaven* (1996)
17. Dionne Brand, *Land to Light On* (1997)
18. Marlon James, *Book of Night Women* (2009)
19. Marie NDiaye, *Trois Femmes Puissantes* (2009)
20. Jesmyn Ward, *Salvage the Bones* (2012)

Indigenous

Canada

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)

Samoa

10. Albert Wendt *Sons for the Return Home* (novel)
11. Sia Fiegl *Where We Once Belonged* (novel)

New Zealand

12. Witi Ihimaera. *Pounamu Pounamu* (short stories)
13. Tina Makerati *The Imaginary Lives of James Poneke* (novel)

Hawai'i

14. Lili'uokalani *Hawai'i's Story by Hawai'i's Queen*. (memoir)

Australia

15. Alexis Wright, *Carpentaria* (novel)
16. Tara June Winch, *The Yield* (novel)
17. Tony Birch, *Common People*, (short stories).
18. Sally Morgan *My Place*.(memoir)
19. Evelyn Araluen, *Dropbear* (poetry)
20. Jimmy Chi *Bran Nue Dae*, (play)
21. Oodgeroo Noonuncal *My People* (poetry)

Also:

22. Tomson Highway, *Kiss of the Fur Queen* (1998)
23. Linda Hogan, *Solar Storms* (1994)
24. *This Place: 150 Years Retold* (2019, Graphic Novel)
25. Sacco, Joe. *Paying the Land*. First ed. Metropolitan Books Henry Holt and Company 2020

Middle East

1. Naghibi, Nima. *Rethinking Global Sisterhood: Western Feminism and Iran*. Mineapolis: 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.

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

Theory

1. Trinh T. Minh Ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (1989)
2. 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)
3. David Palumbo-Liu, *Asian/American: Historical Crossings of a Racial Frontier* (1999)
4. Smaro Kambourelli, *Scandalous Bodies: Diasporic Literature in English Canada* (2000)
5. Kandice Chuh and Karen Shimakawa, ed., *Orientations: Mapping Studies in the Asian Diaspora* (2001)
6. Kandice Chuh, *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique* (2003)
7. Benedict Anderson, *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination* (2006)
8. Shu-mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations Across the Pacific* (2007)
9. Candace Fujikane and Jonathan Okamura, *Asian Settler Colonialism: From Local Governance to the Habits of Everyday Life in Hawaii* (2008)
10. Colleen Lye, *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature* (2009)
11. Joseph Jonghyun Jeon, *Racial Things, Racial Forms: Objecthood in Avant-Garde Asian American Poetry* (2012)
12. Larissa Lai, *Slanting I, Imagining We: Asian Canadian Literary Production in the 1980s and 1990s* (2014)
13. Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (2015)
14. Anne Anlin Cheng, *Ornamentalism* (2018)
15. Thy Phu, *Warring Visions* (2021)

16. Alfian Sa'at, Faris Joraimi, and Sai Siew Min, ed., *Raffles Renounced: Towards a Merdeka History* (2021)
17. Pheng Cheah and Caroline S. Hau, ed., *Siting Postcoloniality: Critical Perspectives from the East Asian Sinosphere* (2022)
18. Neferti X. M. Tadiar, *Remaindered Life* (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. Kaiser 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. 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).
7. Sadat Hasan Manto, "Toba Tek Singh" and "Open It", tr. from the Urdu by Khalid Hasan (1955, English translation 1997)
8. Attia Hossain, *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961)
9. Intizar Husain, *Basti*, tr. from the Urdu by Frances Pritchett (1979, English translation 1995)
10. Mahasweta Devi, *Breast Stories* tr. from the Bengali (English translation 1997)
11. Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (1981)
12. Rohinton Mistry, *Swimming Lessons* (1987)
13. Sara Suleri, *Meatless Days* (1991)
14. Shyam Selvadurai, *Funny Boy* (1994)
15. Jean Arasanayagam, *All is Burning* (1996)

16. Pankaj Mishra, "Edmund Wilson in Benares" (1998)
17. Amitav Ghosh, *The Hungry Tide* (2004)
18. Manjushree Thapa, *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy for Democracy* (2005)
19. Parijat, *Under the Sleepless Mountain*, tr. from the Nepali by Nara Pallav (2007)
20. Tahmina Anam, *A Golden Age* (2007)
21. Basharat Peer, *Curfewed Night* (2008)
22. Daniyal Mueenuddin, *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders* (2009)
23. Gautra Bahadur, *Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Adventure* (2014)
24. Meena Kandasamy, *The Gypsy Goddess* (2014)
25. Zia Haider Khan, *In Light of What We Know* (2014)
26. Daya Pawar, *Baluta*, tr. from the Marathi by Jerry Pinto (2015)

Drama

1. Hanif Kureishi, *Borderline* (1981)
2. Girish Karnad, *Nagamandala* (1988/1990)
3. Manjula Padmanabhan, *Harvest* (1997)

Criticism

1. Homi Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man" (1984), "Sly Civility" (1985)
2. Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988)
3. Partha Chatterjee, "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question", in *The Nation and its Fragments* (1994)
4. Sharankumar Limbale, *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies and Considerations* (2004)
5. Gayatri Gopinath, Introduction, *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Culture* (2005)
6. Leela Gandhi, *Affective Communities* (2006)
7. Francesca Orsini, "The Multilingual Local in World Literature" (2015)
8. Goldie Osuri, "Imperialism, Colonialism and Sovereignty in the (post)colony: India and Kashmir" (2017)
9. Aamir Mufti, *Forget English! Orientalisms and World Literature* (2018)

Also:

- Michael Ondaatje, *In the Skin of a Lion* (1987)
- Janika Oza, *A History of Burning* (2023)

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 Matoo, *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. Sadhu Binning, *No More Watno Dur* (1994)
2. Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999)
3. Dada Amir Haider Khan, *Chains to Lose: Life and Struggles of a Revolutionary*, vol 1., ed. Hassan N. Gardezi (2007)
4. Akhil Sharma, *Family Life* (2014)
5. Jivesh Parasram, *Take d Milk, Nah?* (2021)

Also, you can add these titles to your lists from the previous exam structure:

- Jamaica Kincaid, *Autobiography of my Mother*
- Edward Kamau Braithwaite, *The Arrivants*
- Patricia Powell, *The Pagoda*
- Edwidge Danticat, *The Farming of Bones*
- Yasmine Gooneratne, *Pleasures of Conquest*
- Githa Hariharan, *When Dreams Travel*