This course examines how historical, cultural, and social developments in Africa—from the European scramble for the “Dark Continent” in the late nineteenth century to postcolonialism and post-Apartheid—have been reflected in a range of novels. If earlier texts, mostly by European writers, have constructed “Africa” as a space for adventure and exploitation, later writers have attempted to appropriate, rewrite and reinvent this textual tradition. By exploring how African writers have been able to challenge those former colonial representations, the course will present the novel as a discursive arena in which different African visions and voices have been articulated.

Course Requirements

Attendance (3 absences allowed), participation, short responses 10%

Term paper (6 pages; at least 3 critical sources); due 2/1, 12:00 50%

Final exam 40%

Primary reading

Henry Rider Haggard, King Solomon’s Mines
Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness
Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart
Mariama Bâ, So Long a Letter [Highlearn]
J. M. Coetzee, Disgrace

* The course is taught in English; students outside the Department of Foreign Literatures and Linguistics may submit their written work in Hebrew.

* Themes/questions for class discussion should be 1-2 paragraphs long. You should be prepared to read your theme in class – as well as submit a hardcopy version at the end of that same session. Late submissions will not be accepted. If you miss a class (note: only three absences allowed!), be sure to email/hand in the text in advance. Each theme is worth 1 pt. in the final grade.

24/10 Introduction: The Novel in Africa

31/10 King Solomon’s Mines
Prepare & submit (hardcopy) a theme/question for class discussion

7/11 King Solomon’s Mines (cont.)

14/11 Heart of Darkness
Prepare & submit a theme/question for class discussion

21/11 Heart of Darkness (cont.)

28/11 Heart of Darkness (cont.)

5/12 Things Fall Apart
Prepare & submit (hardcopy) a theme/question for class discussion
Additional reading


