



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

ENG919: World Literatures in English

(3-Credit Units)

Detailed Course Description

Introduction

Whereas at the undergraduate and for the Master of Arts degree, some aspects of this course are studied, here there is an attempt to pull the disparate literatures from the standpoint of global unity which the use of English as a language of intercourse gives to them. This course has a dimension as it seeks to explore how English has affected the literary expressions of different locations of the world and has in turn been domesticated by the experiences of its users especially in their literary works. Consequently, wherever writers employ the English language, two major constraints emerge. These are whether to adopt their various languages or guided by the need for a wider readership which English, a near global language avails them. The preference for one or the other option has been determined by the regions' historical, political and socio- cultural experiences which these writers often highlight in their writings. These peculiar circumstances have perforce made English to adapt to the needs of its foreign speakers across the globe, giving birth, in the process, to what can be referred to as varieties of literatures in English. A sample of these varieties is what the course attempts to proffer to you as students of literature at this doctoral level.

The course aims to:

- a) Expose PhD Students to the rationale for the existence of and study of World Literatures.
- b) Explain some theories that are applicable to the various genres/features of world literatures.
- c) Compare and contrast general national and regional trends in world literatures.
- d) Explore the distinct themes, forms and the literary expressions of these sampled world literatures.
- e) Identify the various changes English language has undergone in its domestication using excerpts from the texts, where applicable.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of the course are to:

- a) Understand the scope and reason(s) for studying world literatures.
- b) Relate the selected texts to some dominant theories in literary criticism.
- c) Trace some of the socio-political and or historical conditions that undergird the different literatures in English.
- d) Distinguish between the various genres, themes and styles of these literatures.

Appreciate too the ways in which the English language has been given its international flavour by foreign writers.

Set/Textbooks/References

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