



GIAN (MoE) Course on

Migration and Citizenship: Comparative Perspectives on African American and Asian American Literatures

14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, and 23 March 2022



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Teaching Faculty
Amritjit Singh, Ohio University

**A Course under Global Initiative on Academic Network (GIAN)
Scheme of the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India**

**Migration and Citizenship: Comparative Perspectives on African American and Asian
American Literatures**

OVERVIEW

We have long viewed the United States as a nation of immigrants and latched on to a relatively cheery narrative of nationhood, even exceptionalism, that is centred in the powerful myth of the “American Dream.” Using the lens of citizenship and its discontents, we have gradually begun to recognize the need to generate a more inclusive definition of the United States that incorporates the narratives of internal migrations, forced or otherwise, of “non-immigrant” groups such as Native Americans, Chicana/os, and African Americans. In this course, through selected literary texts and theoretical approaches (including and especially CRT, Critical Race Theory), we will examine the parallels and potential intersections in the march by African Americans and Asian Americans toward a fuller sense of belonging and citizenship. We expect our discussions to lead to a more complex understanding of issues surrounding identity, assimilation/integration, belonging, and empowerment for both individuals and groups in North America. In demonstrating the importance of intersectional and inter-disciplinary scholarship in relation to migration, immigration, race, class, and gender, the course will deploy comparative inter-ethnic methodologies to highlight the processes by which culture, law, and social attitudes toward race and (im)migration have shaped the promises and challenges of citizenship in the U.S.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the course are as follows:

- i. Understanding the parallels and potential intersections in the journey of African Americans and Asian Americans toward a sense of belonging and full citizenship through selected literary texts and theoretical approaches.
- ii. Exploring issues of race and gender in American culture.
- iii. Critical reading of selected African American and Asian American writers to unpack their major themes and exploring the social and cultural contexts in which their works were produced.
- iv. Encouraging and supporting comparative readings between African American and Ethnic American Literature and Asian American Literature.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

History and Theory

Matthew Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*. Harvard UP, 1989.

Paula Rothenberg, *Race, Class and Gender: An Integrated Study*. 9th Edition. Worth Publishers, 2013. (PR)

REQUIRED READINGS

African American Literature

Rudolph Fisher, *The City of Refuge and Other Stories*. Expanded Edition. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2018. (with special attention to stories titled “The City of Refuge,” “The Promised Land,” and “Miss Cynthie”)

Richard Wright, *Uncle Tom’s Children*. 1938/1940. HarperCollins. Reprint Edition, 1995. (“The Ethics of Living Jim Crow,” “Big Boy Leaves Home,” “Long Black Song”)

Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*. Vintage, 1970.

Abraham Chapman, *Black Voices*. Signet, 2001 (originally published in the 1970s). Many shorter selections in multiple genres.

Asian American Literature

Sadhu Singh Dhama, *Maluka: A Novel*. New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann, 1978. Reprint. Punjabi University Publication Bureau, 1996.

John Okada, *No-No Boy*. 1956. Foreword by Ruth Ozeki. Reprint Edition. University of Washington Press, 2015 [The 1978 reprint is also OK.]

Dhan Gopal Mukerji, *Caste and Outcast*. 1923. Reprint Edition. Introduction by Gordon Chang. Stanford UP, 2002.

Sui Sin Far (Edith Eaton): *Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings*. 1912. Expanded Edition. Urbana: U of Illinois Press, 1995.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Subject to modifications)

Each session will include discussion, participant presentations, and Q & A. Each session will include shorter readings from the texts indicated below.

Dates: 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, and 23 March 2022

Day 1 (Monday, March 14, 2022)

Lecture 1 & 2: 9:00 –9.30; 11:00 -11:30

Introduction, including a PowerPoint presentation and a brief discussion of MJ;
Backgrounds—Critical Race Theory, Whiteness Studies, and more

PUBLIC LECTURE: 9.30-11.00

Challenges of Migration and Citizenship: African Americans and Asian Americans, 1850-1925

Day 2 (Tuesday, March 15, 2022)

Lecture 3 & 4: 9:00 –11:30

Du Bois, “Of Our Spiritual Strivings”; “The Coming of John”; Rudolph Fisher, “The City of Refuge,” “The Promised Land,” “Miss Cynthie”; Sui Sin Far, “The Land of the Free”; “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of a Eurasian”

Day 3 (Wednesday, March 16, 2022)

Lecture 5 & 6: 9:00 –11:30

“Racial Formations” PR (13-22); “White Privilege” PR (175-179); “Constructing Race” PR (33-38); Richard Wright, *Uncle Tom’s Children* “Ethics of Living Jim Crow,” “Big Boy Leaves Home,” “Long Black Song”; Sadhu Singh Dhami, *Maluka*

Day 4 (Thursday, March 17, 2022)

Lecture 7 & 8: 9:00 –11:30

Review all of Part VII PR pp. 493-574 with special attention to the following items: "Indian Tribes: A Continuing Quest for Survival" (501-505), "The 'Three-Fifths Compromise'" (511), *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (524-527), "The Emancipation Proclamation" (528-529), "The United States Constitution" (530-531), "California Constitution" (544), *Plessy v. Ferguson* (547-549), *Brown v. Board of Education* (556-50), "The Equal Rights Amendment" (562), *Lawrence et al. v. Texas* (563-565); Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*; John Okada, *No-No Boy*

No Classes, March 18-March 20

Day 5 (Monday, March 21, 2022)

Lecture 9 & 10: 9:00 –11:30

Aesthetic Debates, Harlem Renaissance and Beyond: Charles W. Chesnutt “Wife of His Youth” (handout); Alain Locke BV, Langston Hughes “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” (handout); James Baldwin BV; Richard Wright “Blueprint” (handout); Marita Bonner, “On Being Young, a Woman, and Colored” (handout); Zora Neale

Hurston “How it Feels to Be Colored Me” (handout); Debates between Frank Chin and Maxine Hong Kingston (handouts); Dhan Gopal Mukerji *Caste and Outcast*; Amiri Baraka/LeRoi Jones, Selected Poems (handout)

Day 6 (Tuesday, March 22, 2022)

Lecture 11 & 12: 9:00 – 1130

A Comparative View of Migration and Citizenship: Taking Stock of Theory and Literary Expression. A retrospective view of texts covered in the course: teaching and research possibilities.

Day 7 (Wednesday, March 23, 2022)

Presentations and final evaluations, 9:00 – 11:30

MECHANICS OF THE COURSE

The course will run as a group discussion in which all of us are expected to make engaged and intelligent contributions to our shared learning and adventure. All participants are expected to have read all required texts before the course begins on March 14.

Each participant will lead class discussion once or twice during the course. Each participant will have approximately 15 minutes to make their presentation—using an appropriate 1-2-page handout.

While participant’s presentations are likely to benefit from appropriate library research, a close reading of the text(s) will often serve the purpose. A participant will be required to submit five responses (2 pages each) on course readings. These responses will be submitted to the course faculty every day, beginning on the second day. In addition, a Short Paper, 6-8 pages (1500-2000 words) will be due on last day of the course, for which there will be class presentations. Regular attendance (no absences allowed) and active participation in class discussions is required, based on careful reading of texts assigned for each class.

For the short paper at the end of the course, each participant is expected to discuss **two** major texts from the syllabus, **one** each by an African American and Asian American author. In addition, the student may choose to integrate in their discussion one or two appropriate shorter works, including essays and/or short stories from the syllabus.

TEACHING FACULTY

Amritjit Singh (PhD, New York University) is Langston Hughes Emeritus Professor of English and African Studies at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Currently, he is a Visiting Fellow at South Asia Institute, U of Texas-Austin. Past President of MELUS, USACLALS,

and SALA, he received the MELUS Lifetime Achievement Award in 2007 and the SALA Distinguished Achievement Award in Scholarship in January 2014. An internationally known scholar of American, African American, Asian American, South Asian, Postcolonial, and Migration/Immigration Studies, he has lectured or taught widely in Europe, Africa, and Asia. He has served as a visiting Fulbright Professor at universities in Berlin, Germany (2002), Graz, Austria (2007), Alexandria, Egypt (2010), and New Delhi, India (2014-15). Singh has authored, edited, or coedited over 15 books, including *The Novels of the Harlem Renaissance* (1976, 1994); *Conversations with Ralph Ellison* (1995); *Memory and Cultural Politics* (1996); *Postcolonial Theory and the United States* (2000); *The Collected Writings of Wallace Thurman* (2003); *Interviews with Edward Said* (2004); *Revisiting India's Partition: Essays on Culture, Memory, and Politics* (2016); and *Critical Perspectives on Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni: Feminism and Diaspora* (2022).

WHO CAN APPLY?

- Research Scholars (formally registered for M.Phil. or Ph.D.) *
- Faculty from academic institutions (colleges, universities, IITs) *
- Professionals in Media and Journalism
- Independent scholars: American, African American and Asian American Literatures

***Preferred Categories.**

B.A. and M.A. students are not eligible.

This intensive GIAN course is intended only for those with serious interest in the subject. You must have read all required texts by March 14 and make a commitment to attend ALL classes from March 14 to March 23.

DEADLINE

- ✓ Interested candidates can fill the google form for which the link is given below:
<https://forms.gle/KzgX6EgrLw4RtHdNA>
- ✓ Last date for receipt of applications: Monday, February 28, 2022, 5pm, IST
- ✓ Shortlisted candidates will be intimated by email by March 4 for registration
- ✓ For any queries, drop an email to Dr. Prabha Shankar Dwivedi at
prabhas.dwivedi@iittp.ac.in

REGISTRATION FEE

- The participation fee for taking the course is as follows:
- ✓ Research Scholars: ₹ 500

- ✓ Faculty Members: ₹ 1000
- ✓ Participants from abroad: US \$ 50

Notes: The course will be conducted in online mode only.

COURSE COORDINATORS

1. **Dr. Prabha Shankar Dwivedi**
Assistant Professor of English
Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences
IIT Tirupati, AP

2. **Dr. V. Vamshi Krishna Reddy**
Assistant Professor
Centre for Comparative Literature
University of Hyderabad, TS