

Field	Literature
Lecturer	Prof. Liliana Sikorska
Topic	The empire of fiction: literature in English and its (multi)cultural foundations
Seminar aims and description	<p>The present seminar concerns topics and genres in literature in English and their multicultural context. Travel, exploration, adventure as well as bloody conquests epitomize the unlimited drive for power while the history of British Empire is encapsulated in literary and cultural texts as well as films. Beginning with the exploratory and religious voyages suggesting the (Christian) white man's burden in "uncivilized" lands, we will look at the development of contemporary fiction in English in the United Kingdom and other English speaking countries (excluding the United States and Canada), at the influence of colonization on the indigenous cultures. During the seminar we will analyze the idea of the empire in literatures of the past and of today in connection with theater and film. From the medieval <i>Travels of Sir John Mandeville</i> which presented us with monsters inhabiting the fringes of the universe, we will journey with the South African director Neill Blomkamp to observe more contemporary monsters inhabiting (at least in film and fiction) the fringes of our galaxy but unvaryingly threatening our civilization who symbolize the strangers we are afraid of. During the seminar we are going to study texts and films that talk about the categories of "near" and "far", us and them, utopias and dystopias, colonialism and post-colonialism and other concepts that uphold and then deconstruct the fictions of the empire.</p>
Sample bibliography	<p>Bradbury, Malcolm. 1971. <i>The Social Context of Modern English literature</i>. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.</p> <p>Featherstone, Simon. 2005. <i>Postcolonial Cultures</i>. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.</p> <p>James, Lawrence. 2011 [1994]. <i>The Rise and Fall of the British Empire</i>. London: Abacus.</p> <p>Loshitzky, Yosefa. 2010. <i>Screening Strangers. Migration and Diaspora in Contemporary European Cinema</i>. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.</p> <p>Morgan, Kenneth O. 2000. <i>Twentieth Century Britain. A very</i></p>

Short Introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Walder, Dennis. 1998. *Post-colonial Literatures in English. History, Language, Theory*. London: Blackwell.