

Principles of Literary Study
pls21.blogs.rutgers.edu

Prof. Andrew Goldstone

(andrew.goldstone@rutgers.edu)

Office hours: Mondays 2:00–3:00 or by appointment

May 3, 2021. Bulawayo; course conclusion.

review: new writer heuristics

- ▶ what are they interested in? (Coetzee: others)
- ▶ what sticks out, what doesn't fit? (penguins)

review: Coetzee and the other

- ▶ “The Novel in Africa”
 - ▶ for Egudu, the novel is other to Africans
 - ▶ Elizabeth: Egudu makes himself “exotic”
 - ▶ are sexual relations like cultural relations?
 - ▶ the Antarctic animals: true aliens
- ▶ “The Dog”
 - ▶ animals: not alien at all
 - ▶ *alienation* as a process
 - ▶ the failure of liberal good intentions

“we are on our way”

- ▶ What is the significance of setting in “Hitting Budapest”?

new writer heuristics

- ▶ What is Bulawayo interested in?
- ▶ What sticks out?

new writer heuristics

- ▶ What is Bulawayo interested in?
- ▶ What sticks out?

- ▶ Who narrates?

NoViolet Bulawayo

1980 (Zimbabwe becomes independent)

1981 b. Elizabeth Tshele, Tsoloshoto, Zimbabwe

1990s (IMF loans and “structural adjustment programs”)

1999 emigrates to US for college

2000– (economic cataclysm)

2005 (Operation Murambatsvina slum-clearance campaign)

2010 MFA, Cornell

2011 Caine Prize for “Hitting Budapest”

2008 chooses name NoViolet (“with Violet”) Bulawayo (home city)

2013 *We Need New Names* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2013)

2017 (Robert Mugabe ousted in coup)

realism, criticism, and the disguises of both

Bulawayo would be my pick for the [Caine] prize. She sure can write, unfortunately her muse insists on sniffing around Africa's sewers. The tragedy is that these are good writers showcasing good prose and great dialogue. But to the extent that literature documents the lived life, they are stuck in the fog of stereotypes. The stories are so ancient, it is a wonder they did not feature smoke signals and slide rules. Except for Medalie's *The Mistress's Dog*, there is not a single mention of the Internet and cell phones, not once.

Ikhide R. Ikheloa, "The 2011 Caine Prize: How Not to Write About Africa," xokigbo.com, March 11, 2012.

“Save Darfur”

- ▶ What does the encounter with the British woman suggest about how to read the story?

literature in English: its history

- ▶ Medieval (600–1500)
 - ▶ from *Beowulf* to Chaucer and we didn't read a word
- ▶ Early Modern or “Renaissance” (16th–17th c.)
 - ▶ Sidney, Shakespeare, Donne, Herbert...
 - ▶ Milton, Marvell...
 - ▶ Bradstreet...
- ▶ 18th c. (“Augustan,” “Enlightenment”)
 - ▶ Swift, Wheatley (!)
- ▶ Romantic (1789ish–1830ish)
 - ▶ Barbauld, Blake, Wordsworth, Shelley
 - ▶ Shelley (?)

history (cont.)

- ▶ 19th c. (“Victorian,” US Antebellum/Postbellum)
 - ▶ Browning, Meredith, Hardy
 - ▶ Melville, Whitman, Dickinson
 - ▶ James (?), Conan Doyle (?)
- ▶ Early 20th c. (“Modernist”)
 - ▶ Stevens, Moore, Eliot
 - ▶ Hughes
 - ▶ James (?)
 - ▶ Hammett (?)
- ▶ 1945–present (no name; should it be two periods?)
 - ▶ Bishop, Brooks, Ammons, Heaney, Hayes...
 - ▶ “postcolonial”: Achebe, Ramanujan, Coetzee, Bulawayo
 - ▶ “contemporary”: Hayes, Bulawayo, Coetzee (?)

envoi

- ▶ come see me in person at office hours in the fall
- ▶ read more