Introduction to American Regional

Literature

НЕЛЛИ АЛЕКСАНДРОВНА ШУЛЬМАН

НЕЛЛИ ШУЛЬМАН РОДИЛАСЬ В ПЕТЕРБУРГЕ И ЖИЛА В ЛОНДОНЕ, США И БЕРЛИНЕ. АВТОР РОМАНОВ ИЗ ЦИКЛА «ВЕЛЬЯМИНОВЫ» И ДЕТЕКТИВНЫХ ПОВЕСТЕЙ О ВИКТОРИАНСКОМ ЛОНДОНЕ. ЛАУРЕАТ НЕСКОЛЬКИХ ПИСАТЕЛЬСКИХ КОНКУРСОВ. ПЕЧАТАЕТСЯ НА РУССКОМ И АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ. АСПИРАНТ ЕВРЕЙСКОГО УНИВЕРСИТЕТА В ИЕРУСАЛИМЕ.

This course explores the rich tapestry of American regional literature, focusing on how geography, culture, and history influence literary expression. Students will examine works from various regions, including the South, New England, the Midwest, the West, and the Great Plains, analyzing how authors capture the essence of their surroundings and refect regional identities.

Курс

\*\*Introduction to American Regional Literature\*\*

This course explores the diverse and complex landscape of American Regional Literature, focusing on how geography, culture, and history shape literary expression across different regions of the United States. The problematic central to this course lies in understanding the tensions between local identity and national narratives, as well as how regionalism both challenges and contributes to a unifed sense of American literature.

\*\*Conceptual Vision and Goals\*\*

The course aims to delve into the ways in which regional literature captures the unique voices, traditions, and experiences of various American communities. By examining works from the South, the Midwest, the West, and New England, students will explore how regional settings infuence themes, character development, and narrative style. The course also considers how these regional texts interact with broader cultural and political movements,

such as industrialization, migration, and the struggle for civil rights.

A key goal of the course is to foster an appreciation of the richness and diversity of American literature beyond the canon of widely recognized national authors. Students will critically engage with the concept of regionalism, analyzing how it serves both to celebrate local distinctiveness and to critique broader social and cultural issues. The course also seeks to challenge students to consider how regional literature informs our understanding of American identity as a whole.

\*\*Logic of Material Selection\*\*

The selected readings are chosen to represent a broad spectrum of regional experiences and literary styles, refecting the course's emphasis on diversity and inclusivity. The materials include works from established regional writers, as well as lesser-known voices that contribute to the richness of the regional literary landscape. Each text has been selected not only for its literary merit but also for its ability to illuminate the particular historical, social, and cultural contexts of its region.

In addition to literary texts, the course incorporates critical essays and theoretical readings that provide students with frameworks for analyzing regionalism. These materials are designed to help students develop a nuanced understanding of the concept and to apply it critically to their readings of the primary texts.

By the end of the course, students will have gained a deeper understanding of how American literature is shaped by the places and communities from which it emerges, as well as the ways in which these regional stories contribute to the broader tapestry of American cultural and literary history.

Course Objectives:

- Understand the concept of regionalism in American literature.

- Analyze the infuence of geography, culture, and history on literary works. - Examine the themes, styles, and narrative techniques of regional writers. - Compare and contrast the literary characteristics of different American regions. - Develop critical thinking and analytical skills through close reading and discussion.

Weekly Topics and Readings:

Week 1: Introduction to American Regionalism

- Overview of regionalism as a literary movement.

- Reading: Selected excerpts from \*American Local Color Writing, 1880-1920\*, edited by

Elizabeth Ammons. (1 hour)

Week 2: The South

- Exploration of Southern Gothic and the portrayal of the South.

- Reading: Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man is Hard to Find". (1 hour)

Week 3: New England

- New England's literary tradition and its focus on Puritanism, nature, and community. - Reading: Sarah Orne Jewett’s "The Country of the Pointed Firs" (excerpts), Mary Wilkins Freeman, "A New England Nun" (2 hours)

Week 4: The Midwest

- The Midwest as the "heartland" of America; themes of isolation and perseverance. - Reading: Willa Cather’s "My Ántonia" (excerpts); Sherwood Anderson’s "Winesburg, Ohio". (selected stories) (2 hours)

Week 5: The West

- The mythology of the American West and its impact on literature.

- Reading: Cormac McCarthy’s "Blood Meridian" (excerpts); Willa Cather's "O Pioneers!". (excerpts) (2 hours)

Week 6: The Great Plains

- Literature of the Great Plains and its depiction of vastness, struggle, and the American Dream.

- Reading: Wallace Stegner’s "Angle of Repose" (excerpts); Mari Sandoz's "Old Jules". (exerpts) (2 hours)

Week 7: The Southwest

- Cultural diversity and the blending of Native American, Mexican, and Anglo infuences. - Reading: Leslie Marmon Silko’s "Ceremony" (excerpts); Rudolfo Anaya’s "Bless Me, Ultima". (excerpts)

Week 8: The Pacifc Northwest

- The relationship between landscape and identity in the Pacifc Northwest.

- Reading: "Ken Kesey’s \*Sometimes a Great Notion" (excerpts); Marilynne Robinson's "Housekeeping". (excerpts) (2 hours)

Week 9: The Urban Experience

- Regionalism in urban settings; the contrast between rural and urban life. - Reading: Richard Wright’s "Native Son" (excerpts); Zora Neale Hurston’s "Their Eyes Were Watching God". (excerpts) (2 hours)

Week 10: Contemporary Regionalism

- How contemporary authors reinterpret regionalism.

- Reading: Jesmyn Ward’s "Salvage the Bones" (excerpts); Louise Erdrich’s "The Round House". (excerpts)

Week 11: Comparative Analysis

- Comparative analysis of different regional works.

- Activity: Group discussions and presentations on selected themes across regions.

Week 12: Conclusion and Review

- Final refections on regionalism in American literature.

- Activity: Course review, fnal essay preparation, and peer feedback session.

Assessment Format:

- Participation and Class Discussions (20%)

Active participation in weekly discussions, demonstrating understanding of the readings. - Weekly Reading Responses (20%)

Short essays (500 words) responding to prompts related to the weekly readings. - Group Presentation (15%)

A comparative analysis of two regions, presented to the class.

- Midterm Essay (20%)

A 1500-word essay analyzing the impact of a specifc region on the work of an author studied in the course.

- Final Project (25%)

A 2500-word research paper or creative project exploring a theme related to American regional literature, incorporating multiple texts and critical perspectives.

Пререквизиты к слушателям

B2 English level (as defned by CEFR scale)

https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1- cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale

Список литературы

Week 1: Introduction to American Regionalism

- "American Local Color Writing, 1880-1920", edited by Elizabeth Ammons (1998) (selected excerpts)

Week 2: The South

- Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find" (short story) (1953) Week 3: New England

- Sarah Orne Jewett, "The Country of the Pointed Firs" (1896)

- Mary Wilkins Freeman, "A New England Nun" (1891)

Week 4: The Midwest

- Willa Cather, "My Ántonia" (1918)

- Sherwood Anderson, "Winesburg, Ohio" (1919)

Week 5: The West

- Cormac McCarthy, "Blood Meridian" (1985)

- Willa Cather, "O Pioneers!" (1913)

Week 6: The Great Plains

- Wallace Stegner, "Angle of Repose" (1971)

- Mari Sandoz, "Old Jules" (1935)

Week 7: The Southwest

- Leslie Marmon Silko, "Ceremony" (1977)

- Rudolfo Anaya, "Bless Me, Ultima" (1972)

Week 8: The Pacifc Northwest

- Ken Kesey, "Sometimes a Great Notion" (1964)

- Marilynne Robinson, "Housekeeping" (1980)

Week 9: The Urban Experience

- Richard Wright, "Native Son" (1940)

- Zora Neale Hurston, "Their Eyes Were Watching God" (1937) Week 10: Contemporary Regionalism

- Jesmyn Ward, "Salvage the Bones"(2011)

- Louise Erdrich, "The Round House" (2012)

Week 11: Comparative Analysis

- No new readings; students will revisit texts from previous weeks for analysis. Week 12: Conclusion and Review

- No new readings; focus on fnal essay preparation and review.