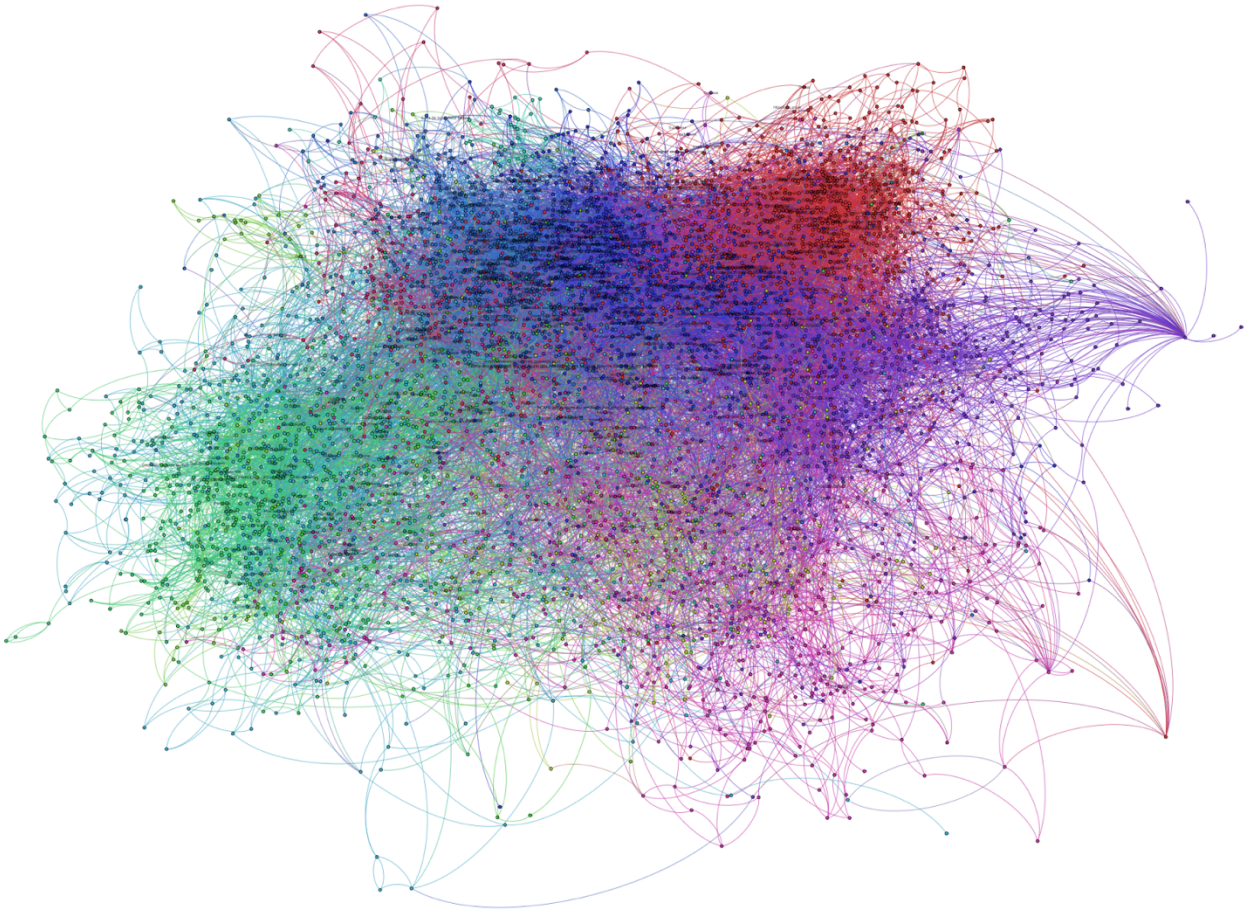

Cross-reference Network of Diderot's *Encyclopaedia, or Classified Dictionary of Sciences, Arts, and Trades*.
"Knowledge Networks, Juxtaposed: Disciplinarity in the *Encyclopédie* and *Wikipedia*" by Ryan Heuser, Mark Algee-Hewitt and John Bender.

CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL LITERATURES

SECOND COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION (SYLLABUS OPTION)

August 14, 2017

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Cultural Mediations in Literary Studies, ICSLAC

CLMD 6908: Second Comprehensive Examination

Primary Reader: Professor Sarah Casteel

Secondary Reader: Professor Sukeshi Kamra

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1. COURSE OVERVIEW

> When we reject the single story, when we realize that there is never a single story about any place, we regain a kind of paradise.
>
> Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

This course, titled **Contemporary Global Literatures**, is designed as a second-year survey course which will introduce both historically-established and currently-debated theories, as well as a balanced selection of literary works that tackle global issues. The course is suitable for many programs such as the Global and International Studies[1], Journalism and Humanities, International Business, as well as the programs within the Department of English Language and Literature.

The course time-line assumes three-hour weeks. All three hours are dedicated to lectures and there are no tutorials. The lectures will allow for student input and discussion. Based on the class size, Teaching Assistant support is expected, and will be beneficial in evaluation of assignments.

Weekly three hours may be delivered in a three-hour block once a week, or they may be split into two ninety-minute sessions twice a week. The latter is the preferred setup since it will allow additional time for the readings, and better concentration can be expected from the students. Either way, the course design divides the topics to be discussed each week in two sessions of ninety minutes each.

This syllabus is inspired by the following courses:

- ENGL 1009A Literature in Global Context – Professor Mayurika Chakravorty
- GINS 2020A Global Literatures – Professor Sarah Casteel

[1] At Carleton University, global literatures courses are not only required for all the students of Global and International Studies (GInS) but the program also has a Global Literatures specialization.

- GINS 2020B Global Literatures: Narratives of Development – Professor Sarah Brouillette

I would like this course to motivate my students to discover more, as my professors have inspired me to do so. I believe that knowledge is all about connecting the dots. "Everything is connected for the Ibo," Chinua Achebe says, "[t]hings are linked" (Baker and Draper 22). I would argue that things are linked, not just for the Ibo, but for all of us. Art, politics, morality and discourse are all connected. The blockbuster movie introduces you to a song, the song takes you to the singer's activism, the activism makes you look up the background, and you learn about the history and the politics behind it. These, in turn, lead to news on the television and memes on the social media. When curiosity makes you pull gently one end of a fine thin thread, you may never be able to stop following where that thread leads you. This is the curiosity—and the awareness of a giant interconnected network of knowledge[2]—I want to impart to my students. I want them to see that nothing is isolated and that there are new connections to be made. Naturally, this course will make good use of intertextuality.

In 1966, Julia Kristeva coined the term intertextuality "to denote the interdependence of literary texts[;]" any one text is connected "with all those that have gone before it." A text "is not an isolated phenomenon but is made up of a mosaic of quotations, and that text is the absorption and transformation of another. According to Kristeva, "texts echo each other" (Cuddon 424). Texts also talk to one another. For instance, Michelle Cliff's *Abeng* is in a dialogue with Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*. They communicate via another text, William Wordsworth's poem "I Wandered

[2] The cover image symbolizes the interconnectivity of knowledge. It is a computer-generated visualization of the "cross-reference network of [Diderot's] *Encyclopédie*. Each node is an article; each edge, or link, indicates a cross-reference between them. Articles without cross-references are not displayed here. The network was visualized in the software Gephi and colored by its network modularity algorithm with default settings" (Heuser, Algee-Hewitt and Bender).

Lonely as a Cloud" ("Daffodils"). The intertextuality between some of the texts of this course are shown in figure 1.

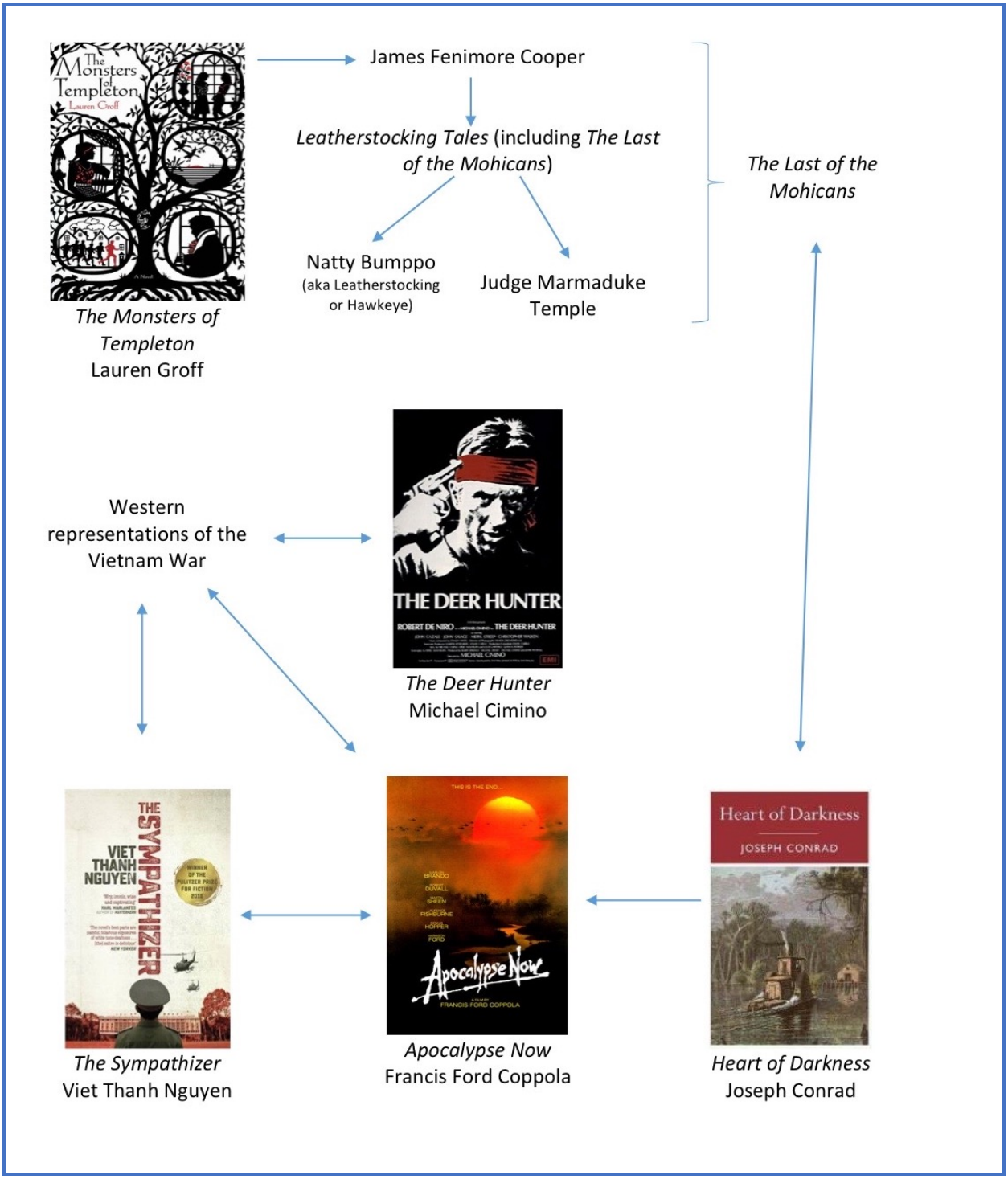

Figure 1: Connecting the dots – intertextuality among some of the course material.

Course objectives[3] also include instilling in the students a reflex of critical thinking and a habit of scrutinizing all binaries. We will challenge all goods and bads, all rights and wrongs; we will place them in context and draw the bigger picture. Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* opens with this sentence spoken by Tambu, the narrator: "I was not sorry when my brother died" (1). This one sentence, in isolation, may make Tambu an insensitive, uncaring person who is not saddened by the loss of a sibling. What makes her admit such a bold, and socially-unacceptable inner thought? We have to understand her circumstances and the background of the story. We need to consider her "position of enunciation." Stuart Hall maintains that "[w]e all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific. What we say is always 'in context', [in other words,] *positioned.*" This is the position of *enunciation* (222). The narrator who is talking or writing is a *positioned* narrator. Tambu of *Nervous Conditions* is sharing her emotions from her position of enunciation.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie articulates the danger of a single story in her exquisite lecture at TED Talks. Simply being conscious of the multiplicity of stories already takes us out of the danger zone. To know that there are other stories is to want to hear them. The purpose of this course is to bring about an awareness that even the stories we have long known and accepted as the one unique version may be told from different perspectives. Once again, Hall's "position of enunciation" is important here. Who the speaker is, and who the speaker is talking about matter greatly. Hence, the necessity of multiple narrators and multiple stories. Global literatures offer alternative versions and multiple angles. We have to admit that, for extended periods of time, we had single stories of people and places, of events and communities. Fortunately, during the past few decades, we have

[3] *My* goals, or course objectives, are different than the student learning outcomes which are listed in Chapter 3. While my goals may not be clearly measurable, learning outcomes have to be. For this reason, I wanted to briefly include in here *my* expectations and what *I* will strive for.

been forging ahead with new narratives, representations and rewritings, and we have been leaving behind the single stories of Africa, of Native Americans, of the Vietnam War, of the Other, of all the things faraway (in space or time) and unfamiliar. We also want to move away from what Adichie calls a "patronizing, well-meaning pity" (4:49). The objective of this course is not to produce kindness through mercy. I want my course to induce curiosity, a desire to learn more, to understand, to challenge common narratives, and to appreciate the value of having multiple alternative stories. The more stories we have, the more dots we can connect.

Primary texts for this course are as follows[4]:

Books (students must acquire themselves):

Translations, Brian Friel
A Small Place, Jamaica Kincaid
Nervous Conditions, Tsitsi Dangarembga
We Need New Names, NoViolet Bulawayo – pages 1-148
American Born Chinese, Gene Luen Yang
The Monsters of Templeton, Lauren Groff
The Sympathizer, Viet Thanh Nguyen – pages 1-199

Books (required pages will be provided by the instructor):

The Plot Against America, Phillip Roth – pages 1-82
Born a Crime, Trevor Noah – pages 1-117

Poems:

"Colonization in Reverse" by Louise Bennett
"The White Man's Burden" by Rudyard Kipling

Songs:

"Not One of Us" by Peter Gabriel
"Englishman in New York" by Sting
"Biko" by Peter Gabriel

[4] Supplementary texts and secondary sources are not listed here. Instead, they are listed under the weekly schedules.

"The Jungle" / "Wimomeh" / "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" by Solomon Linda, and later, various Western appropriations

Images:

Pearl's Soap, Ad – The White Man's Burden
Judge Magazine, Cartoon – The White Man's Burden
Various apartheid signs from South Africa

Speeches, lectures, stand-up comedy routines:

"The Danger of a Single Story" by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, TED Talks
Stand-up Comedy by Trevor Noah

Short stories:

"A Private Experience" - *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
"Jumping Monkey Hill" - *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
"The Thing Around Your Neck" - *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.
"Good Advice is Rarer Than Rubies" - *East, West*, Salman Rushdie
"The Free Radio" - *East, West*, Salman Rushdie

Movie and documentary clips:

"Rattlebag: 25th Anniversary of Brian Friel's *Translations*" by RTÉ (Irish Public Radio) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8aUROE43IlM - 14:25/38:38 mins.
"Ride of the Valkyries" - *Apocalypse Now* by Francis Ford Coppola - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30QzJKCUekQ - 4:43 mins.
"The Fall of Saigon" by CBC News - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=og6bi3cgf5g - 5:43 mins.
"Russian Roulette" - *The Deer Hunter* by Michael Cimino - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHtQwxKaofk - 2:54 mins.
Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud - Carleton University Library Catalogue – 10:00/96:00 mins.
"The Huron Chief" *The Last of the Mohicans* by Michael Mann - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LcpgKK2DI4 - 2:48 mins.

Guest Speakers:

"Music in the Global Context" by Jesse Stewart, Associate Professor, School for Studies in Art and Culture, Carleton University / Adjunct Professor, Visual Arts Program, University of Ottawa

"The World as Backdrop: Scaling Up and Down World Cinema" by Malini Guha, Assistant Professor of Film Studies, Carleton University

"Global Art Histories" by Victoria Nolte, Ph.D. Candidate, Cultural Mediations, ICSLAC, Carleton University

Contemporary Global Literatures course will draw the connecting lines between the aforementioned texts. We will study the material under these main topics: Language, Travel, Trauma, Decolonization, Rewriting, Humour, Alternative History, Genre, and Representation. In addition, we will reserve one week for in-class reading and study of short stories.

One final ambition of the course is to be in synchronization with our century, and to be up to date with the trends, tools and technologies the millennials engage in. Inclusion of texts in genres that may have been unconventional in literary studies until the twenty-first century, such as stand-up comedy routines and graphic art autobiographies, is just one way to rejuvenate a literature course. Another youthful approach I have incorporated into this course is the submission of reading responses in 140 characters or less, namely, in tweets. If Yann Martel can write a profound micro-story in a tweet—"La terre? Nous l'avons mangée hier.[5]" (Pargaud)—my students can easily tweet meaningful reading responses. Hopefully, they will have fun doing it.

[5] "The earth? We ate it yesterday" (translation mine).

2. COURSE RATIONALE

> "What kind of bird are you if you can't fly?"
> said the bird.
> To this the duck replied,
> "Now, what kind of bird are *you* if you can't swim?"
> and dived into the pond.
>
> *Peter and the Wolf,* Sergei Prokofiev

The Institute for World Literature (IWL), headquartered at Harvard University and led by David Damrosch, one of the foremost world literature scholars, "has been created to explore the study of literature in a globalizing world," according to its website. The Institute explains that in "the twenty-first century, our understanding of 'world literature' has expanded beyond the classic canon of European masterpieces and entered a far-reaching inquiry into the variety of the world's literary cultures and their distinctive reflections and refractions of the political, economic, and religious forces sweeping the globe." Erich Auerbach would have agreed. He was of the opinion that we possess, and are possessed by the spirit of our own time (69). This reciprocal possession of and captivation by one's current era is at the core of our desire to understand the aspects and experiences of our own contemporary age. In 1952, when Auerbach wrote his essay "Philology and *Weltliteratur*," he referred to the first half of the twentieth century during which "events have enlarged our intellectual perspectives, new outlooks on history and on reality have been revealed, and the view of the structure of inter-human processes has been enriched and renewed" (70). It is then easy to conclude that the seventy-five years that have passed since Auerbach's comments had further developed our "intellectual perspectives" and engendered even more crucial viewpoints. In addition to our revived awareness and broadened perspectives, our frame of reference has also shifted. Today, when our century is already advancing in its teenage years, there is an urgency,

more than ever before, associated with studying global literatures. In response to Franco Moretti's argument that "the literature around us is now unmistakably a planetary system" (148), Heng and Ramey assert that "a planetary system of literatures had already existed for a millennium and more: literatures whose global themes, global subjects, global purview, and whose global imaginary were there for all to consider" (389). Including *The Thousand and One Nights* and *Decameron*, they list stories, epics, and accounts of travels going as far back as the tenth century, arguing that they represent global literatures (389). True. But, *The Thousand and One Nights* and *Decameron* did not create "a genuinely transcultural zone that undermines the territorial borders of cultural and literary production, thereby leading to the emergence of a global consciousness" as did the "contemporary globalization" (Cheah 23).

Justin D. Edwards asks what the appeal of postcolonial literature is. By way of an answer, he ponders if it is "surprising that there are reading publics fascinated by such texts," "[a]fter a tumultuous twentieth century marked by the politics and conflicts of decolonization, affecting nations across the globe" (1). It is clear that postcolonial and decolonization literatures are inevitable parts of contemporary global literatures. As Cheah argues, in examining "the global production of Western cultures and literatures" we must now employ "the perspectives of empire and postcoloniality, and include the literatures of formerly colonized regions written in European languages," as well as the written and oral works in non-European languages (23). This course includes several postcolonial texts, some tackling the devastation of the colonial times, and some others dealing with the issues of decolonization (see fig. 2).

To appreciate how far we have come with respect to decentering literature and "wrenching the comparative enterprise away from its Eurocentric home" (Cheah 23), we only need to consider this course and others like this, with their texts from around the globe, being studied in universities

Text	Setting	Main Themes
Translations Brian Friel	Colonial Ireland	Language, changes made by the colonial rule, identity, culture, resistance to colonizers
A Small Place Jamaica Kincaid	Colonial and postcolonial Antigua	Travel and tourism, slave trade and colonialism, decolonization, language, culture, corruption i.e. "learned evil"
Nervous Conditions Tsitsi Dangarembga	Colonial Zimbabwe	Trauma and "nervous conditions," language, culture, identity, patriarchal society and gender inequality
We Need New Names NoViolet Bulawayo	Postcolonial Zimbabwe	Decolonization, NGOs, World Bank and the IMF World Bank Literature
Short Stories Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie Salman Rushdie	Nigeria and the United States India	Sexism, gender inequality, Religious wars, World Bank Literature
American Born Chinese Gene Luen Yang	Present-day United States	Genre, identity and stereotyping, language
The Monsters of Templeton Lauren Groff	Early colonial North America, present-day United States	Rewriting, first contact, multiple stories, intertextuality, representation
The Plot Against America Phillip Roth	1940s United States, fictional and semi-fictional	Alternative history, racism, discrimination, foreshadowing present day USA
The Sympathizer Viet Thanh Nguyen	Vietnam War, 1960s United States	Representation, multiple stories, intertextuality
Born a Crime Trevor Noah	South Africa, during apartheid and post-apartheid	Humour, colonialism, racism, segregation, control and power mechanisms

Figure 2. Themes associated with the main texts.

for a couple of decades now. Damrosch makes the point that today, "[t]he ongoing acceleration of economic and cultural globalization has brought the scope of world literature to a new level" (106). While today, for the authors from the global South, the struggle to be published, to be marketed,

to be available, to be read still persists, Damrosch argues that it is much improved compared to the "older imperial networks," when

> literature usually flowed outward from the metropolitan center to the colonial periphery, with Dickens assigned as required reading in India as was Cervantes in Argentina. Colonial writers would rarely if ever see their works assigned in turn in London or Madrid, … (106)

Theo D'haen agrees that the twenty-first century is indeed a great time for world literature. He asserts that "[n]o other approach to literary studies has known as spectacular a success in the new millennium as that which goes by the name of 'world literature'" (1). He spends some time on the previous definitions of the term. Two quotations D'haen entertains are of interest. One is from Richard Moulton: "'Universal literature' is 'the sum total of all literatures,' whereas 'world literature' 'is this Universal Literature seen in perspective from a given point of view, presumably the national standpoint of the observer' (Moulton 1921, 6)" (qtd. in D'haen 19). A couple of decades later, Albert Guérard redefines

> *Universal Literature* [as] the fullest possible expansion of our field: it embraces all literatures, of all ages, in all languages, without insisting on their unity or their relations. *World Literature* is limited to those works which are enjoyed in common, ideally by all mankind, practically by our own group of culture, the European or Western. (Guérard 1940, 15) (qtd. in D'haen 19)

Needless to say, neither of these definitions are remotely satisfactory. However, they demonstrate the current insufficiency of the term "world literature," and that is why "global literatures" has become a more friendly, indeed, a "global" term.

When Goethe first advocated for World Literature in 1827, an earlier understanding was to build a—necessarily inadequate—collection of national literatures from different parts of the world. In addition to this flawed and possibly ineffective collection/canon approach, Goethe's concept was also largely Eurocentric. Luckily, comparative literature has been successfully "wrenching the comparative enterprise away from its Eurocentric home" (Cheah 23) since the

early 1990s. Finally, there is the matter of circulation. Cheah insists that "world literature in the narrow sense of literature that circulates globally is historically complicit with the epistemic violence of imperialism" (18). However, there is still hope that we may benefit from Goethe's *Weltliteratur*. Homi Bhabha's re-reading of Goethe leads us to a world literature of current interests. If Goethe was right in his speculation about the inner nature and the unconscious workings of individuals and societies, then, Bhabha suggests,

> world literature could be an emergent, prefigurative category that is concerned with a form of cultural dissensus and alterity, where non-consensual terms of affiliation may be established on the grounds of historical trauma. The study of world literature might be the study of the way in which cultures recognize themselves through their projections of 'otherness'. Where, once, the transmission of national traditions was the major theme of a world literature, perhaps we can now suggest that transnational histories of migrants, the colonized, or political refugees—these border and frontier conditions—may be the terrains of world literature. (17)

Bhabha's point synthesizes the aforementioned theories of Auerbach and Cheah. Firstly, what is here and now, or what has not yet gone away, is of concern to a reader. Secondly, we may have passed the stage of "transmission of national traditions." There are few exotic frontiers left thanks to new and incessant forms of communication. Elsewhere, Bhabha cautions us that "we must not fail to see how our own intimate, indigenous landscapes should be remapped to include those who are its new citizens; or those whose citizenly presence has been annihilated or marginalized" (xxii). Global literatures can help us with this intent to be inclusive, as well as to be critical of common narratives. Vilashini Cooppan argues that "[g]lobalization, taken as in part a reading strategy, might challenge us to look anew at literary texts, seeking not the mimetic compact between nation and narrative but rather the presence of certain intra-national and extra-national forces of affiliation and disaffiliation" (183). It has been said that literature is the ultimate truth. While that cliché may be valid in contrast to texts of imperialist or propagandist nature, the real purpose of literature is not to establish the ultimate truth, but to offer real experiences and points of view of diverse

peoples. Global literatures explore universal topics that are prevalent in our transnational world. Today there are "more people living across or between national borders than ever before" (Bhabha xxi), and "the history of colonialism and contemporary globalization has brought many different cultures into jarring proximity" (Cheah 23). Global literatures reflect this mobility and interaction. The benefit of literature is that it brings awareness and coherence to contemporary issues, and a better comprehension of dilemmas that are common to us all.

While Cooppan asserts that "historical periodization" assigned to globalization may vary from the ancient and medieval world's trade routes to the "postmodern, post-colonial acceleration of spatio-temporal connection" (177), the readings in this course are limited to contemporary authors, and to works that are published after the 1980s when globalization was on its way to become a full-blown social force. Cooppan calls this recent period "contemporary globalization" that saw "unprecedented economic and cultural forces of connection" (177). These new connections are reflected in global literatures.

While the Western author's "situation of strength"—to borrow a term from Edward Said—is pervasive in nineteenth- and early-twentieth centuries, today non-European fictional characters can speak for themselves. Gustave Flaubert's Kuchuk Hanem[6] "never spoke of herself, she never represented her emotions, presence, or history. *He* spoke for her and represented her" (Said 6). Today, Tambu and Darling can and do speak.

This course covers a variety of literary styles and genres including alternative history, auto-biography, drama, novel, short story, and graphic novel. Cooppan, paraphrasing Todorov, argues that [g]enres are systems in constant transformation, always inverting, displacing, or combining earlier genres and, equally, ever in the process of being themselves remade" (185). I agree that a

[6] In Turkish "küçük hanım," young lady.

diversity of genres show us "something about a larger cultural story of cross-societal contact, transmission, and hybridization" (185). Different styles give us the opportunity to critically engage with the effect the author is striving for. The level and mode of our involvement changes from a novel to a play to a graphic auto-biography. I chose works whose authors and/or protagonists come from a multiplicity of backgrounds; works that make use of more than one language; and stories that are set in lesser-known places around the world. In short, my goal was to choose books that are global in all aspects. Auerbach had worried that our earth was "growing smaller and losing its diversity" (66). While this risk is present and scholars discuss the possibility often, I think Auerbach[7] would have been pleased with my diverse choices.

To vouch for Thomas Pavel's assertion that imagination has world-creating powers (6), one only has to have been a child once. Rudyard Kipling once specified world's oldest profession.[8] Without challenging his assertion, one can argue that world's oldest pastime—art, craft—is storytelling. While being "a practice common to all cultures," storytelling, historically, "has acted as a sort of connective tissue across which themes, subjects, values, and discourse genres have circulated among different peoples throughout the centuries, as testified by our common patrimony of legends, tales, stories, myths, parables, sayings, proverbs, etc." (Petrilli and Ponzio 98-99). The main idea of storytelling, the desire to tell, and to listen, has not changed. Our global literatures today are not very much different than the parables circulated in the old world. While the ultimate goal of world literature was to "articulate philosophies and worldviews" different than ours, and

[7] Auerbach's biography is an early example of the global connections that are so common in our time and that lie at the heart of this course. In 1929, Auerbach had become a philology professor at the University of Marburg, Germany. In the early years of the Nazi regime, along with dozens of other professors, he was forced to leave his position. Auerbach took up residence in Istanbul, my home town. There, he wrote *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. After more than a decade in Turkey, Auerbach moved to the United States and worked at Pennsylvania State and Yale universities respectively. He died in in Connecticut in 1957.

[8] "Lalun is a member of the most ancient profession in the world" (Kipling 5).

"to mentally travel to 'foreign' worlds" (Pulitano 53-54), today's globalized life requires a study of works that also deal with intertwined complex issues.

Why do we need to study global literatures? Is it because we want to be "ethically sensitive to the cultural differences and geopolitical complexities of the contemporary age" (Cheah 23)? Is it because imagination has world-creating powers (Pavel 10) and "literature can contribute to an understanding of the world" (Cheah 5). Is it because global literatures allow us to travel distances, even go back in time, or peak into the future, consider what-ifs and imagine alternative scenarios? Is it to celebrate diversity? Yes. All of the above. Most importantly, global literatures impress upon us a sense of unity. As Auerbach calls it, we are unified in our multiplicity. We realize that we are more similar than we are different. We struggle with the same issues: wealth, gender and race inequalities, discriminatory and stereotyping attitudes, difficulties of fitting in, preserving our identities and cultures. We all want basic human rights, freedom of self-expression, good education and good jobs. Our different customs and traditions do not set us apart, they merely require mutual understanding and respect. Global literatures empower us to see our similarities, and explore, understand, accept and respect our distinct qualities.

I want my students to see—to believe in—the world-making, world-altering powers of literature. When Pheng Cheah asks if there is "a normative worldly force immanent to literature," we should be able to answer 'yes,' and then go on to exemplify "the normative force that literature can exert in the world" (5). Kwame Anthony Appiah argues that "what makes the novel available to its readers is not shared values or beliefs or experiences but the human capacity to conjure new worlds in the imagination" (xi). We will have to believe that the world-making capacity of literature and the world-making capacity of the human imagination are working hand-in-hand.

Damrosch, in a recent speech, quipped that “what world literature isn’t is that it isn’t what is world literature anymore,” following it up with “been there, done that” (Ungureanu 0:00-1:10). If I may be allowed to be equally playful, I would like to finish in the style of our students—the millennials—and say that world literature is “sooooo twentieth century.” In the twenty-first century, we study Contemporary Global Literatures.

3. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who complete this course successfully will have demonstrated an ability to:

1. Define key concepts such as world, worlding, world literatures, global, globalism, globalization and global literatures, and explain why the meanings of some of these terms have changed over time.
2. Explain the significance of colonialism, post-colonial conditions and difficulties of the decolonization processes in global literatures. Compare the narratives of stories that are connected by time, space or socio-economic conditions, especially between older and newer texts.

   Embedded Knowledge and Skills (EKS): Observe how the narratives change, and understand the significance of this change.
3. Identify post-colonial difficulties presented in the texts, and draw accurate connections between decolonization and ongoing, other forms of "colonization." Identify and discuss these other forms of subjugation and explain why former colonists engage in them.

   EKS: Establish the historical and social contexts for each text.
4. Identify the representations in the texts. Determine the author's point of view (position of enunciation), and explain how it is different from or similar to our own. Find other texts on the same topic that present different representations.

   EKS: Apply critical thinking. Present arguments while interpreting challenging texts.
5. Draw conclusions about the role of literature in society.

   EKS: Develop an understanding of how literature relates to their own discipline and career choices.

6. Write essays with clarity and conviction on challenging topics.

   EKS: Improve essay writing skills as well as oral discussion and presentation abilities. Form and argue a thesis.

7. Identify formal aspects and genres of texts, and explain their functions.

   EKS: Recognize the literary devices the authors use, and how they work to advance the message of the text. Build up literary vocabulary.

4. COURSE SCHEDULE

Each week consists of three hours of lectures. These three hours can be consecutive, or they can be divided into two ninety-minute sessions. The course plan factors in the possibility of two weekly sessions by diving the lecture material in two parts for each week.

4.1. WEEK 1: Key Concepts and the Role of Literature

Part 1

In this very first session of the course, as is the custom, we will begin by reviewing the syllabus and the objectives of the course.

Before a brief introduction to the course, students will be asked to consider what they expect from a course titled Contemporary Global Literatures. Based on their responses, we will have a chance to discuss our expectations, and connect these to real-life experiences and concerns. We will also ask, and try to answer some questions: Why do we read? What is the function of literature? Why world literature, why global literatures? What are the concepts associated with this course? What does the title, **Contemporary Global Literatures**, mean?

A short time will be reserved to go over the major works we will study, and note their interconnectivity and their relation to our goals. The students will be required to obtain *Translations*, *Nervous Conditions*, *A Small Place*, *American Born Chinese*, *The Sympathizer*, and *The Monsters of Templeton.* All other texts will be provided by the instructor on cuLearn.

We will start defining key concepts and terms such as world, global, globalization, post-colonial, diaspora, and so forth. We will continue working on the concepts and terms, adding to and adapting their definitions in every class.

Supplementary texts:

- Gupta, Suman. *Globalization and Literature*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009. Pages 1-12.

Part 2

This session is dedicated to warm-up texts. We will watch, listen, read or view the following texts and discuss them:

- Stand up routine - Trevor Noah, 2015 - https://vimeo.com/130619176 - transcript at cuLearn
- "The Danger of a Single Story" – lecture by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 2009 *TED Talk* - https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story - transcript at cuLearn
- "Englishman in New York" – song by Sting, 1987 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d27gTrPPAyk - lyrics at cuLearn
- "Not One of Us" – song by Peter Gabriel, 1980 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dlowHBCzLFY - lyrics at cuLearn
- "The White Man's Burden" – poem by Rudyard Kipling, 1899 - cuLearn
- "The White Man's Burden" - cartoon by Victor Gillam in April 1, 1899 edition of *Judge* - cuLearn
- "The White Man's Burden" – advertisement, *Pearl Soap* in October 1899 edition of *McClure's Magazine* - cuLearn
- "Colonization in Reverse" – poem by Louise Bennett, 1966 - cuLearn

Assignments:

Before the next class, students must have read the play *Translations* by Brian Friel.

4.2. WEEK 2: Language

This week is dedicated to the study of Brian Friel's *Translations*, and to the discussions of the Language theme in connection with colonization. Other themes such as maps, violence and the position of the imperial power will also be deliberated.

Part 1

We will start the lecture with a brief history of Ireland at the time of the play's setting. We will explore the significance of the hedge schools and the ordnance survey, and learn about the ideas of certain influential people of the time, such as Daniel O'Connell. Then, we will move on to the generation of Friel and the Troubles, Northern Ireland's civil unrest. We will discuss how Friel dealt with the current issues by writing a play that takes place 150 years earlier.

We will listen to an interview with Stephen Rea, co-founder of the Field Day Theatre Company, actor and Friel's friend:

- "Rattlebag: 25th Anniversary of Brian Friel's *Translations*" by RTÉ (Irish Public Radio) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8aUROE43IlM - 14:25/38:38 mins.

Supplementary texts:

- Hawkins, Maureen S. G. "'We Must Learn Where We Live': Language, Identity, and the Colonial Condition in Brian Friel's *Translations*." *Eire-Ireland*, vol. 38, no. 1-2, Spring-Summer 2003, pp. 23-37. Web. 20 July 2017.
- Fernández-Suárez, Yolanda. "An Essential Picture in a Sketch-book of Ireland: The Last Hedge Schools." *Estudios Irlandeses - Journal of Irish Studies*. Number 1, 2006, pp. 45-57.

Part 2

The second session of this week will be dedicated to a discussion of the intent and the significance of the play. What is the message and is it successful? Why does Hugh insist on teaching Latin and ancient Greek, as opposed to English, which he speaks well? What contradictions Friel wants to expose? We will also talk about the formal aspects of the play, namely the use of language. We will try to answer why one language is representing two, and what the

implications of this choice are. To grasp the effect of English being used for both English and Gaelic lines, we will watch a brief excerpt of the play's performance:

- Translations Trailer - Villanova Theatre - Directed by Valerie Joyce

  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7fAjKR-bH4

Assignments:

Before the next class, students must have read Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*.

First reading response in the form of a tweet is due by midnight of the upcoming Sunday. This reading response can be on any of the texts covered in the first week, or on *Translations*.

4.3. WEEK 3: Travel

This week's main text is Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*. In this concise work, Kincaid, drawing on her personal experiences of her childhood in Antigua, tackles issues that are common to colonized communities and those that are currently in the painful process of decolonization. Under the Travel theme, we will look at the darker side of tourism, and try to understand the reasons behind Kincaid's harsh words.

Part 1

This week will start with a brief history of Antigua which includes Christopher Columbus, the first European to step on the island in 1493, and the subsequent colonization by the English who left St. Kitts to settle in Antigua in 1632. Long lasting impacts of slavery, and the master/slave, tourist/servant relationships that persist even after the end of slavery will occupy some of our time. We will examine the style and language used by Kincaid, and what effects these choices make on the reader. We will discuss Kincaid's frustrations, her goals in writing this book, and the multiple decolonization problems she depicts. We will talk about the tourist gaze and the learned evil. We

will also continue on the Language theme from the previous week, and examine the similarities/differences in the Antiguan context.

Supplementary texts:

- Fanon, Franz. "The Black Man and Language." *Black Skin, White Masks*. Franz Fanon. New York: Grove Press, 2007.
- Fox, Geoffrey. "Welcome to My Contri." *Welcome to My Contri*. New York: Hudson View Press, 1988.
- Fox, Geoffrey. "Welcome to My Contri." *ReadLit.com*. Read by Geoffrey Fox. 2017. Web. http://readlit.com/musings/welcome-to-my-contri-a-story-by-geoffrey-fox/
- Walcott, Derek. *Omeros*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1990.

Part 2

In this session we will complete our discussion of *A Small Place*. The rest of the time will be dedicated to essay writing tips and techniques. We will use *A Small Place* to learn how to do a close reading.

Assignments:

Before the next class, students must have read *Nervous Conditions* by Tsitsi Dangarembga.

Second reading response is on Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*. Send it in the form of a tweet to @GlobalLiteratur by midnight of the upcoming Sunday.

First essay is due by the second class of next week:

Exercise in Close Reading (600 – 700 words) – 10% – due on the 4th week

4.4. WEEK 4: Trauma

In Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*, we will find plenty of material for this week's theme, Trauma, as well as for other topics such as missionaries and their functions in colonized territories, female oppression in patriarchal societies, and once again, Language.

Part 1

The lecture will begin with a history of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. Through Cecil Rhodes, we will make connections to matters that still have impact on the lives of Africans such as the De Beers Diamonds and the Bushmen struggles. Students will be encouraged to watch the movie *Blood Diamond*, if they find the time to do so.

We will talk about the Rhodes Scholarship and figure out how we should deal with it today, knowing what we know about the person who bequeathed it. Should we reject it, should we accept it, should we modify it? What does our critical thinking say, now that we no longer have room for good/bad binaries?

In this class, we will connect the history of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe with its depiction in *Nervous Conditions*, especially through a close reading of pages 18-19.

Taking our cue from the title of the book and its epigraph, and under the light of Franz Fanon's "Colonial War and Mental Disorders" essay in *The Wretched of the Earth*, we will discuss trauma and mental illness in colonized people. We will examine Nyasha's breakdown, and the rupture that follows Nyasha's mother's servility. We will also look at less visible psychological disorders such as that of Tambu's mother and her aunt. Tambu, herself, remain our main attention point.

Supplementary texts:

- Fanon, Franz. "Colonial War and Mental Disorders." *The Wretched of the Earth*. 1963. New York: Grove Press, 2004.

- *Blood Diamond*. Directed by Edward Zwick. Warner Bros. et al. 2006.
- Hortle, Robert. "Rhodes Scholars: Can You Justify Taking the Money of the 'Godfather of Apartheid'? *The Guardian*. TheGuardian.com. 1 Feb. 2016. Web. 30 July 2017.
- Thompson, Katrina Daly. "The Mother Tongue and Bilingual Hysteria: Translation Metaphors in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*." The Journal of Commonwealth Literature. 01-June-2008. Vol 43, Issue 2, pp. 49 – 63.
- Walker, George. "'So Much to Do': Oxford and the Wills of Cecil Rhodes." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*. Volume 44, 2016 - Issue 4 pp. 697-716.
- Rahman, Muzna. "Bodily Secrets: The History of the Starving Body in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*." *Forum for Modern Language Studies*. Volume 50, Issue 3, 1 July 2014, pp. 275–288.

Part 2

In this session, we will look into the missionaries, their *raison d'être*, and how they function. We will examine how the natives view them ("holy whites," "minor deities"). We will close read page 19, and pages 105-106.

We will also continue with our theme of Language, because we have so much material in *Nervous Conditions*. We will look at how Tambu's brother, Nyasha, and even the missionaries themselves, deal with the "Shona versus English" clash in their struggles for identity, upward mobility, and in the case of the missionaries, to fit in, to gain confidence, as well as to use it as a tool for their purposes. We will close read page 53 and compare Nhamo's dilemma with the folktale in Fanon's "The Black Man and Language" essay in *Black Skin, White Masks* (7). Folktales and proverbs have global circulation as well. The joke Fanon recounts has a much funnier Turkish version which I will share with my students.

Supplementary texts:

- Fanon, Franz. "The Black Man and Language." *Black Skin, White Masks*. Franz Fanon. New York: Grove Press, 2007.

Assignments:

Before the next class, students must have read the first 148 pages of *We Need New Names* by NoViolet Bulawayo.

Third reading response is on Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*. Send it in the form of a tweet to @GlobalLiteratur by midnight of the upcoming Sunday.

4.5. WEEK 5: Decolonization

This week, first order of business is to divide our class into five groups. Each group will read one the following short stories for next week's in-class discussion:

- "A Private Experience" - *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- "Jumping Monkey Hill" - *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- "The Thing Around Your Neck" - *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.
- "Good Advice is Rarer Than Rubies" - *East, West*, Salman Rushdie
- "The Free Radio" - *East, West*, Salman Rushdie

This week's theme is Decolonization, and we will study the first part (pages 1-148) of NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*. We will look at what impact global economics, including neoliberal ideologies the World Bank, the IMF, and the NGOs have on literature, and in turn, how literature represents globalization.

Students will receive their marked first essays this week.

Part 1

Our first session will set the context. *We Need New Names* is taking place in year 2005. That is the year when Mugabe's government executed its campaign of removing hundreds of thousands of people from their homes. We will see how this real-life event affected the ten-year-old narrator Darling and many others like her. We will discuss the roles of the NGOs, the World Bank, the IMF, and the Structural Adjustment Programs.

Part 2

The second part of this week will focus on the child narrator and analysis of Darling's life in her own words. We will practice close reading on certain excerpts from the book.

Supplementary texts:

- Davy, Steven. "What Can You Buy for $100 Trillion in Zimbabwe? Not Even a Candy Bar." *PRI*. PRI.org. 12 June 2015. Web. 4 Aug. 2017. <https://www.pri.org/stories/2015-06-12/what-can-you-buy-100-trillion-zimbabwe-not-even-candy-bar>
- Drewry, Martin. "It's Time NGOs Admit Aid Isn't Going to 'Save' Africa." *The Guardian*. TheGuardian.com. 22 July 2014. Web. 2 Aug. 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2014/jul/22/africa-rescue-aid-stealing-resources>
- Wilkinson, Robyn. "Broaching 'Themes Too Large for Adult Fiction': The Child Narrator in NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*." *English Academy Review*. Volume 33, Number 1, 2016. Pp. 123-132.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW). "Zimbabwe: Evicted and Forsaken Internally Displaced Persons in the Aftermath of Operation Murambatsvina." *HRC*. HRC.org. December 2005 Volume 17, No. 16(A). Web. 17 July 2017.

<https://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/zim1205/zim1205text.pdf>

Assignments:

Before the next class, students will have read the short story assigned to them and be prepared to discuss it in class next week.

Fourth reading response is on *We Need New Names* by NoViolet Bulawayo. Send it in the form of a tweet to @GlobalLiteratur by midnight of the upcoming Sunday.

4.6. WEEK 6: Short Stories

This week most of the work will be done by the students. They will come to class having read one of the five short stories assigned to them. They will summarize the story, provide brief historical context, identify main themes and issues, discuss how they qualify to be global literature and lead the discussions. Instructor will moderate, and participate in the discussions as necessary, mostly to keep it lively.

Assignments:

Before the next class, students must have read the *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Young.

Fifth reading response is on one of the short stories by Adichie or Rushdie. Send it in the form of a tweet to @GlobalLiteratur by midnight of the upcoming Sunday.

Second essay is due by the second class of next week:

Analytical Essay (1200 – 1400 words) – 15% – due on the 7th week

4.7. WEEK 7: Genre

Analytical Essay assignment is due this week.

We have a guest speaker:

"Music in the Global Context" by **Jesse Stewart**, Associate Professor, School for Studies in Art and Culture, Carleton University / Adjunct Professor, Visual Arts Program, University of Ottawa.

Part 1

After we listen to our guest speaker, we will start our discussion on the theme Genre. After a brief introduction to the word "genre" and "literary genres," we will look at the comic book / graphic novel format. A brief history of these graphic works will be provided, and some of the earth-shattering examples will be examined. The instructor will pass around some samples of this genre for the students to peruse through:

- *The Complete Maus*: A Survivor's Tale, Art Spiegelman
- *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi
- *The Arab of the Future, 1 and 2: A Childhood in the Middle East*, Riad Sattouf
- *The Arrival*, Shaun Tan

Also in this class, we will watch the first ten minutes of *Persepolis*, the movie.

Part 2

In this section, we will start our discussion on *American Born Chinese*. We will talk about identities and stereotypes, and how the "image and text" format functions. We will also debate the role of the Monkey King and the child narrator.

Assignments:

Before the next class, students must have read, at least mid-way through, *The Monsters of Templeton* by Lauren Groff.

Sixth reading response is on *American Born Chinese*. Send it in the form of a tweet to @GlobalLiteratur by midnight of the upcoming Sunday.

4.8. WEEK 8 - Rewriting

Marked essay papers will be returned today.

We have a guest speaker:

"The World as a Backdrop: Scaling Up and Down World Cinema" by **Malini Guha**, Assistant Professor of Film Studies, Carleton University.

This week we start our discussion on *The Monsters of Templeton*, and we will continue discussing this work and its connection to other texts next week as well.

Part 1

After we listen to our guest speaker, we will begin our analysis of *The Monsters of Templeton*. This work is linked to many other texts, and we will investigate how they are interconnected and how some of the newer texts rewrite the older texts.

Part 2

We will look into author James Fenimore Cooper's legacy, and talk about the characters in *The Last of the Mohicans*.

We will watch an excerpt from "The Huron Chief." *The Last of the Mohicans* by Michael Mann - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LcpgKK2DI4 - 2:48 mins.

Assignments:

Before the next class, students must have finished reading *The Monsters of Templeton* by Lauren Groff, as well as the first two chapters (82 pages) of Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America.*

Seventh reading response is on *The Monsters of Templeton* or on one of the texts linked to it. Send it in the form of a tweet to @GlobalLiteratur by midnight of the upcoming Sunday.

4.9. WEEK 9: Rewriting continued

We have a guest speaker:

"Global Art Histories" by **Victoria Nolte**, Ph.D. Candidate, Cultural Mediations, ICSLAC, Carleton University.

This week, we will continue to discuss *The Monsters of Templeton* and all the other texts it is connected to.

Part 1

Continue with the discussion of *The Monsters of Templeton,* James Fenimore Cooper, the real and fictional Marmaduke Temple, and *The Last of the Mohicans.*

Part 2

A brief lecture on alternative history and Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*. We will learn who Charles A. Lindbergh was, and discuss how this work is related to present day United States.

Assignments:

Before the next class, students must have read the first 100 pages of *The Sympathizer* by Viet Thanh Nguyen.

Eight reading response is on the second half of *The Monsters of Templeton* or on one of the texts linked to it (a text different than your last week's tweet). Send it in the form of a tweet to @GlobalLiteratur by midnight of the upcoming Sunday.

4.10. WEEK 10: Representation

This week we will talk about the representations of the Vietnam War and the Vietnamese and study Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Sympathizers*.

Part 1

There will be a brief lecture, to set the context, on the American involvement in the Vietnam War. We will watch the last hours of the American presence in Vietnam and the last helicopter air-lifted from the American Embassy (known commonly as the Fall of Saigon):

"The Fall of Saigon" by CBC News - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=og6bi3cgf5g - 5:43 mins.

Part 2

We will make intertextual connections between Joseph's Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the movie *Apocalypse Now*, the movie *The Deer Hunter*, and our book, *The Sympathizer*.

We will watch excerpts from the aforementioned movies:

"Ride of the Valkyries" - *Apocalypse Now* by Francis Ford Coppola - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30QzJKCUekQ - 4:43 mins.

"Russian Roulette" - *The Deer Hunter* by Michael Cimino - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHtQwxKaofk - 2:54 mins.

Assignments:

Before the next class, students must have finished reading *The Sympathizer* (until page 199), as well as the first 116 pages of *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah.

Ninth reading response is on *The Sympathizer* or on one of the texts linked to it. Send it in the form of a tweet to @GlobalLiteratur by midnight of the upcoming Sunday.

Third essay is due by the second class of next week:

Comparative Essay (1800 – 2000 words) – 25% – due on the 11th week

4.11. WEEK 11: Representation continued

Comparative Essay assignment is due today.

We will continue our discussion on representation, *The Sympathizer*, and all the other texts we can link to it.

Assignments:

Before the final exam, the students are encouraged to finish all their reading assignments if they are behind on some of them.

Tenth and last reading response is on the second part of *The Sympathizer,* or on one of the texts linked to it, or on Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime*. Send it in the form of a tweet to @GlobalLiteratur by midnight of the upcoming Sunday.

4.12. WEEK 12: Review

Marked essay papers will be returned.

This week is reserved for review, answering any questions the students might have, and tying up the lose ends.

Also this week, we will explain the format of the final exam, and practice with sample questions.

5. COURSE SUMMARIES

5.1. WEEK 1: Key Concepts and the Role of Literature

"*You call this literature?*"

Matthew Diffee – *The New Yorker*

J.A. Cuddon's Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory starts its entry on *literature* with these three words: "A vague term" (472). Terry Eagleton would agree with this opening. In *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Eagleton demonstrates how hard it is to define *literature*: "Some kinds of fiction are literature and some are not; some literature is fictional and some is not; some literature is verbally self-regarding, while some highly-wrought rhetoric is not literature" (9). Cuddon's Dictionary takes the most common approach and states that "the term carries with it qualitative connotations which imply that the work in question has superior qualities" (472). He goes on to suggest that literary works are customarily recognized "by virtue of the excellence of

their writing, their originality and their general aesthetic and artistic merits" (472). As imprecise as this definition is, it is nonetheless one that we can accept and move forward with. We must, however, be open to contemporary genres.

While novels, poetry, drama and short stories are considered to be literary genres, today other styles are infiltrating literature studies. In contemporary global literatures, it would be futile to ignore the broader range of cultural production, such as graphic novels and creatively-structured autobiographies. Two such works are included in this course: stand-up comedian Trevor Noah's half comic memoir and half lecture on apartheid, *Born a Crime*, and autobiographical graphic novel which is also partly what is called *le fantastique*—the fantastic— in French, Gene Luen Yang's *American Born Chinese*. Another book incorporated into this syllabus defies all categorization: *A Small Place* by Jamaica Kincaid is, all at once, a creative non-fiction (Wood), a metafictional discourse (McLeod), and a travel or anti-travel narrative. It can also be called a memoir. All these different attributions show that *literature* is not the only "vague" term; *genre* is also open to debate. We are the beneficiaries of rich oral storytelling traditions that include "legends, tales, stories, myths, parables, sayings [and] proverbs" (Petrilli and Ponzio 99). Although the novel keeps its predominant status as the written literary genre, contemporary literary studies do not discriminate against newest forms and styles. As it gets more complicated to define terms such as *literature*, *genre*, and *literary genre*, the broader our portfolio of representations should become. This syllabus reflects this new inclusiveness, and the larger range of visionary texts.

How is literature different than other forms of discourse? How do these texts we call literature work in comparison to ordinary communication methods, such as the news on television? Susan Petrilli and Augusto Ponzio explain that the difference is in one's interest in the other, as opposed to one's interest in one's self. They point out that "[w]hile in contemporary society communication

with others is goal-oriented, channeled into the interests and gains of the individual to a pathological degree, in storytelling such a tendency is replaced by communication oriented by the *interesting*, where what counts is one's relation with the other, one's interest in the other per se" (99). Furthermore, Petrilli and Ponzio argue that a story is "an end in itself, of its being founded uniquely in the pleasure of invoking the other, of involving and listening to the other" (99). Whereas daily communication, watching the news on television, reading hobby magazines are all for the satisfaction of personal gain or interest, stories are consumed purely because they are *interesting*, because they offer a view into other lives. Storytelling, Petrilli and Ponzio assert, "creates pauses in communication-production processes that allow for reflection, critical thinking, dialogue, encounter, hospitality towards the other" (99). Arguably, these pauses in which we can reflect, re-orient, and engage in critical thinking, comprise the ultimate goal of studying literature.

We may also experience difficulty in defining some of the most common words such as "world," "global" and "globalization." We use them everyday, but what exactly do they mean? Eric Hayot observes that "both 'world' and 'globalization' are two of the master-terms of the geographic and historical imaginaries governing the modern period[,]" and they are essential "to the concepts of government, social life, economic development, human culture, ecology, technology, and so on." Hayot argues that these two words are being used interchangeably "even though the two words mean very different things." He argues that the world is "a geographic unity, an organic whole, a frame for cosmopolitanism." Whereas globalization, he explains, is "a transformation," which "acts on us." Hayot points out the paradoxes of globalization's transformations as "more communication, but less community; more difference, but less diversity; more speed, but less time." He asserts that "[g]lobalization makes things globe-al; it brings them

in contact with the globe, … the 'globe' of globalization is defined by the activities it makes possible" (227). Obviously he does not favour pairing globalization with world literature (228).

Suman Gupta's clarifications in *Globalization and Literature* are very helpful, and the students will be encouraged to read the first chapter, "The Nuances of Globalization." Gupta says that "scholarly discussions of globalization" are plenty and diverse, however, he finds three definitions in particular relevant and useful. These are:

> Anthony Gidden's definition of globalization as 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa' (Giddens 1990, 64).
> Martin Albrow's observation that 'globalisation effectively means that societies now cannot be seen as systems in an environment of other systems, but as sub-systems of the larger inclusive world society' (Albrow 1990, 11).
> Roland Robertson's understanding that 'Globalization as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole' (Robertson 1992, 8). (Gupta 3-4)

As Gupta remarks, all definitions make sense when you consider them individually. So then, what is the relationship between globalization and literature? Firstly, "globalization is thematically treated in literary works," (53) as we will see in *A Small Place* and *We Need New Names*. However, Gupta argues that "the effects of technological enhancement of information and communication networks, the drivers of globalization forces, are not merely represented *within* literature; they also comprehensively *act upon* literature" (53).

Gupta's influential work introduces us to James Annesley's *Fictions of Globalization* (2006) in which Annesley argues that we must not read books to find evidence of globalization in them, for instance, the fact that in *We Need New Names*, the children of the slums of Zimbabwe receive, as aid, t-shirts with Western logos on them is not evidence of the reality of globalization. Instead, we must read global literature "to refine ways of knowing globalization's discourses. We must find

ways “to read contemporary fiction in terms that add to the knowledge about, and understanding of its discourses” (Annesley 6).

Another issue in global literatures is the difficulties for non-Western authors to find publishers. Damrosch argues that, faced with obstacles in getting published, or in acquiring large readerships due to lack of marketing, writers may “find it hard to resist going with the global flow, producing work that fits foreign stereotypes of what an 'authentic' Indian or Czech novel should be. Alternatively, watered-down versions of trendy approaches can proliferate, written in a superficial international style divorced from any vital cultural grounding" (107). This is a serious issue. In fact, one of the texts chosen for this course, *We Need New Names* by NoViolet Bulawayo, has been accused of having written to make fit what the Western audience would expect from Africa. We will investigate in the classroom if this work, even partially, deserves the criticism. We will also contrast this issue with the long tradition of Western authors pandering to their readers.

We will also mention Franco Moretti’s notion of “distant reading” which he suggests as a method to cover more ground in global literatures, and the reaction of his appalled colleagues. It will be interesting to hear our students’ thoughts on this one.

Finally, we will look at terms that have changed meanings over time, and new *portmanteau* terms such as glocal, which may mean a combination of local and global, or taking something that is international, or global and making it local, maybe adapting it. Damrosch gives the famous slogan of the 1990s as an example of glocalism: “Think globally, act locally.” “In literature,” he suggests, “writers can treat local matters for a global audience,” or “they can present their locality as a microcosm of global exchange” (109).

5.2. WEEK 2: Language

> You taught me language, and my profit on't
> Is I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
> For learning me your language!
>
> Caliban, *The Tempest*, William Shakespeare

Brian Friel's multi-layered and consequential drama *Translations* offers a lot to unpack both in form and in content. The events take place in 1833, in a small fictional Irish town called Baile Beag. Friel wrote the play in 1980, at the closing of a very tumultuous and violent decade of the ongoing hostilities between the Catholic/Nationalist and Protestant/Unionist factions of the Northern Ireland. He clearly wanted to write something that could help his fellow Irish to reflect calmly and clearly on the continuing bloodshed. He chose to do this by setting his play, not at that present time, but in 1833 when the Irish were facing other conflicts, ones that are deeply connected to those of 1980. Friel, by setting the clock 150 years back, skillfully encourages a new discourse for his generation without mentioning the ongoing terror and disorder. In fact, placing some distance between fiction and the current problems is an approach precisely spelled out as the main goal of The Field Day Theatre Company which Friel had founded with his friend, actor Stephen Rea. The company's maxim was articulated as a resolve to "[contribute] to the solution of present crisis by producing analyses of the established opinions, myths and stereotypes which had become both a symptom and a cause of the current situation[9]" (Field Day Theatre Company vii). With this determination, the first play they put on stage became Friel's *Translations*.

We need to know a few things about Ireland in the first half of the nineteenth century to better understand the context of the play. *Translations* is brimming with references to the critical events

[9] This excerpt is quoted often (see also Lojek 83).

and issues of the time in which it is set including a foreshadowing of the potato blight and the ensuing Great Famine. We must also keep in mind that the colonizing British were Anglican or Protestant, and the colonized Irish were mostly Catholic. This difference in religion was one of the agents of the civic unrest at the time of Friel's writing. During the timeline of the play, two significant developments were taking place in Northern Ireland. One of these was the National School System that was introduced in 1831 and was slowly taking hold in rural Ireland, and the other was the Ordnance Survey. Both of these government enterprises had the consequence of increasing the exposure to "the King's good English" (Friel 30), and weakening or entirely eliminating the Gaelic language. What better way to problematize the endangerment of the native tongue through the domination of the imperial language—the King's good English—than by using an "extraordinary device of rendering two languages through the medium of one" (Grant 47), and adding dead languages such as Latin and ancient Greek into the mix? These formal aspects of the play will be discussed below.

The British government had decided to create new and accurate maps of Ireland, and in the process, rename every landmark and every geographical entity with anglicized names. The new mapping had multiple advantages for the colonizers: identification of land ownership for taxation purposes, providing precise terrain intelligence to the British army, and converting all Irish place names into English. The project, which was largely seen as an imperialist control and power mechanism, was executed by a military body that included engineers and cartographers. In *Translations*, Captain Lancey, an officer and a cartographer explains, in between Owen's inadequate and intentionally misleading translations, that "His Majesty's government has ordered the first ever comprehensive survey of this entire country" in order to enable the military authorities with "up-to-date and accurate information on every corner of this part of the Empire."

He continues to explain that land evaluations will be "reassessed for purposes of more equitable taxation." All this, he concludes, is "to advance the interests of Ireland" (33-34). According to Justin D. Edwards, Lancey's words imply "that he is leading a military operation which is designed to provide the British armed forces with the information needed to secure the position of the colony under the crown." In addition, the King can "regulate and enforce taxation in Ireland and take financial control of the territory." Furthermore, "the mapping of Ireland functions as a symbolic appropriation of the land." Since this map will replace all previous ones, it will "become the authoritative text that will legitimize the British appropriation of the land." Edwards concludes that "a map has power to take away a country's national sovereignty by depicting one nation as coming under the control of another" (85-86). The Anglicization of all the names on the map ties in nicely with the other initiative of the government, the National Schools which only offered education in English. As language rights scholar Stephen May argues, language is not only a significant part of both identity and culture, it is also a highly political concern (134-35), therefore it is inextricable from the colonial and imperial designs.

The native system of education in small towns such as the play's Baile Beag consisted primarily of hedge schools. The hedge school system was born out of the necessity to educate Irish communities in rural areas. These schools were considered to be private—independent—schools set-up and ran by a teacher/schoolmaster who was an educated member of the peasant society he served or one from a nearby town. The schoolmaster was paid by the students on a per topic basis, reading, writing and arithmetic being the main subjects. Hedge schools were also known to teach Latin, Greek or English, depending on what the schoolmaster was versed in or chose to instruct. The schools had a makeshift look, ordinarily taking place at a house or a barn, adding to the lack

of "an official status" and reveal them plainly as part of the informal native system (Fernández-Suárez 45). *Translations* draws the picture of a typical hedge school as follows:

> The hedge-school is held in a disused barn or hay-shed or byre. Along the back wall are the remains of five or six stalls – wooden posts and chains – where cows were once milked and bedded. A double door left, large enough to allow a cart to enter. A window right. A wooden stairway without a banister leads to the upstairs living-quarters (off) of the schoolmaster and his son. Around the room are broken and forgotten implements: a cart-wheel, some lobster-pots, farming tools, a battle of hay, a churn, etc. There are also the stools and bench seats which the pupils use and a table and chair for the master. (1)

When the British brought the National System[10] of education to Ireland in 1831, this "meant the beginning of the end for hedge schools" (Fernández-Suárez 45). While the professed goal was to improve the quality of education, there were other intentions, such as conversion of Catholic population to Anglicanism, and stamping out Irish language and culture. In *Translations*, these actual developments of the time—the National School System and the Ordnance Survey—are cleverly brought together to demonstrate what Hawkins calls a "linguistic imperialism" (23).

The language of the colonizer—or the language of the dominant group—as we will see over and over again in other texts of this course, offers opportunities and connection with a larger world. If English means liberation from poverty and the vicious circle of a small town, naturally people will be drawn to it. Maire, in *Translations*, voices her concern regarding the lack of English instruction in their hedge school, quoting Daniel O'Connell—also called the Liberator—an Irish politician of the time, who was in favour of moving forward with the English language:

> We should all be learning to speak English. That's what my mother says. That's what I say. That's what Dan O'Connell said last month in Ennis. He said the sooner we all learn to speak English the better. …I'm talking about the Liberator, Master, as you well know. And what he said was this: 'The old language is a barrier to modern progress.' He said that last month. And he's right. I don't want Greek. I don't want Latin. I want English. (24-25)

[10] This is an ill-suited title, arguably by design since what was national for the British was the opposite of national for the Irish.

It is understandable that people like Maire who do not have the luxury to worry about maintaining their language when they have concerns about their futures. Daniel O'Connell predicted that the Irish would soon abandon their language for these practical purposes:

> A diversity of tongues is no benefit; it was first imposed on mankind as a curse, at the building of Babel. It would be of vast advantage to mankind if all the inhabitants of the earth spoke the same language. Therefore, although the Irish language is connected with many recollections that twine around the hearts of Irishmen, yet the superior utility of the English tongue, as the medium of all modern communications, is so great that I can witness without a sigh the gradual disuse of Irish. (qtd. in Crowley 111)

Here, we must contrast O'Connell's real-life words, "superior utility of the English tongue, as the medium of all modern communications" with those of *Translations*' hedge school master Hugh's similar sentiments: "I explained that few of us [spoke English], on occasion … usually for the purposes of commerce, a use to which his tongue seemed particularly suited" (23). While they may seem to be saying the same thing, real O'Connell says it as an endorsement of English, whereas fictional Hugh says it disparagingly. O'Connell and Hugh are also at odds with respect to the diversity of languages. Hugh cherishes Latin and Greek, and sees value in studying the classics in their original languages. O'Connell, on the other hand, takes practicality to its extreme and considers the multiplicity of languages as a curse. They both think, however, that they "must learn those new names" (Friel 88).

Before we finish the week, we will briefly mention Franz Fanon's "The Black Man and Language" (Chapter 2, *Black Skin, White Masks*), which examines the language dilemma of the colonized. The Language theme will arise again in the upcoming weeks when we analyze *A Small Place*, *Nervous Conditions*, *We Need New Names*, *Born a Crime*, and *American Born Chinese.*

5.3. WEEK 3: Travel

> On the right, ladies an' gennulmen, you see *la Playa de la Tortuga*, you call it Tortle Beach. It was here that Gumersindo Cabezas land in fifteen forty-two an' discover our contri. Later I show you where Gumersindo Cabezas got eaten by the Wakuna Indians. It is a MacDonald's restaurant there now.
>
> *Welcome to My Contri,* Geoffrey Fox

A kind of its own, Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* is a work that is difficult to categorize. It has been called an anti-guide (McLeod 91) or a countertravel[11] writing (Edwards 74). Corinna McLeod notes that "[t]he Library of Congress has labeled the text as biography, travel, and the ubiquitous 'homes and haunts.' But on the bookshelves in bookstores, the text appears under autobiography, travel literature, fiction, and essay." McLeod concludes that "*A Small Place* is all of these things" (78). That is why it is necessary to study it. By the end of the week, we will all agree that our discussion of *A Small Place* has been both disturbing and rewarding.

"You are a tourist," Kincaid addresses the reader. This second person narrative pulls *you* in, involves *you*, and directly implicates *you*. Shaken up, bewildered, the reader is forced to stop and think: Am I the ugly privileged tourist? Where did my tourist's gaze land? What did I pretend not to see? This "self-reflexivity and heightened self-awareness," as McLeod calls it, is something the island itself must also exercise. As the tourist becomes informed and receptive, so will the island, McLeod argues, will find its identity and take responsibility for its fortunes (77).

[11] "Kincaid's *A Small Place* has been described by Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan as a piece of 'countertravel writing'. This is because Kincaid exposes the compulsion of those traditional travellers, tourists and writers who have tried to fit what they see into familiar narratives" (Edwards 74).

In any critical discussion of Antigua, other Caribbean Islands, or any colonized location, one must inevitably talk about the post-colonial attitude of the Western powers, including the World Bank, and the IMF. We will come back to the economical subjugation that has replaced colonialism when we are discussing NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*. Tourism is one of these post-colonial mechanisms that perpetuate the colonial conditions, in other words, benefits for the privileged and subservience for the previously colonized. Franz Fanon, in the blunt language Kincaid employs, explains that the elite of the newly-independent colonial nation partner with

> the Western bourgeoisies who happen to be tourists enamored of exoticism, hunting and casinos. The national bourgeoisie establishes holiday resorts and playgrounds for entertaining the Western bourgeoisie. This sector goes by the name of tourism and becomes a national industry for this very purpose. … Because [the national bourgeoisie] is lacking in ideas, because it is inward-looking, cut off from the people, sapped by its congenital incapacity to evaluate issues on the basis of the nation as a whole, the national bourgeoisie assumes the role of the manager for the companies of the West and turns its country virtually into a bordello for Europe. (*Wretched* 101-102)

Neither Kincaid nor Fanon let the native population get off scot-free. They have to be accountable for their own nationhood and identity. McLeod argues that Kincaid's "prediction that through voices like hers, Antigua will see itself as a new country able to construct itself outside of the tourists' disfiguring gaze" (77). Going back to Cheah's confidence in literature's powers—and, as we will also reaffirm once more in our reading of *We Need New Names*—Kincaid's *A Small Place* "seeks to have a worldly causality in contemporary globalization" (Cheah 13). Here, with my students, we will discuss how successful this "worldly force" of literature is. Has Kincaid achieved some of her goals in writing this book, and in the way she has written it, in the language and style she has used? We will ask ourselves to compare our past behaviours to our future attitudes as tourists. Or, if we will ever be tourists again.

A Small Place takes us back to our discussion of language from the previous week. We must compare the loss of language in *Translations* with the loss of language—multiple times—in Antigua. *A Small Place* allows us to add another layer to the language-as-domination. Not only that the colonizer wipes out the native tongues but they also prefer that only a chosen handful should become impeccably proficient in the colonizer's language. These will be the agents of the colonizers, their assistants, their local enforcers. The rest should speak the colonizer's language poorly, identifiably, in a dialect or creole, so that they can be recognized as who they are and kept in their places. This ties in with the colonizer's aim to keep the majority of the colonized population uneducated. We see in Kincaid's first-hand account of a community event how successful the erasure of the Caribbean culture has been through suppression of language and promotion of American language:

> In Antigua today, most young people seem almost illiterate. On the airwaves, where they work as news personalities, they speak English as if it were their sixth language. Once, I attended an event at carnival time called a "Teenage Pageant." In this event, teenagers, male and female, paraded around on a stadium stage, singing pop songs—a hideous song called "The Greatest Love" was a particular favourite among them to perform—reciting poems they had written about slavery—there is an appropriate obsession with slavery—and generally making asses of themselves. What surprised me most about them was not how familiar they were with the rubbish of North America—compared to the young people of my generation, who were familiar with the rubbish of England—but, unlike my generation, how stupid they seemed, how unable they were to answer in a straightforward way, and *in their native tongue of English*, simple questions about themselves. In my generation, they would not have been allowed on the school stage, much less before an audience in a stadium. (43-44, emphasis mine)[12]

There is quite a lot to unpack here. The switch from "the rubbish of England" to "the rubbish of North America" indicates the relocation of the centre of cultural imperialism. "Native tongue of

[12] If we have time, I also wish to share with my students that the permeation of "the rubbish of North America," or the corrupt and authoritarian governments are not unique to colonized countries. My homeland, Turkey, has never been physically colonized but it still suffers from cultural imperialism, and corrupt and authoritarian governments. The similarities between a large and populous G20 country which has never been colonized, and a post-colonial small island are staggering. We will ponder the parallels, time permitting.

English" is thought-provoking. The fact is that there is no Antiguan language. Edwards explains that "the original inhabitants have been genocidally exterminated" and that Kincaid's "ancestors were slaves from Africa who would have spoken an African language," which was of course lost long time ago. Now they only have the oppressor's language, and moral and political corruption only encourages the corruption of that one language left to them, as well as the corruption of education.

We need to look at the tourism industry as a whole in which "the traveller is not a passive subject who sits back and enjoys the view. Rather, he is often an important player in a culture of consumption and exploitation that established and continues the European colonial project" (Edwards 74). There are the advertisements in the forms of posters and television commercials, there are the tours and the tour guides, there is the servility the locals are willing to engage in, and there are the corrupt governments that will promote tourism at all costs. "For Kincaid," Lesley Larkin argues, "the figure of the tourist stands in metonymically for the subject of neoliberalism, just as tourism stands in for the whole of the neoliberal economy, enabling Kincaid to enunciate a sweeping economic and ideological critique in her analysis of one tourist in one small place" (195). "Bonham Richardson, a scholar of Caribbean geography," McLeod explains, "[traces] one important source of the problem back to the 'Hotel Aid Ordinance,' passed by the island's colonial government in 1952, that reduced import fees on construction material for hotels" (McLeod 79). In the West, travel guides and internet travel cites engage in relentless propaganda that undermines the true history as well as the socio-economic conditions of the exotic places they are marketing. I will include one example in here that exposes the blatant falsehoods. Let us compare the promotion blurb on the Antigua and Barbuda website (http://www.antigua-barbuda.org/index.htm)

with the entry for Antigua in the *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture,* and with Kincaid's own words.

Antigua and Barbuda website:

> Welcome to Antigua and Barbuda!
> All the signs pointed towards Antigua. The island had warm, steady winds, a complex coastline of safe harbors, and a protective, nearly unbroken wall of coral reef. It would make a perfect place to hide a fleet. And so in 1784 the legendary Admiral Horatio Nelson sailed to Antigua and established Great Britain's most important Caribbean base. Little did he know that over 200 years later the same unique characteristics that attracted the Royal Navy would transform Antigua and Barbuda into one of the Caribbean's premier tourist destinations.

Antigua entry in *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture*:

> was sighted during Columbus's second voyage to the Caribbean in 1493, [however,] geography and a lack of natural resources, including a limited supply of fresh water, conspired to deter sustained, permanent settlement by both the indigenous peoples of the region, the Arawaks and the Caribs, and the conquering Spanish. Unguarded and unexploited for over a century, Antigua was seized by an English expedition in 1632. Initially populated by small-scale subsistence and tobacco farmers, the island became a producer of sugarcane in the 1660s, a change that, with the subsequent introduction of African slaves, completely transformed the nature of the colony. By 1700 Antigua had developed into a traditional plantation society comprised of large estates, a small European planter class, and large numbers of slave laborers. (T. Hawkins)

Jamaica Kincaid in *A Small Place*:

> In the Antigua that I knew, we lived on a street named after an English maritime criminal, Horatio Nelson, and all the other streets around us were named after some other English maritime criminal. (24)

Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson is considered a hero in England. He came to Antigua to protect the interests of the King, and to prevent Antigua to do trade with the United States. He is a maritime criminal to Kincaid. The tourist web site markets him as a legend who "established Great Britain's most important Caribbean base." The site is proud of Antigua becoming "Great Britain's most important Caribbean base." The *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture* offers the no-nonsense truth that "[b]y 1700 Antigua had developed into a traditional plantation society

comprised of large estates, a small European planter class, and large numbers of slave laborers." In tourism industry, the tourist is complicit, but the industry itself is downright guilty.

In conclusion, "[i]n Antigua," Kincaid says, with an exasperation that jumps right out of the page,

> people cannot see a relationship between their obsession with slavery and emancipation and their celebration of the Hotel Training School (graduation ceremonies are broadcast on radio and television); people cannot see a relationship between their obsession with slavery and emancipation and the fact that they are governed by corrupt men, or that these corrupt men have given their country away to corrupt foreigners. (55)

Kincaid has started with tourism "as the entry to a critique of colonialism, the neocolonial Antiguan government, and the colonizing elements of the tourist industry" (McLeod 90). I believe that her book has been tremendously successful in bringing awareness to the issues of her island. I am looking forward to hearing the opinions and comments of my students.

5.4. WEEK 4: Trauma

> I contend that we are the finest race in the world and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race. Just fancy those parts that are at present inhabited by the most despicable specimens of human beings what an alteration there would be if they were brought under Anglo-Saxon influence, look again at the extra employment a new country added to our dominions gives.
>
> "The Last Will and Testament," Cecil Rhodes

> If you're stealing something it's better if it's small and hideable or something you can eat quickly and be done with, like guavas. That way, people can't see you with the thing to be reminded that you are a shameless thief and that you stole it from them, so I don't know what the white people were trying to do in the first place, stealing not just a tiny piece but a whole country. Who can ever forget you stole something like that?
>
> *We Need New Names,* NoViolet Bulawayo

"Despite its reliance on slavery," Cheah posits, "colonial capital justified itself as a civilizing mission" (13). This cannot be more aptly depicted than in *Nervous Conditions* by Tsitsi Dangarembga. *Nervous Conditions* is the coming-of-age stories of Tambu, the narrator, and her cousin Nyasha in colonial Zimbabwe (Rhodesia at the time). The epigraph of the book reads "The condition of native is a nervous condition." The author identifies this quote as "an introduction to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth.*" My 2004 edition of *The Wretched of the Earth* has a foreword by Homi K. Bhabha and a preface by Jean-Paul Sartre. So, it was not easy to find the exact location of this fitting epigraph, but I think I have located it within Sartre's preface. He says: "The status of 'native' is a neurosis introduced and maintained by the colonist in the colonized *with their consent*" (Sartre iiv). We will have to discuss with the students "*with their consent*" part, but the

rest of the sentence is pertinent for the stories of Tambu and Nyasha, and hence our theme for the week, Trauma. The book offers plenty more to consider, such as Cheah's "civilizing mission," which is a double-edged sword, primarily functioning on behalf of the colonizer, but could also be an opportunity for a few to break through the system. Since education system offered by the missions is the English education system, in English, we will find many examples for our theme of Language. Another significant motif of *Nervous Conditions* is the patriarchy and the gender inequality. As Tambu's mother says, "[the] business of womanhood is a heavy burden" (16), and we will see that a few women in Tambu's life crush under it.

Fanon asserts that when a person is repeatedly denied "any attribute of humanity," as the colonized is treated by the colonizer, that person is forced "to constantly ask the question: What am I in reality?" (182) This is the condition, the nervous condition—or the neurosis—Tambu's cousin Nyasha is in. Fanon continues to claim that "[w]hen colonization remains unchallenged by armed resistance, when the sum of harmful stimulants exceeds a certain threshold, the colonized's defences collapse, and many of them end up in psychiatric institutions" (182). Fanon's "armed resistance" comment has been much discussed and it is beyond the scope of this course. What is of interest here is that when the colonial atmosphere becomes too heavy with poisonous denial of humanity for an individual, that individual is bound to go insane. The trauma of losing everything—the land, the produce, the culture, the language, the identity, the freedom—is so great that it is inconceivable to not suffer mental injuries. But the colonized is not even allowed to have a mental disorder. Remember the repeatedly denied humanity. Even a mental disease, a nervous condition is denied a native. When her family takes Nyasha to a psychiatrist, he says "that Nyasha could not be ill, that Africans did not suffer in the way we had described. She was making a scene" (Dangarembga 206). In other words, the psychiatrist says that Nyasha is only pretending to be sick,

she cannot possibly be sick, because she is an African, not a complete human, and her nervous system is not as developed as a European's, therefore she cannot have a nervous breakdown which is reserved for higher-class humans.

Nyasha is not the only person in Tambu's story who is having troubles under the massive trauma of colonization. Nyasha's mother, an educated smart woman with her diplomas and her job and her own salary, still not independent from the patriarchy of her husband, becomes a "hysteric" with an ailment Sue Thomas calls an "angelic housewifely submission" (26). Tambu's own mother is always weak and sick, not being able to deal with, in her own words, "the poverty of blackness on one side and the weight of womanhood on the other" (16). Tambu, narrating her own story, struggles with many doubts and conflicts. She is bound by the gender inequality in her community, and doomed to poverty, fly-infested latrines and a second class personhood. She is doubly subjugated because she is both a colonized African and a woman. Then, with the sudden death of her brother, her rich uncle takes her under his wings, and she becomes a student of the missionaries' English education system. This education is her ticket away from the troubles of her poor community, but now the conflicts are more apparent. People who are the cause of her nation's oppression are giving her an education. Something is not right here. Initially, Tambu, unlike Nyasha does not question the motives of the missionaries. She explains that she "was not concerned that the freedom fighters were referred to as terrorists, did not demand proof of God's existence nor did [she] think that the missionaries, along with all the other Whites in Rhodesia, ought to have stayed at home[13]" (157). As Tambu grows up, she becomes aware of all these things she was not previously concerned with. Tsitsi Dangarembga, explains in an interview that "though

[13] Note the connection to Kincaid's *A Small Place*: "There must have been some good people among you, but they stayed home. And that is the point. That is why they are good. They stayed home" (35).

Tambu may not have been psychologically contorted when she was fourteen, she definitely is now" (209).

Tambu starts her *bildungsroman* with the words "I was not sorry when my brother died" (1). We will ponder on this opening line which some consider shocking. Why such a controversial admission, and why at the very beginning? We may decide that it is because this statement captures the harsh reality of being a colonized African, and in addition, being a woman whose ambitions outside the family life are blocked by men. This one sentence represents all the major themes of Tambu's story: She is oppressed by the foreigners invading her land, and oppressed again by her patriarchal community. With the death of the brother, she is now next in line for the opportunity to study at the mission's English school. For this purpose, she will be taken away from the family homestead by her rich uncle Babamukuru, who had also been educated by the English missions. This English education, argues Rahul Krishna Gairola, "is her only hope of escaping her two biological, subaltern roles - blackness and womanhood." Therefore, Tambu is not sad when her brother dies. We could call Tambu selfish or insensitive (Nyasha once called her "spineless"), but there is no clear right or wrong in a colonized community. Given the context, it can be argued that Tambu had no choice but to choose survival.

It is inconceivable to talk about Rhodesia or the present-day Zimbabwe without a mention of Cecil Rhodes, the Rhodes Scholarship and De Beers Diamonds. Trevor Noah reckons that "if black South Africans could go back in time and kill one person, Cecil Rhodes would come up before Hitler (195). Mark Twain's oft-quoted comment, "I admire him, I frankly confess it; and when his time comes I shall buy a piece of the rope for a keepsake" (405), became one of the world-famous insults. Needless to say, Cecil Rhodes is not considered to be a great man by most people. The

entry in *A Dictionary of British History* by John Cannon and Robert Crowcroft is brief and sarcastic:

> Rhodes, Cecil (1853–1902). Imperialist and capitalist.
>
> In 1870 Rhodes went to Natal to help his brother grow cotton, but amassed a huge fortune in diamonds and gold. He became prime minister of the Cape in 1890; opened up the country north of the Limpopo, modestly naming it Rhodesia; and was involved in the Jameson Raid. When he died, his final will provided for a series of scholarships to Oxford.

At the age of 17, Rhodes was sent to South Africa by his parents for health reasons. One of his brothers was already there farming cotton. He discovered diamonds in Kimberley and dug for them with increasing success. Subsequently, he found gold in Johannesburg, and "[b]y 1880 he was able to found the De Beers Mining Company, which in 1888 expanded to become De Beers Consolidated Mining Company" (Riches and Palmowski). Twenty years later, Rhodes was the owner of 90% of all the world's diamond production. De Beers still maintains near-total domination of the world diamond market. In our classroom, we will briefly discuss "blood diamonds" and the predicament of Bushmen in Botswana, both of which are issues that are still ongoing in our century.

In 1889, Cecil Rhodes' British South Africa Company colonized the territory which is now Zambia and Zimbabwe, and called it Rhodesia. The movement of settlements from the south (present day South Africa) towards Tambu's country was fast and furious. Tambu's grandmother used to live "in Chipinge [southeastern Zimbabwe], where the soil is ripe and your great-grandfather was a rich man in the currency of those days, having many fat herd of cattle, large fields and four wives who worked hard to produce bountiful harvests." Tambu's grandmother explains that the white

> [w]izards well versed in treachery and black magic came from the south and forced the people from the land. On donkey, on foot, on horse, on ox-cart, the people looked for a place to live. But the wizards were

> avaricious and grasping; there was less and less land for the people. At last, the people came upon the grey, sandy soil of the homestead, so stony and barren that the wizards would not use it. (18)

In her account, the natives, the black Africans, the ones who are denied any humanity by the colonizers, are referred to as "the people." The colonizers, the white settlers are labelled as "wizards" or "white wizards." In the grandmother's speech the roles are reversed, and it is the colonizers who are not real people. These white wizards engage in black magic which is, in the West, mostly attributed to black people. The grandmother is, thus, subverting the notions of white and black, implies that the real dark people are the white colonizers.

Rhodes became the prime minister of the Cape Colony in 1890. In his final will[14], he "established his enduring legacy, the Rhodes Scholarships" (Walker 697). The prestigious scholarship allows "scholars with outstanding intellectual and leadership qualities to study at Oxford for two years" (Riches and Palmowski). Some of the famous recipients of the Rhodes Scholarship include one Canadian Prime Minister (John Turner), one United States President (Bill Clinton), one Carleton University Chancellor (Arthur Kroeger), multiple television personalities (Rex Murphy, Rachel Maddow, et al.), and one cultural theorist who is quoted in this syllabus, Stuart Hall. In *Nervous Conditions*, Tambu's uncle Babamukuru, was a Rhodes Scholar in everything but name. Since Black Africans were not allowed to receive Rhodes Scholarships until 1991, Babamukuru's two-year scholarship in England could not have been called Rhodes. Women were also not qualified to receive the scholarship before 1977, and only until recently—2012—in South Africa. According to the last will and testament of Cecil Rhodes[15], the purpose of the

[14] In his first will which he had drawn when he was back in England to get his university degree, Rhodes had left "all his worldly goods to create a secret society for the furtherance of the British Empire" (Walker 697). The secret society which would bring "the whole uncivilized world under British rule" is of interest because it shows Rhodes' Anglo-supremacist beliefs and his unshakable conviction in colonialism.

[15] This document is freely available through Internet Archive, https://archive.org/details/lastwilltestamen00rhodiala

scholarship was to train young colonists and to instill "into their minds the advantage to the Colonies as well as to the United Kingdom of the retention of the unity of the Empire." Knowing all the acts and intentions of Rhodes, how do we answer Robert Hortle's question, "can you justify taking the money of the 'godfather of apartheid'?" This will be a discussion for our classroom.

5.5. WEEK 5: Decolonization

> After we sit, the man starts taking pictures with his big camera. They just like taking pictures, these NGO people, like maybe we are their real friends and relatives and they will look at the pictures later and point us out by name to other friends and relatives once they get back to their homes. They don't care that we are embarrassed by our dirt and torn clothing, that we would prefer they didn't do it; they just take the pictures anyway, take and take. We don't complain because we know that after the picture-taking comes the giving of gifts.
>
> *We Need New Names,* NoViolet Bulawayo

As we have already seen in *A Small Place*, decolonization is a painful process that resembles rowing against the tide, in fact, multiple tides. There are so many forces working against the well-being of the former colony. Cheah asserts that "[c]ontemporary flows of money, especially humanitarianism and environmental and world preservation funds, present themselves as attempts to humanize the world" (13). The novels Cheah studies[16] in *What Is a World?*, just like *A Small Place* and *We Need New Names* we examine here, "expose how these global flows violently destroy worlds despite their humanizing claims." Tourist industry, "the dehumanizing impact of transnational humanitarian aid on a receiving people," and "the devastating impact of economic

[16] The books Cheah examines are Michelle Cliff's *Abeng* and *No Telephone to Heaven*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, Nuruddin Farah's *Gifts*, Ninotchka Rosca's *State of War*, and Timothy Mo's *Renegade* (12-13).

corruption and political authoritarianism" are causes that come up again and again (13). In *A Small Place*, we looked at the tourism industry, and the corrupt and authoritarian government. In *We Need New Names*, we will see an unimaginable level of corruption and political authoritarianism, as well as "the dehumanizing impact of transnational humanitarian aid on" people of Zimbabwe. In both *A Small Place* and *We Need New Names*, Fanon's assertion that "colonialism is incapable of procuring for colonized peoples the material conditions likely to make them forget their quest for dignity" (*Wretched* 147) is perfectly exemplified.

In this course, we are reading *Nervous Conditions* and *We Need New Names* back to back because the latter follows the former in actual time. *Nervous Conditions* represents colonial Zimbabwe and *We Need New Names* represents that nation's postcolonial predicament. *We Need New Names* takes place in the twenty-first century; it draws a recent, almost present-day picture of the country. Both novels are narrated in the first person by young girls. The heroine of *We Need New Names* is Darling, a ten-year-old girl living in Paradise, a misnomer for a displacement slum.

Zimbabwe gained its independence in 1980, and by the early 2000s, the mayhem of decolonization had become ordinary life. Robert Mugabe, who has been in power for 37 years, now, since the independence of 1980[17] which he helped bring about, is one of the most corrupt politicians in the world. He, his wife Grace Mugabe, and their extended family have been running a "kleptocracy" for decades now. Junot Díaz, in *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, attributes "the creation of the first modern kleptocracy" to Dominican Republic's Rafael Trujillo, saying that "Trujillo was Mobutu before Mobutu was Mobutu" (2-3n1). Today, we could say that Mugabe was Erdoğan[18] before Erdoğan was Erdoğan. The point is that there are no shortages of

[17] Mugabe was the Prime Minister between 1980 and 1987, and he has been the president since 1987.

[18] Turkish President, former Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has been in power for the past fifteen years. He and his family are just as corrupt as the Mugabes. Our texts in this course are full of references to corrupt despots, including General Abacha of Nigeria, and Indira and Sanjay Gandhi of India.

corrupt politicians and heads of states, as we have already seen in *A Small Place*. In addition to the corruption problems, the Zimbabwe of *We Need New Names*, suffers from a number of decolonization issues we need to know in order to be able to understand the context.

First, we have to realize that decolonization is inextricably connected to the goals and operations of the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) that work with the loans of the WB and the IMF. The loans of the WB and the IMF come with many—mostly unattainable—requirements/conditions for reform. The countries in need of these loans usually sign up for the Structural Adjustment Programs. Anup Shah asserts that the IMF and the World Bank's acts, for all intents and purposes, amount to a demand "that poor nations lower the standard of living of their people." The impoverished population, who rely on services and subsidies, are impacted the most from the policies of the IMF and the World Bank. Typically, SAPs force the country to devalue its currency against the dollar. In addition, deep cuts in social services, education and health care are required. The subsidies for food staples are eliminated as well. Shah concludes that "many developing nations are in debt and poverty partly due to the policies of international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank." This is certainly the case in *We Need New Names*.

In 1980, after the independence, Zimbabwean dollar became the nation's currency. However, civil unrest, distrust in the government, involvement in the Second Congo war, debts to be paid to IMF and many other socio-economic reasons conspired against the currency. Repeated devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar as the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe "produced an ever-increasing torrent of money, and with it ever more inflation," which reached its peak in mid-November, 2008, at an estimated 79.6 billion percent (Hanke and Kwok). As Zimbabweans started to use US dollars, euros and South African rands, the government also gave up on the Zimbabwean dollar, and

stopped printing it all together in 2009. The country no longer has a national currency and uses a variety of foreign currencies as opposed to making one of those strong currencies its own. In *We Need New Names*, when the government was still printing money in billion and trillion Zimbabwe dollar banknotes (see fig. 3), and when these pieces of paper were not buying anything, being worth less than a US penny, Darling's grandmother, a poor old woman living in a shaft in the slums, cannot make any sense of the situation: "What I don't understand is how this very money that I have in lumps cannot even buy a grain of salt" (26).

Figure 3. One hundred trillion Zimbabwe dollars from 2008. Today "[f]or every 175 quadrillion Zimbabwe dollars, locals will get $5 in exchange. So, 250 trillion Zimbabwe dollars will be worth just $1" (Davy).

Another government initiative that had a tremendous impact on the lives of Darling, her friends and the people of Paradise is Operation Restore Order which the people of Zimbabwe call Operation Murambatsvina ("Clear the Filth"). This ill-conceived project was supposedly intended to prevent illegal housing, but the real aim seems to be pushing the poor communities to the

peripheries of townships, in other words, out of the way. The United Nations Special Envoy "estimated that 700,000 people lost their shelter, livelihood, or both as a result of the evictions, and that about 570,000 of them have been internally displaced" (Human Rights Watch). In her disarming and naïve child's voice, Darling explains how one night the bulldozers appear out of nowhere and start demolishing:

> The fathers are throwing hands in the air like women and saying angry things and kicking stones. The women are screaming the names of the children to see where we are and they are grabbing things from the houses: plates, clothes, a Bible, food, just grabbing what they can grab. And there is dust all over from the crumbling walls; it gets into our hair and mouths and noses and makes us cough and cough. (67-68)

The events of that night are traumatic, devastating. They haunt Darling in her sleeps. We see how the narration from a child's perspective differs from that of an adult's. Robyn Wilkinson argues that "the voice of a child … can offer an effective mode for the critique of social and political issues, because of its straight-forward and unselfconscious nature" (124).

The role of NGOs in Darling's story is significant. The aid they receive—"in small packages"—is negligible. Food products are utterly inadequate, and clothes and toys are cheap and useless. Even in her abject poverty, Darling knows what is poor quality and what is not. The idea must be that the poor should appreciate even the lowest quality of goods they are offered. The children perform for the aid workers, pose for their cameras in the ways they ask them to, and as a reward, they get their gifts. Their "gifts" are toy guns and t-shirts with the logos of Western mega-firms. Toy guns are, of course, not only useless in educational value, but also inappropriate in the extreme for this particular society which is involved in wars of all sorts, all the time. There is un-checked violence everywhere. It is possible that the toy guns may have been the discards, unsold, unwanted toys of the West where parents are conscious enough to not give toy guns to their children. The t-shirts with logos on them are probably donated by the organizations such as Google as promotional

material. NGOs have to make do with the limited resources they have. They also have to use the images of vulnerable and suffering children, with no regard to the indignity they inflict on them, in order to be able to collect aid.

NGOs, notwithstanding the charity-based economy they perpetuate, are mainly well-meaning, hard-working people, even if sometimes their orientalist and Othering gazes can be more injurious than the wounds they are trying to heal. NGOs do not make much sense economically either. They have certain agreements with the local governments, the World Bank, the IMF, and possibly with other organizations. Today, this network, in spite of the NGOs' intentions, is designed to benefit the West more than the global South. Martin Drewry, director of UK-based Health Poverty Action, argues that the UK, although "a world leader in development aid," is also "taking corporate profits out of Africa – which cause far more poverty there than aid relieves." Drewry admits that "the dishonesty of the aid narrative, which portrays Africa as the grateful beneficiary of the rich world's generosity," only perpetuates a lie, "and one that causes profound damage to the cause of poverty eradication." He further asserts that

> the UK plays a key role in the theft of Africa's resources. Through the actions of its inadequately regulated multinational companies, its contributions to climate change, giving parts of its aid as loans that contribute to the debt crisis, and its network of tax havens through which it facilitates the looting of billions from Africa each year. (Drewry)

These are harsh words, and coming right from an insider who has devoted his entire life to aid and volunteer work. This complex network of capitalist, imperialist "aid" is making Africa poorer and the West richer. Drewry puts it in numbers noting that "Africa suffers a net loss of £58bn a year." "[T]he truth is the UK takes far more from Africa than it gives in aid. Africa subsidizes us, not the other way around," Drewry concludes.

In this course, we will only read the first part (until page 148) of *We Need New Names*. In the second part of the book, Darling is able to leave the misery of Paradise behind and go to the United States, where she is an illegal alien. Her experience during her second displacement, or her "second arrival" to borrow a term from Sarah Phillips Casteel, does not include hunger, however, now she has to deal with homesickness, identity confusion, and culture shock. I hope the first part of the novel will encourage the students to read the rest of the book in their own time.

5.6. WEEK 6: Short Stories

> A story is not like a road to follow … it's more like a house. You go inside and stay there for a while, wandering back and forth and settling where you like and discovering how the room and corridors relate to each other, how the world outside is altered by being viewed from these windows. And you, the visitor, the reader, are altered as well by being in this enclosed space, whether it is ample and easy or full of crooked turns, or sparsely or opulently furnished. You can go back again and again, and the house, the story, always contains more than you saw the last time. It also has a sturdy sense of itself of being built out of its own necessity, not just to shelter or beguile you.
>
> Alice Munro

Short story is considered a Canadian genre, especially after Alice Munro won the Nobel Prize for Literature for being the master of the contemporary short story. This week we will study these five short stories:

- "A Private Experience" - *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- "Jumping Monkey Hill" - *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- "The Thing Around Your Neck" - *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.
- "Good Advice is Rarer Than Rubies" - *East, West*, Salman Rushdie
- "The Free Radio" - *East, West*, Salman Rushdie

Students prepare for this week by reading one of these stories, as assigned to them the previous week. One student from each story group will kick off the discussion by offering a summary of her/his group's story, and identifying some of the discussion points. The students should also try to establish the historic context briefly, it there is one that is relevant to the story (for instance, in

"A Private Experience," the setting is the Christian-Muslim strife in modern-day Nigeria). We will try to see the motifs in each story, try to connect each story to other texts we have studied thus far, and we will discuss what makes these stories "global." After we have debated for about 20-25 minutes, we will move on to the next story. I, as the moderator, will have a list of questions we can all ponder upon, but I will pose them only if the students run out of things to say (although, this is very unlikely).

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's stories are semi-autobiographical and very powerful. This collection, Jess Row, explains

> traces the journey Adichie herself has taken. Brought up in the Nigerian college town of Nsukka, in the aftermath of the failed war for Biafran independence that killed two of her grandparents, she moved to the United States at 19 to attend college and had early literary success with her novels *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*. All these personhoods are represented here: the sheltered child, the vulnerable immigrant in Philadelphia and Brooklyn, the foreign student adrift in a dormitory in Princeton, the young African writer asked to objectify herself for an uncomprehending audience.

The stories travel between Nigeria and the United States, and depict characters who are all multi-dimensional, and complete with their all too human doubts, concerns and flaws.

Salman Rushdie's *East, West* has three groups of stories, those that are from the East, from the West, and from a combination or a liminality of the two. I have chosen two stories from the East group, because I felt that my syllabus lacked Indian content.

"A Private Experience" - Adichie

Two women in the market place, minding their own businesses, all of a sudden find themselves in a dangerous chaos when a riot breaks out between Muslims and Christians. Chika, an Igbo Christian, accepts the help of the other woman, and running away from the violence, they both hide in an abandoned store to wait out the strife. It is clear to Chika that her companion is a Hausa and a Muslim. Therefore, they are each a member of the two fighting factions. Chika, the narrator,

assumes the other woman is poor ("her necklace, probably plastic beads threaded on a piece of string") and uneducated ("if this woman's mind is large enough to grasp any of that."). But, soon these two ordinary women, with small gestures to comfort one another, form a bond; all they want is to survive and for their loved-ones to survive. The story encourages us to contemplate civil wars, especially religious ones, and the regular people who get caught in it. Who are the fighters fighting for? Not for these two women who have no trouble living side by side. The story demonstrates the futility of religious wars, as well as providing excellent examples of stereotyping.

"Jumping Monkey Hill" - Adichie

Jumping Monkey Hill is an absurdly-named fancy resort outside Cape Town. The name is reminiscent of the most common insults that have been hurled at Africans for the longest time. An aging English man, Edward, organizes an African Writers' Workshop at this resort. The narrator, Ujunwa is from Nigeria. The other participants are: a white South African woman, a black South African man, a Tanzanian man, an Ugandan man, a Zimbabwean woman, a Kenyan man, and a Senegalese woman. They do not have names. There is also Isabel, wife of Edward. Ujunwa's first encounter with Isabel is worth noting:

> she sat next to Ujunwa and said that surely, with that exquisite bone structure, Ujunwa had to come from Nigerian royal stock. The first thing that came to Ujunwa's mind was to ask if Isabel ever needed royal blood to explain the good looks of friend back in London. She did not ask that but instead said—because she could not resist—that she was indeed a princess and came from an ancient lineage and that one of he forebears had captured a Portuguese trader in the seventeenth century and kept him, pampered and oiled, in a royal cage. She stopped to sip her cranberry juice and smile into her glass. Isabel said, brightly, that she could always spot royal blood and she hoped Ujunwa would support her antipoaching campaign and it was just horrible, horrible, how many endangered apes people were killing and they didn't even eat them, never mind all that talk about bush meat, they just used the private parts for charms. (99-100)

There is enough material just in this one paragraph to keep us busy, but the rest of the story has more issues. Edward is a sexist, as well as a sexual harasser. He harasses and intimidates Ujunwa

more than once. When Ujunwa completes her short story, he tells her that it is no good because it is not African enough and it is not plausible for Africa. We are familiar with this way of thinking because we have already heard it in Adichie's speech "The Danger of a Single Story." Is there a list from which an African writer, writing stories from Africa, should choose from? Which themes are considered African and which themes are not? We will discuss the stereotyping of a continent.

"The Thing Around Your Neck" - Adichie

The title of this story evokes the neck-rings worn in some cultures around the world, including in Myanmar. However, most people think of Africa when they see a neck-ring. In this story, the thing around your neck implies a burden, or something that keeps a hold on you, keeps you back, or maybe it is like an anxiety or a lump in the throat that will not go away, "something would wrap around your neck, something that very nearly choked you before you fell asleep" (119). Through the use of the second person narration, we feel that the thing around our necks are choking us. The narrator comes to the United States to relieve the burden of her poor family back in Lagos. After she gets sexually assaulted by her relative, she tries to survive on her own. She encounters every kind of stereotyping and ignorant questions. When she becomes close with a young white man, she receives even more stares and racist remarks. When she has to go back to her family, without knowing if it will be temporary or permanent, she feels the thing around her neck.

"Good Advice is Rarer Than Rubies" - Salman Rushdie

In the stand-up comedy routine of Trevor Noah which we watched in our first week, we heard Noah say: "They always ask these questions making it seem like absolutely everybody wants to come and stay in the UK. I always want to say to them, 'it's not as great as you think.' It really isn't" (1:40). No, not everyone wants to go and stay in the UK. Miss Rehana does not want to move to the UK. But she is engaged—an arranged marriage—and her fiancé is already in England,

so she must apply for a visa to go to England, join her fiancé and get married. “Muhammad Ali, who specialised in advising the most vulnerable-looking of these weekly supplicants,” (6) has good advice for her, and good advice is rarer than rubies. Miss Rehana accepts to receive the advice but only when it is offered free, because she is a poor orphan, and cannot pay for advice even if it is as good as rubies. Muhammad Ali, who had fallen for the beauty of Miss Rehana, makes an exception and gives her his advice for free. He tells her that she must get all the information, every banal little detail about her and her fiancé’s lives right. One mistake, and she would not qualify for a visa. This is an advice as valuable as rubies. She gets all the details wrong, fails the test and does not get the visa.

“The Free Radio” - Salman Rushdie

Those of us who have read *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry and *Midnight’s Children* by Salman Rushdie, have seen this before. In the 1970s, India was enticed “by loans amounting to tens of millions of dollars from the World Bank, the Swedish International Development Authority and the UN Population Fund” to curb the population (Biswas). Then in 1975, when civil liberties were suspended during a state of emergency, “Sanjay Gandhi, son of the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, began what was described by many as a ‘gruesome campaign’ to sterilize poor men” (Biswas). Gandhi’s widespread compulsory sterilization program was a response to the demand of the IMF and the World Bank. David Frum and Justin Green, in their review of Vinod Mehta’s book *The Sanjay Story*, explain that, with democracy suspended, forced sterilization was encouraged by the IMF and the World Bank

> with renewed vigour. (There was little condemnation of the Emergency itself. Visiting India in 1976, World Bank president Robert McNamara was thrilled by Indira Gandhi’s “disciplined, realistic approach” and applauded her “willingness to find practical solutions” to India’s myriad problems.) Indira and Sanjay, the self-styled socialists, inflicting on Indians the humiliation of forced sterilization in order to appease

> western loan sharks: the irony was lost on them. Socialism, like much else, had been reduced to a slogan. (Frum and Green)

Based on the recurring themes that are the consequences of the demands and interferences of the IMF and the World Bank, it is hard not to agree with Amitava Kumar when he provocatively suggests that World Literature should instead be called World Bank Literature.

5.7. WEEK 7: Genre

> The genres, it is thought, have other designs on us. They want to entertain, as opposed to rubbing our noses in the daily grit produced by the daily grind. Unhappily for realistic novelists, the larger reading public likes being entertained.
>
> Margaret Atwood

There is a book on my desk titled *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan. It does not have one word of writing in it. It is a visual literature, written in images. It tells a deep and powerful story, an account of immigrant experience. Both Art Spiegelman and Marjane Satrapi, the two top pioneers of the graphic autobiographies, praise Tan on the back cover of the book. David Small calls it a "new literary genre." Compared to *The Arrival*, Spiegelman's *Maus*, Satrapi's *Persepolis*, and Gene Luen Yang's *American Born Chinese* may be considered an "old literary genre" perhaps? I do not think so, however, the point is that graphic novels and autobiographies are all the rage now, and any global literatures course must consider them, especially when they are so passionately dealing with all the global matters that are of interest to global literatures studies.

Christopher Kuipers, in his essay titled "The New Normal of Literariness: Graphic Literature as the next Paradigm Genre," observes that "at different times, certain literary genres dominate their historical genre system, exerting sway over other contemporary genres." He further argues that "in 'the visual turn' the next iteration of 'normal literature' will be irrevocably marked by a new royal genre, namely graphic literature" (281). For some reason, "[g]raphic literature has a [special] affinity to non-fiction, particularly life writing" (282). Perusing internet book sites, I realize that Kuipers' is an accurate assessment. In fact, five of six graphic books I personally own are "life writing;" autobiographies or other forms of personal experiences. Kuipers says that he likes to use the term "graphic literature," because he finds "[t]his new term underscores that this

art form (like poetry, drama, fiction) is a wider category that is able to exhibit its full aesthetic panoply within a wide range of shorter and longer instantiations" (283).

The graphic book I have chosen for this course, *American Born Chinese* is an exquisitely drawn book; it is a pleasure to hold, and to look/read. The author makes use of a number of literary devices (with writing, colour and image). Once again, here we have a child/adolescent narrator, who switches from being Jin, an American born Chinese, to a blond Danny, and then back. His good friend Wei-Chen, and his conspicuously-named cousin Chin-Kee complicate his identity issues. Then there is the Monkey King, who has his own problems of fitting in. These colourful characters, in this non-linear story line, eventually all make peace with themselves and with one another.

The issues presented in graphic novels are serious matters; the holocaust, Middle-Eastern refugees, Iran's religious revolution, its wars with it neighbours, and the oppression of its people, and similarly somber and weighty problems have been tackled by graphic novels. Stella Oh argues that "[g]raphic narratives allow room to couple levity with seriousness and humour with suffering. … Using humour and laughter as tools to discuss difficult issues such as racism, bullying and rejection, Yang's graphic narrative incites laughter that interrupts and challenges the underpinning ideologies that gird such racist behaviors" (21).

We will perform close reading of images and texts of *American Born Chinese* to unearth "the stereotype of Chinese men as racially alien, sexually menacing but asexual, and a threat to American way of life" (Oh 22), and explain how Chin-Kee performs all these functions. I will ask the students what other examples they can think of from other texts (the naked man jumping out of the trunk of a car in the movie *Hangover* comes to mind).

5.8. WEEKS 8 – 9: Rewriting

> just by saying that something was so, they believed that it was. I know now that these conquerors, like many others before them, and no doubt like others after, gave speeches not to voice the truth, but to create it.
>
> *The Moor's Account,* Laila Lalami

The Monsters of Templeton by Lauren Groff is a multi-layered work that interconnects with many other texts. The intertextuality, as well as a rewriting of the frontier discourse are the aspects that particularly interest us. *The Monsters of Templeton*'s starting is complex and we must set the stage with a few historic details.

James Fenimore Cooper (1789 – 1851) lived in Cooperstown, New York. His father, an early settler, founded Cooperstown on the property he owned (or had appropriated). James Fenimore Cooper was considered to be a historian and a novelist, and he wrote "historic" novels, using the word "historic" loosely. He became a legend with his five frontier novels called the *Leatherstocking Tales*. One of the most famous of these stories is *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) which is made into movies multiple times, most famous ones being the 1936 and 1992 versions. In Cooperstown today there is a statue of Cooper himself, and a statue of one of his fictional characters. This latter statue, Lauren Groff says in *The Monsters of Templeton*, is "of Natty Bumppo and his dog, or Chingachgook and his dog, we don't exactly know which is depicted" in its bronze (33). Nathanial "Natty" Bumppo, also known as Hawkeye among many other names, is a white man adopted by an Indian and raised as his "white son." Chingachgook is the last Mohican, who is the adopted brother of Natty. The bronze statue in Cooperstown is made in such a way that you cannot tell if it is the white man or the Mohican. Cooper must have tried to do his best to be fair to the Indians, and probably invented the "noble Indian," however his primary goal was to

establish the glorious pioneer discourse. Craig White asserts that *The Leatherstocking Tales* "are traditionally acclaimed as the founding texts of United States literature and culture." He explains that Hawkeye and Chingachgook "are prototypes for many heroes in later American literature and popular cultures, from cowboys to noble savages in westerns." White suggests that a well-known postcolonial classic, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) is in dialogue with *The Last of the Mohicans*. Conrad's novel is based on "his journey in 1890 to the Congo region of West Africa, then colonized by Belgium." White explains that the connection between the two books come from the fact that both books "[take] place on a frontier where forces of European empires are advancing." Today, we have new readings of Heart of Darkness, especially by Chinua Achebe (see Achebe, "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*," 1977), just like we have new readings of James Fenimore Cooper's novels.

The Monsters of Templeton changes James Fenimore Cooper to Jacob Franklin Temple; Cooper's father, William Cooper, the man who founded Cooperstown, becomes Marmaduke Temple; and finally, Cooperstown turns into Templeton. Once these changes are made, Lauren Groff sets to revisiting and rewriting the history of the town with a mixture of fiction and historic fact.

Through the connections to *Heart of Darkness* and to *The Last of the Mohicans*, we will spend quite some time on this complex novel. We will analyze the 1992 movie rendition (rewriting) *The Last of the Mohicans*, which "was promoted as a multicultural film dedicated to a more sympathetic and authentic rendering of Native American cultures than Cooper's original story or Hollywood's past productions" (Marubbio 139). We will find the instances where this claim rings true and other instances where the opposite is more accurate.

5.9. WEEKS 10 – 11: Representation

> Until the lion tells his side of the story, the tale of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.
>
> African Proverb

America's involvement in the Vietnam war was the most resisted and the most contested foreign act of the United States. In spite of the massive anti-war movement, politicians went ahead with it. After years of futile fighting, and massive losses on both sides, finally in 1975, President Gerald Ford announced that the United States was pulling out of South Vietnam. When it became clear that Saigon was at the verge of falling to the Viet Cong, thousands of Americans and Vietnamese scrambled to flee the capital. After the war, Vietnam remained a popular topic for movie makers. Marilyn B. Young argues that most of these movies were "mainly populated by Americans at war with an unseen enemy. Vietnam was an unchanging jungle stage set, a faraway place where bad things happened to Americans who regrettably did bad things in turn" (23). To my knowledge, there were no Vietnam War stories, in English language, either in literature or in movie format, that presented the story from the perspective of the Vietnamese. That changed with Viet Thanh Nguyen's 2015, Pulitzer Prize winner novel *The Sympathizer*. Here we have all the previous representations challenged. As one book reviewer writes, *The Sympathizer* "illuminates how Americans failed in their political and military attempt to remake Vietnam—but then succeeded spectacularly in shrouding their failure in Hollywood distortions" (Booklist Reviews).

The narrator is "simply able to see any issue from both sides" (1), maybe that is why he is a double agent. "[T]he Americans had promised us salvation from communism if we only did as we were told. They started this war, and now that they're tired of it, they've sold us out," the narrator's

general tells him, “But who is there to blame but ourselves? We were foolish enough to think they would keep their word” (11).

After the Americans pulled out of Vietnam, leaving behind hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese who were their friends, companions, servants, translators, cooks, informers, drivers and many other things, to be dealt with by the incoming Viet Cong which was guaranteed to be not kind on those who had helped the Americans. The narrator of *The Sympathizer* recounts his, and his friends’ fictional escape in minute detail. After spending some time in refugee camps in Guam, they arrive in the United States, and immediately form a Vietnamese diaspora and a secret resistance in the hopes of going back to fight the Viet Cong. In this new life full of racism and stereotyping, the narrator finds himself a meaningful purpose: to help a movie director—the fictional Francis Ford Coppola—who is making the fictional version of *Apocalypse Now*, to accurately represent the Vietnamese. The director turns out to have accurately predicted the future when he makes this announcement:

> I made this movie. I made a great work of art. How do you know you’ve made a great work of art? A great work of art is something as real as reality itself, and sometimes even more real than the real. Long after this war is forgotten, when its existence is a paragraph in a schoolbook students won’t even bother to read, and everyone who survived it is dead, their bodies dust, their memories atoms, their emotions no longer in motion, this work of art will still shine so brightly it will not just be about the war but it will be the war. (178)

As can be expected, our narrator is disappointed in himself for not being able to bring about a positive change; he thinks that he “had been deluded in thinking that I could effect change in how we were represented.” And later, he delivers the ultimate conclusion: “They owned the means of production, and therefore the means of representation, and the best that we could ever hope for was to get a word in edgewise before our anonymous deaths” (179).

Just like *The Monsters of Templeton*, this novel also connects us to many texts. In fact, through scholarly studies which compare *The Last of the Mohicans* with *Heart of Darkness* and with *The Deer Hunter,* it turns out that *The Monsters of Templeton* and *The Sympathizer* are also related by six degrees of separation (see fig. 1 for a rendition of their interconnectedness). We will watch a couple of excerpts from *Apocalypse Now* and *The Deer Hunter*, and our discussion of all of these texts will span two weeks, with one or two hours reserved for a brief discussion of the apartheid in South Africa as recounted by Trevor Noah in *Born a Crime*.

5.10. WEEK 12: Review and Preparation for the Final Exam

This last week is reserved for reviewing all the topics covered throughout the semester and to clarify any questions the students may have.

We will also use this week to go over the format and the expectations of the final exam, as well as answering sample questions.

6. ASSIGNMENTS and FINAL EXAM

Overview:

- Reading Responses (in tweet form i.e. in 140 characters or less) – 2% each, 10 responses for a total of 20% – due each week between 2nd and 11th weeks, inclusive
- Exercise in Close Reading (600 – 700 words) – 10% – due on the 4th week
- Analytical Essay (1200 – 1400 words) – 15% – due on the 7th week
- Comparative Essay (1800 – 2000 words) – 25% – due on the 11th week
- Final Exam – 30% – time tbd
- Bonus: Engagement with other students' twitter reading responses – 5%

Reading Responses:

A total of ten tweeted responses, each due by midnight on Sundays, starting with the second week of the course. A special Twitter account, Global Literatures (@GlobalLiteratur[19]) has been created for this purpose. This twitter account is protected i.e. available only to the students of the course. Students are expected to tweet their weekly reading responses constrained by Twitter's 140-character limits. This limitation encourages us to focus on brevity and effectivity. In order to be able to say the most or make the biggest impact by using least number of words, we must move things around, reorganize our thoughts and restructure our sentences. These tweeting exercises not only make the reading response assignments exciting but they also help students move away from round-about, long-winded, and often rambling styles towards efficient sentence constructions. One example of a reading response tweet can be seen in figure 4.

[19] Twitter allows only fifteen characters for usernames. These usernames are called "handles" and they start with an "@" sign.

Figure 4: Example of a reading response tweet.

Engagement with other students' twitter reading responses:

For a bonus of up to 5%, the students can respond to other students' tweets in meaningful and constructive ways. Replies such as "I agree" or "Exactly" are not allowed.

Exercise in Close Reading:

This is a warm-up assignment for the purposes of practicing and improving essay writing skills. Through in-class exercises and provided instructions, students will demonstrate how deep they can dig into texts, and how much meaning they can squeeze out of short excerpts. They will discover

the functions of the style/language effects contained in the excerpts. While elaborating on the text's significance, the students must also exercise concise writing. Students will select an excerpt of 100-300 words from the text of their choice for this essay.

Analytical Essay:

In this assignment, the students will demonstrate their comprehension of the text, their employment of critical thinking, their original ideas, and their ability to argue a thesis throughout a well-organized essay. They have to present a thesis statement aided by the instructions provided and the exercises we have done in class. They have to use textual evidence to support their claim. Students can select any text thus far studied to perform their analysis on, except for the text they have already used for the close reading assignment.

Comparative Essay:

In this assignment, using one of the prompts provided by the instructor, the students will compare two or more works we have studied throughout the course. Only one of the works they choose for this essay can be a text they have already written about. The students are not going to attempt to "answer" the prompt they choose from the instructor's list of 5-6 cues, rather, they will use it as a starting point. They should provide textual evidence and argue their claim throughout. Sample prompts for this assignment are as follows:

- What forces are at play in the decolonization difficulties of Antigua in *A Small Place* and Zimbabwe in *We Need New Names*? In which ways these two places and the narrations differ or converge?
- Both *Nervous Conditions* and *We Need New Names* take place in Zimbabwe, albeit at different times. What are the contrasts and similarities between the two texts? How do you compare Tambu's and Darling's personal developments?

- Compare *Translations* and *Nervous Conditions* from a language perspective. How do the colonizers treat language in each of these works? What are the reactions of Hugh, Manus, Maire, and Owen in *Translations* and Tambu, Nhamo, and Nyasha, in *Nervous Conditions* towards language?
- Choose two or more works to discuss the significance of proper nouns such as Chin-Kee, Paradise, Darling, Bastard, Rhodesia, Owen/Roland, Baile Beag, Jumping Monkey Hill and so forth.

Final Exam:

Final exam will consist of three sections: short answer questions, close reading, and long-form questions. Each section is 10% for a total of 30% of the overall grade of the course.

Short answer questions mostly consist of definitions. There will be 8 such questions out of which the students will choose only 5 to answer, for 2 points each. Some examples are:

- What is the Ordnance Survey?
- What is an NGO?
- How do you describe decolonization?
- Who was James Fenimore Cooper?
- What is the function of Monkey King?

In the close reading section, students will be given two excerpts on which to write a 1-2 page analysis. Close reading excerpts might be:

> *Nervous Conditions*
>
> Today there are fewer white people on the mission. They are called expatriates, not missionaries, and can be seen living in unpainted brick houses. But they are deified in the same way as the missionaries were because they are white so that their coming is still an honour. I am told that whether you are called an expatriate or a missionary depends on how and by whom you were recruited. Although the distinction was told to me by a reliable source, it does not stick in my mind since I have not observed it myself in my

> dealings with these people. I often ask myself why they come, giving up the comforts and security of their more advanced homes. Which brings us back to matters of brotherly love, contribution and lightening of diverse darknesses. (105)

The Sympathizer

> We were displaced persons, but it was time more than space that defined us. While the distance to return to our lost country was far but finite, the number of years it would take to close that distance was potentially infinite. Thus, for displaced people, the first question was always about time: When can I return?
>
> Speaking of punctuality, I said to Madame, your clock is set to the wrong time.
>
> No, she said, rising to fetch the beer. It's set to Saigon time.
>
> Of course it was. How could I not have seen it? Saigon time was fourteen hours off. Refugee, exile, immigrant—whatever species of displaced human we were, we did not simply live in two cultures, as celebrants of the great American melting pot imagined. Displaced people also lived in two time zones, the here and the there, the present and the past, being as we were reluctant time travelers. But while science fiction imagined time travelers as moving forward or backward in time, this timepiece demonstrated a different chronology. The open secret of the clock, naked for all to see, was that we were only going in circles. (199)

The long-form questions will be similar to that of the essay questions above. The students are not required to do comparative analysis; they can simply write on one text. They will choose one prompt out of the three that will be provided. The answer should be in 2-3 pages. Sample prompts might be:

- *A Small Place* is a different kind of book. In which ways does the direct addressing of the reader work, and how does the critique of tourism address larger issues?
- In *Translations*, what are some of the arguments for and against adopting the English language? Is one argument stronger than the other? What does Hugh recommend?
- Which representations does *The Sympathizer* seek to modify, and how does the narrator go about "correcting" former representations?

7. AFTERWORD

I hope my students will learn during this course as much as I have learned designing it. It was a tremendously enriching and enjoyable process. I hope my students will get the same joy out of it as I have. I hope they will be curious to follow all the leads, but maybe not as much as I have; they would be risking being lost forever in a web of connected knowledge, as I have.

I have two regrets:

1. I was not able to include a work of translation. In order to be able to incorporate a text in this course, all the stars had to align perfectly: the diversity (in theme, setting, author's locality and/or homeland, genre, the issues that are dealt with), the contemporaneity, the adaptability to a limited time frame, the amount of reading that can be assigned to students, and all other considerations had to line up flawlessly. For this reason, a translated work did not make the list. However, in an interview, NoViolet Bulawayo, says that "[t]here are multiple Englishes out there. Mine is the English I arrive at through Ndebele, my native language from Zimbabwe; my English gets its pulse from my intimacy with another language" ("Conversation" 7). I am hoping that all these multiple Englishes, in addition to the fact that we have dealt with the theme of Language quite a lot, will make up for the lack of a translated work.
2. I had to eliminate so many great books. I had to make choices. My short list contained more than 20 excellent works. I could only pick a handful. In particular, I regret immensely not being able to include:

- *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi
- *The Moor's Account*, Laila Lalami
- *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*, Michael Chabon

- *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Junot Díaz
- *Naomi*, Junichiro Tanizaki

In my opinion, these are extraordinary works of art with plenty of relevant material for this course. I was introduced to these works thanks to my professors. As I mentioned at the top of this syllabus, this course is inspired by the courses of my professors, and consequently, I did allow myself to repeat some of their choices. But I also wanted to demonstrate my own range, and did not want to use my professors' choices in their entirety. Consequently, these good books were left out of my list. However, if for any reason (for instance, due to availability issues), a book on my list has to be replaced, then I will substitute it with one of the above.

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COMPREHENSIVE EXAM READING LIST

Reading List[20]

Part 1 – World Literature / Global Literature: 9 books, 9 articles (18 works)

Apter, Emily. *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature (Translation/Transnation)*. New Jersey: Princeton UP, 2005. Print.

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[20] 15 scholarly books, 12 journal articles, 18 creative works; total of 45 works.

Siskind, Mariano. “The Globalization of the Novel and the Novelization of the Global: A Critique of World Literature.” 2010. *World Literature – A Reader.* Theo D’haen, César Dominguez and Mads Rosendahl Thomsen, eds. London, Routledge, 2013. 329-352. Print.

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Part 2 – Diaspora Studies: 3 articles

Clifford, James. "Diasporas." *Cultural Anthropology*. 9.3 (Aug. 1994): 302-344. Web. 1 Dec. 2016.

Safran, William. "Diasporas in Modern Societies." *Diaspora*. 1.1(1991): 83-99. Web. 1 Dec. 2016.

Tölölyan, Khachig. "The Contemporary Discourse of Diaspora Studies." Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East 27.3 (2007): 647-655. Web. 1 Dec. 2016.

Part 3 – Colonial and Postcolonial Studies: 6 books

Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2004. Print.

Cheah, Pheng. *What is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2016. Print.

Edwards, Justin. *Postcolonial Literature*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008. Print.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 2005. Print.

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Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994. Print.

Part 4 – Creative Writing: 18 works

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozie. *The Thing Around Your Neck*. Vintage: Toronto, 2010. Print.

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APPENDIX – Location of Lyrics and Transcripts

Trevor Noah – Stand-up Routine - Transcript

http://readlit.com/Syllabus/TrevorNoah-StandUpRoutine-Transcript.pdf

“Biko” – Peter Gabriel - Lyrics

http://readlit.com/Syllabus/Biko-PeterGabriel-1980-Lyrics.pdf

“Not One of Us” – Peter Gabriel - Lyrics

http://readlit.com/Syllabus/NotOneOfUs-PeterGabriel-1980-Lyrics.pdf

“English Man in New York – Sting - Lyrics

http://readlit.com/Syllabus/EnglishManInNewYork-Sting-1987-Lyrics.pdf

The Danger of a Single Story –TED Talk - Chimamanda Adichie - Transcript

http://readlit.com/Syllabus/TheDangerofaSingleStoryTranscript.pdf