ENG 77b Literatures of Global English
Fall 2015
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Class times: Building # TBD – MWTh 1:00-1:50
Dr. Kantor office hours: Rabb 239 – M 2:00-4:00; W 4:00-5:00
TA Daniella Gati office hours: Building # – TBD

Course Description
Anglophone fiction from around the world confronts readers with a paradox: It uses English to describe situations where little English is spoken, and where other languages make their presence known in the form of borrowed words, translated phrases, and unfamiliar syntax. This course looks at the globalization of English through three novels from different parts of the Anglophone world: Salman Rushdie’s Midnight’s Children representing India, Zakes Mda’s The Heart of Redness representing South Africa, and Junot Díaz’s The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao representing the Caribbean diaspora in the United States. These three primary novels are historical sagas that use family memory to represent nations with very different political relationships to the English language. All three novels also celebrate the way English wrestles with and blends into Hindi-Urdu, Xhosa, and Caribbean Spanish.

Along with the primary texts originally written in English, students are asked to engage with “contexts” about the three regions from which these novels emerge. These include critical readings as well as films, short stories and and novel excerpts that tackle the role of global English from the perspective of other world languages. How do students in a Hindi-medium classroom protest the instructor’s use of English to teach them physics? How does an aspiring novelist writing in Zulu navigate a publishing market that only wants English books? How do a Swedish hotelier and a Puerto Rican drag queen find bilingual performers for a show that will appeal to American tourists in the Dominican Republic?

Learning Outcomes
Students are expected to develop the following competencies through readings, assignments, and classroom discussions.

Critical reading and writing skills
Students should be able to discuss stylistic features of texts using genre-specific vocabulary, and advance their own arguments about the relationship of style to content. Students should demonstrate an ability to construct arguments with reference to secondary literature.
Understanding of the mobility of global English

Students should develop a historical understanding of English’s ascendance as a globally dominant language, the way it interacts with other language and literature traditions, and the way it is transformed by those interactions.

Students should also gain insight into the way that English affects people’s mobility – physical, economic, social – around the world.

Insight into the multiplicity of global Englishes

Students should be able to compare representations of English in various national contexts, and understand the differences between various experiences of multilingualism and postcoloniality in different parts of the world. Students should be able to think critically about issues of ethnicity and economics as they pertain to the narratives in this course.

Compelling multimedia presentations

Students should be able to produce a multimedia presentation that demonstrates proficiency with Storymap software, a prudent balance of images, text, and other media, and a style of argument appropriate to the genre and length. Students should be able to deliver multimedia presentations in a confident and fluid style that demonstrates mastery over the subject.

Assignments and Grading

Students will complete three essays, reading questions, and a group presentation as a part of this course. These assignments will introduce students to different kinds of writing in literary study and help students develop general writing skills – argument, organization, evidence, and clarity – necessary for academic work in a range of disciplines.

Below is a brief description of each type of assignment, its due date, and the relative weight it carries in the course. More detailed instructions about the topics and expectations will be disseminated as the course progresses. Students have the option to write the two unit capstone essays about any of the three units in the course (although both essays cannot be completed for the same unit). It is the responsibility of each student to assess the total workload of this and their other courses and schedule their essays accordingly.

It is imperative that you submit work on time. A late essay will be marked down by a half grade each day that it is late. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. In order to hand in work on time that represents the best of what you’re capable of, it’s important to start early. Formal writing of high quality cannot be completed in a single sitting.

The primary objective of these assignments is to deepen your understanding of the course material while helping you to improve your writing—a skill set that will serve you well throughout your time at Brandeis and beyond. Daniella and I will be reading your essays with the aim of providing constructive comments, and I encourage you to meet with us if you have further questions. In assigning you a final grade for the course, I will factor into my assessment the effort that you put into the assignments and the progress over the duration of the term as demonstrated in your writing.

Participation

Students should come to each class prepared: having completed the reading and writing assignments, having 10 pts Always
brought with them all relevant course materials, and ready to participate actively. Attendance at all class sessions is required. Only three unexcused absences will be permitted without negatively affecting your participation grade.

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<th>Reading Questions</th>
<th>15 pts Weekly on Sunday via Google Forms</th>
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<td>On “Context” weeks, you will respond to reading questions posed by Dr. Kantor. On other weeks, you will write your own question or short reflection (100-200 words) about one of the texts assigned for the week ahead.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Unit Capstone: secondary literature</th>
<th>15 pts 10/2 (unit 1) or 11/2 (unit 2) or 12/2 (unit 3)</th>
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<td>For the unit of your choice, an essay (3-4 pages) that explores one of the novels, stories or films for this unit the light of an argument in the secondary literature.</td>
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<th>Unit Capstone: close reading</th>
<th>15 pts 10/2 (unit 1) or 11/2 (unit 2) or 12/2 (unit 3)</th>
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<td>For the unit of your choice, an essay (3-4 pages) that offers a comparative close reading of the style of English and/or its interaction with other languages in passages from two of the novels, stories or films within this unit.</td>
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<th>Map presentation</th>
<th>15 pts 9/24 (group 1) 10/12 (group 2) 10/29 (group 3) 12/3 (group 4)</th>
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<td>For the unit you are assigned, a Storymap group presentation that traces the movements of characters in the main novel for each unit. Includes citations of descriptions of places and journeys from that novel.</td>
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<th>Final essay</th>
<th>30 pts 12/9</th>
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<td>Essay (5-6 pages) that compares two to four fictional texts from different world areas and relates them to an argument in at least one piece of secondary literature from the course. Students may use outside texts with instructor approval.</td>
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**Course Policies**

**Safe learning community**

This course is a seminar, and the contribution of each student in class discussions and activities is vital to its success. Students are expected to contribute to fostering an inclusive and caring classroom community that respects a diversity of opinions and experiences.

**Public domain**

In this class, we will develop a collegial community for the purpose of learning. Please be aware that all members of the class may read the writing you produce for this course.

This class requires the use of tools that may disclose your coursework and identity to parties outside the class. To protect your privacy you may choose to
use a pseudonym/alias rather than your name in submitting such work. You must share the pseudonym/alias with me and any teaching assistants as needed. Alternatively, with prior consultation, you may submit such work directly to me.

Please consult with me if you have any concerns about privacy related to any specific assignment.

Credit Hours
Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that you will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).

University non-discrimination policies
In this class, we will and uphold Brandeis University policies and regulations pertaining to the observation of religious holidays, assistance available to physically disabled, visually, and/or hearing impaired students, plagiarism, sexual harassment, and racial or ethnic discrimination. All students are advised to become familiar with university regulations and are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to my attention.

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

Academic Integrity
All students are expected to adhere to Brandeis University’s Code of Academic Integrity at all times. You are expected to demonstrate academic integrity in your classroom conduct and written work. All the work you submit in this course must have been written for this course. It must originate with you in form and content, with all contributory sources fully acknowledged. Please consult Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity.

Plagiarism means representing the work and ideas of others as your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. It is a form of theft and a serious offense. I am obligated to report violations. The normal penalty for a violation is an “F” for the term.

Reading List

Fiction
Agnes Sam – “They Christened it Indenture”
Edwidge Danticat – “Water Child”
Jamaica Kincaid – “Girl,” “Wingless,” and “Figures in the Distance”
Josefina Báez – selections from Dominicanish (LATTE)
Junot Diaz – The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao
Mayra Santos-Febres (tr. Stephen Lytle) – selections from Sirena Selena (LATTE)
Nadine Gordimer – “City Lovers”
Phaswane Mpe – *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*
Salman Rushdie – *Midnight’s Children*
Shrilal Shukla (tr. Gillian Wright) – selections from *Raag Darbari* (LATTE)
V. S. Naipaul – “His Chosen Calling” and “B. Wordsworth” from *Miguel Street*
Zakes Mda – *The Heart of Redness*

**Film**

*English Vinglish* – dir. Gauri Shinde (LATTE)
*You Laugh, But It’s True* – dir. David Paul Meyer (LATTE)

**Non-fiction (LATTE)**

Andrew Offenberger – “Duplicity and Plagiarism in Zakes Mda’s *Heart of Redness*”
Gaiutra Bahadur – “Her Middle Passage” from *Coolie Woman*
John and Jean Comaroff – “Three or Four Thoughts on Ethno-Futures” from *Ethnicity, Inc.*
M.K. Gandhi – “What it is to be a ‘Coolie’,” “Man Proposes, God Disposes” and “The £3 Tax” from *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*
Rashmi Sadana – “The Slush Pile” and “Reading Delhi and Beyond” from *English Heart, Hindi Heartland*
Stuart Hall – “When was ‘Post-colonial’? Thinking at the Limit”
T.B. Macaulay – “Minute on Education”

**Schedule of Readings**

**Week 1**
8/27- Course introduction

**Indian Contexts**

**Week 2**
8/31- T.B. Macaulay – “Minute on Education” (LATTE)
9/2- Shrilal Shukla (tr. Gillian Wright) – selections from *Raag Darbari* (LATTE) and Rashmi Sadana – “The Slush Pile” and “Reading Delhi and Beyond” from *English Heart, Hindi Heartland* (LATTE)
9/3- Film: *English Vinglish* – dir. Gauri Shinde (LATTE)

**Midnight’s Children**

**Week 3 – Book One**
9/7- no class
9/9- Introduction – “Hit the Spittoon” p. 53
9/10- “Under the Carpet” – “Tick Tock” p. 136

**Week 4 – Book Two**
9/14- no class
9/16- “The Fisherman’s Pointing Finger” – “Commander Sabarmati’s Baton” p. 305
9/17- “Revelations” – “How Saleem Achieved Purity” p. 396

**Week 5 – Book Three**
9/21- “The Buddha” – The End
9/23- no class
9/24- Map presentation (*Midnight’s Children*)

*Unit Capstone Due*

South African Contexts

**Week 6**
9/28- no class
9/29- John and Jean Comaroff – “Three or Four Thoughts on Ethno-Futures” from *Ethnicity, Inc.* (LATTE)
9/30- (LATTE) Andrew Offenberger – “Duplicity and Plagiarism in Zakes Mda’s *Heart of Redness*”
10/1- Film: *You Laugh, But It’s True* – dir. David Paul Meyer

*Welcome to Our Hillbrow*

**Week 7**
10/5- no class
10/7- Introduction – “Notes from Heaven”
10/8- “Refilwe” – The End

*The Heart of Redness*

**Week 8**
10/12- Map presentation (*Hillbrow*)
10/14- Chapter 1 – Chapter 3
10/15- Chapter 4 – Chapter 5

**Week 9**
10/19- Chapter 6 – Chapter 7
10/21- Chapter 8 – Chapter 9 Daniella leads class
10/22- Chapter 10 – The End Daniella leads class

*Other South African Stories*

**Week 10**
10/26- Map presentation (*Redness*)
10/28- “City Lovers” Nadine Gordimer, read by Tessa Hadley (LATTE)
10/29- Agnes Sam – “They Christened it Indenture” from *Jesus is Indian* and M. K. Gandhi – “What it is to be a ‘coolie’,” “Man Proposes, God Disposes,” and “The £3 Tax” from *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (LATTE)

*Unit Capstone Due*
Caribbean Contexts

Week 11
11/2- Stuart Hall – “When was ‘Post-colonial’? Thinking at the Limit” (LATTE)
11/4- Mayra Santos-Febres (tr. Stephen Lytle) – selections from Sirena Selena (LATTE)
11/5- Josefina Báez – selections from Dominicanish (LATTE)

The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao
Week 12 Part I
11/9- Chapter 1 – Chapter 2
11/11- Chapter 3
11/12- Chapter 4

Week 13 Parts II and III
11/16- Chapter 5
11/18- Chapter 6
11/19- Chapter 7

Week 14
11/23- Map presentation (The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao)
11/25- no class
11/26- no class

Other Caribbean Stories
Week 15
11/30- V.S. Naipaul “His Chosen Calling” from Miguel Street and Gaiutra Bahadur “Her Middle Passage”
12/2- Edwidge Danticat “Water Child,” read by Junot Diaz (LATTE)
12/3- “Girl” and “Wingless” by Jamaica Kincaid, read by Edwidge Danticat; and “Figures in the Distance” read by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (LATTE)

Unit Capstone Due

Conclusions
Week 16
12/7-
12/9-