ENGL 128: Readings in Comparative World English Literatures
Summer 2020

Professor Cajetan Iheka
Meeting Times: MW 1:00-4:15
Office: LC 406 Office Hours: by appointment
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An introduction to the literary traditions of the Anglophone world in a variety of poetic and
narrative forms and historical contexts. Emphasis on developing skills of literary interpretation
and critical writing; diverse linguistic, cultural and racial histories; and on the politics of empire
and liberation struggles. Authors may include Daniel Defoe, Mary Prince, J. M. Synge, James
Joyce, C. L. R. James, Claude McKay, Jean Rhys, Yvonne Vera, Chinua Achebe, Ngūgī wa
Thiong'o, J. M. Coetzee, Brian Friel, Amitav Ghosh, Salman Rushdie, Alice Munro, Derek
Walcott, and Patrick White, among others.

Required Texts

Mary Prince, The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave (1883) (Penguin Classics) 9780140437492 $15.00
Ngūgī wa Thiong’o, A Grain of Wheat (1967) (Penguin Books) 9780143106760 $17.00
Tsitsi Dangarembga, Nervous Conditions (1988) (Ayebia Clarke) 9780954702335 $13.95

Total cost for these editions bought new: $76.95

Assignments

Course Participation 20%
Close Reading Paper (3-4 pages) 20%
Museum Visit Paper (3-4 pages) 20%
Final Paper (8-10 pages) 40%

Grading Scale in %
A (92-100)
A- (85-91)
B+ (80-84)
B (75-79)
B- (70-74)
C+ (65-69)
C (60-64)
C- (55-59)
D (50-54)
F (Below 50)

Please note that you cannot use a text for more than one paper.

Attendance and Preparedness: Attendance is mandatory for this class. Participation in class discussion/work is also important as the overall success of this class depends on the quality of your contribution. I expect you to come to class having done the assigned reading and prepared to contribute to the discussion in a significant manner.

Close Reading Paper: This assignment involves the close reading of an assigned text. You can think of this paper as the analysis of an issue or theme in a selected text. A strong essay will be anchored in close reading and will analyze a passage or a few key episodes that illuminate the important problem or issue you are investigating. The paper should be 3-4 pages long. Due 10 July at 5pm.

Museum Object Paper: For this assignment, you will discuss an assigned text in relation to an artwork in the African Art or Asian Art Collection of the Yale Art Gallery. These artworks, like the texts we are studying, have come a long way from their original context. Thus, there is a shared current in circulation and worldliness. You can take on this shared attribute, a theme, or other characteristic in your paper. Length: 3-4 pages. Due 24 July.

The class will meet in the Yale Art Gallery on 15 July for an orientation to the collections. Students will then arrange to visit the Gallery to select an object.

Final Paper: You will develop a research paper with a clear argument that focuses on one primary text. Productively draw on a range of secondary sources for this paper, which will be assessed based on the force of your argument and the compelling power of your analysis and rhetorical maneuvers. The length of the paper is 8-10 pages. Due 31 July.

Writing: We will devote class time before and after each assignment to discuss effective writing, do practice exercises, and offer feedback. Where patterns emerge in student papers, I will devote time at the beginning of class to tackling the issues. These class discussions will be supplemented with one-on-one meetings to discuss individual concerns.

Students have an opportunity to revise one of the earlier papers, incorporating instructor feedback, for the final paper.
Classroom Decorum: I always expect you to treat your classmates and me with respect. This means listening attentively when someone else is speaking. Whispering, texting, interrupting, eye-rolling, eating, and the like are rude and disruptive. The use of computers, cell phones, and other devices are prohibited; come to class with print copies of assigned readings and writing materials for taking notes. Studies show that taking note by hand facilitates retention and recall of learning.

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating on examinations, plagiarism, improper or non-acknowledgment of sources in essays, and the use of a single essay in more than one course are examples of academic dishonesty, which may result in failing the class and/or suspension from the university. You can read Yale’s policies on academic dishonesty here: http://catalog.yale.edu/undergraduate-regulations/regulations/academic-dishonesty/

Disabilities/Accommodation: Please document your accommodations with the Resource Office on Disabilities and make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss how to maximize your learning in the class. The Resource Office can be reached at 203-432-2324.

Writing Center: I strongly recommend the Writing Center as an excellent resource for effective writing strategies. Contact the Writing Center at 203-432-7237 or writing@yale.edu to schedule free consultations.

Schedule

Please note that this schedule is subject to change. I will let you know of such changes immediately

Week 1

29 June: Mary Prince, The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave (3-63)

1 July: Mary Prince, The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave
Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, “Tell Them”

Week 2

6 July: Jamaica Kincaid, The Autobiography of My Mother (3-128)

8 July: Jamaica Kincaid, The Autobiography of My Mother
Derek Walcott, “Sea is History”

Close Reading Paper Due on Friday 10 July at 5pm

Week 3

13 July: Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, A Grain of Wheat (1-149)
15 July: Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, *A Grain of Wheat* + Visit to Yale Art Gallery

**Week 4**

20 July: Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions* (1-121)

22 July: Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*
       Chimamanda Adichie, “Jumping Monkey Hill”

**Museum Object Paper Due on Friday 24 July at 5pm**

**Week 5**

27 November: Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* (3-204)

29 November: Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things*

31 July: Final Paper Due (10pm)