

Université de Montréal
Département d'études anglaises
ANG 6660 Globalization and Literature
Été 2011

Instructor: Professor Heike Härting
Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 to 3pm
Office: C-8118
Telephone: (514) 343-6192
E-mail: heike.harting@umontreal.ca
Office Hours: Tuesdays 10 am to 11 am

Special Topic: Cosmopolitanism, Literature, and Film

Course Description:

This course has several objectives. First, it introduces students to a variety of cultural, literary, political, and anthropological theories of cosmopolitanism. We will begin with a historical analysis of the notion of cosmopolitanism and question the predominance of normative cosmopolitanisms in the various disciplines of the humanities. Second, we will explore the productive and interventive possibilities of reading cosmopolitanism through a cultural and materialist lens, paying specific attention to the critical purchase of James Clifford's concept of "discrepant cosmopolitanisms," Gayatri Spivak's notion of "worlding," and Pheng Cheah's notion of "activist cosmopolitanism." Third, this course seeks to establish meaningful links between theoretical and literary representations and imaginings of cosmopolitanism. In particular, we will look at the ways in which writers use language and narrative form to enact a cosmopolitan ethics of disjuncture, displacement, and hospitality. At the same time, our readings will draw out the ways in which the economic and political realities of globalization compel new and alternative cosmopolitanisms that are not rooted in a Kantian discourse of identity and peaceful world trade. Fourth, this course makes an initial attempt at thinking through the cosmopolitan dimensions of contemporary films, on the level of film production, narrative, and theory. Given that global image production is the most influential trajectory towards building post-national yet localized identities, film constitutes a central medium through which to articulate, track, and analyze these new narratives of identity.

Texts:

Aidoo, Ama Ata. *Our Sister Killjoy*. New York: Longman, 1977 (2007).
Bush, Catherine. *The Rules of Engagement*. Toronto: Harper Perennial Canada, 2000.
Kant, Immanuel. *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*. Trans. Ted Humphrey. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1983.
Mouré, Erin. *O Cidadan. Poems*. Toronto: Anansi, 2002
Menchu, Rigoberta. *I, Rigoberta Menchu: AN Indian Woman in Guatemala*. Verso, 1984 (Second English Language Edition, 2009)
Nwabani, Adaobi Tricia. *I do not Come to You by Chance*. New York: Hyperion, 2009.
Roy, Arundhati. *Public Power in the Age of Empire*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2004.

A Course Reader (for included readings, see Tentative Reading Schedule)

Films:

Stephanie Black's *Life and Debt*
Alexander Gonzales Inarritu's *Babel*
Marc Forster's *The Kite Runner*
Kevin MacDonald's *The Last King of Scotland*

A Course Reader (for included readings, see Tentative Reading Schedule)

Assignments:

In-class Presentation	20 %
Short Paper	30 %
Research Paper	40 %
Participation	10 %

In-Class Presentations

Oral presentations have to be 20-30 minutes long and must provide a critical discussion of the assigned theoretical texts and establish—wherever meaningful or necessary—connections with the literary text or film related to the session. By way of a careful reading of the text in question, the presentation should outline the logic and validity of the text's theoretical argument. Finally, presentations should be designed in ways that generate discussion among students. Thus, each student must propose at least two relevant questions about the texts under examination. The presenter must field and respond to questions, and lead class discussion.

Short Paper

Your short essay must be a critical reflection on—not an expository summary of—the texts you discussed in your in-class presentation. Your paper may or may not address the ways in which class and group discussions helped you expand, rethink, and/or research particular thoughts you had on a theoretical text. However, your paper may also be a way of developing your creative reading skills and mediate the ways in which a literary text or film can be read to question or shift some of the assumptions and arguments made in one of the theoretical texts you discussed in your presentation. Short papers are no more than 1200 words long and have to be submitted no later than one week after the presentation.

Research Paper

In this course you will have to write a 15-page research essay on a topic of your choice. All research papers must be argumentative essays and adhere to the MLA style of academic writing and quotation. Essays will be graded for their originality of thought, their appropriate use of secondary sources, their demonstration of independent research, their logical organization and argumentation, and their writing style. **All final papers must be handed in on June 16, 2011.**

A Note on Class Conduct

This course is designed to provide all students with an equal opportunity to participate in class discussions. Ideally, the classroom is a safe space of exchange and learning where everyone should feel encouraged to ask questions and to raise uncomfortable issues. By raising questions and not being afraid of potentially uncomfortable situations, we move towards the production of knowledge that takes into account its own political and ideological situatedness. Therefore, it is important that students be patient with each other and help create a safe environment in which all students feel at ease to voice their opinions. Creating such an

environment entails that people refrain from interrupting others and from dominating the class discussion at large.

Tentative Reading Schedule

(The full bibliographical information for all theoretical and critical sources is noted on the texts, which are available for xeroxing at the main office of the English Department)

May 3: Introduction

Film: *Life and Debt*

Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden: "What is Transnational Cinema?"

May 5: Whose Cosmopolitanism? Some Ethics of Cosmopolitan Thinking

Immanuel Kant: "To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch."

Jacques Derrida: "Of Cosmopolitanism."

Julia Emberely: "Epistemic Encounters: Indigenous Cosmopolitan Hospitality, Marxist

Anthropology, Deconstruction, and Doris Pilkington's *Rabbit-Proof Fence*"

Discussion of *Life and Debt*

May 10: Normative Cosmopolitanisms? The Local in the Global?

Nussbaum, Martha: "Kant and Cosmopolitanism."

Seyla Benhabib: "The Philosophical Foundations of Cosmopolitan Norms."

Anthony Appiah: "Rooted Cosmopolitanism."

May 12: Reading Cosmopolitanism: Worlding, Women Migrants and Historical Continuity

Ama Ata Aidoo: *Our Sister Killjoy*

Pheng Cheah: "The Cosmopolitical—Today."

Gayatri Spivak: "Three Women's Texts"

May 17: Cosmopolitanism, Capital, and Culture

George Yudice: "The Expediency of Culture."

Toby Miller et al: "Globalization + Hollywood History+ Cultural Imperialism + the GATT and Friends = *Laissez-Faire* Hollywood or State Business?"

Arundhati Roy: *Public Power in the Age of Empire*

May 19: Babel—Cosmopolitan Narrative and Network Cinema

Pheng Cheah: "Given Culture. Rethinking Cosmopolitical Freedom."

Walter Dignolo: "The Many Faces of Cosmo-polis. Border Thinking and Critical Cosmopolitanism."

Thomas Elsaesser: "The Mind-Game Film."

May 24: The Cosmopolitan Subject and Citizenship

Erin Mouré: *O Ciudadan*

Bonnie Honig: "The Foreigner as Citizen"

Peter Nyers: "Emerging or Emergency Identities?"

May 26: Cosmopolitan Travelers and Capital

Pico Iyer: "The Multiculture" (from *The Global Soul*)

Craig Calhoun: "The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travelers."

Gayatri Spivak: "The Rest of the World: An Interview with Gayatri Spivak"

May 31: Digital Re-Worldings and African Cosmopolitanism?

Adaobi Tricia Naubani: *I Do Not Come To You By Chance*

Homi Bhabha: "Unsatisfied--Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism"

David Harvey: "The Nature of Environment"

James Ferguson: "Globalizing Africa"

June 2: Cosmopolitanism, Human Rights, and Nationalism, Again

Film: *The Kite Runner*

Timothy Brennan: "Cosmo-Theory."

Jacques Rancière: "The Emancipated Spectator"

Joseph Slaughter: "The Legibility of Human Rights"

June 7: Cosmopolitanism and Humanitarian Interventionism

Catherine Bush: *The Rules of Engagement*

Paul Gilroy: "The Planet"

David Chandler: "The Road to Military Humanitarianism: How the Human Rights NGOs Shaped a New Humanitarian Agenda."

June 14: Uncanny Cosmopolitanism: A Humanitarianist Attitude?

Film: *The Last King of Scotland*

Michael Ignatieff: "The Humanitarian as Imperialist."

Makau Mutua: "Human Rights in Africa: The Limited Promise of Liberalism"

Sean Cubitt: "Cosmopolitan Film."

June 16: Cosmopolitanism and Indigeneity

Rigoberta Menchu, with Elsiabeth Burgos-Debray. *I, Rigoberta Menchu: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*.

James Clifford: "Mixed Feelings" or "Indigenous Articulations"

Kay Schaffer and Sidonie Smith. "Conjunctions: Life Narratives in the Field of Human Rights."