

GLSP: HUMS 633, World Literature
Tuesdays 6-8:30, Downey 100, Spring 2012
Professor Indira Karamcheti
Office: 285 Court Street, # 110
Hours: Tuesday 10-12, after our class, and by appointment
Tel: 860-685-3625

DESCRIPTION: The last half of the 20th century has seen the establishment of a canon of literary classics from many places in the world outside of the Europe: Africa, Asia, the Pacific, the Americas. Some authors have become not only recognizable to, but indispensable for, the educated first world reader: Chinua Achebe, Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipaul, Gabriel Marcia Marquez, and Bharati Mukherjee are certainly a few of these authors. How do these authors shape their worlds and what issues concern them? What in their works and formal methods appeals so much to the reader of the first world? We will consider such questions as how canons come to be, and what criteria determine which books become "classics." We will discuss certain themes central to this genre, such as the problematics of language, the literary as opposed to the oral traditions, cultural identity, and the seeming inescapability of history and politics.

REQUIREMENTS: faithful attendance and engaged, thoughtful participation in discussion. You should come to class not only having read the material assigned, but prepared with questions and ideas about it. The written work will consist of two essays of 3-4 pages, double-spaced; one essay of 4-5 pages; and a final paper of 5-7 pages.

TEXTS:

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*
Chinua Achebe, *Education of a British-Protected Child*
Chimamanda Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun*
Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*
Arundhati Roy, *God of Small Things*
Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *The Autumn of the Patriarch*
Roberto Bolano, *Monsieur Pain*
Junot Diaz, *The Brief, Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*
V.S. Naipaul, *The Mystic Masseur*
Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*
Keri Hulme, *The Bone People*
David Damrosch, *How to Read World Literature*

Foundational Course Option: Students taking the course with this option will receive more extensive and detailed feedback on their work through individually designed assignments and meetings with the instructor. Foundational courses are intended to provide an additional level of guidance, support, and feedback to ensure that students cultivate the tools and skills necessary for graduate level research and writing.

SCHEDULE:

Week 1
Jan. 31: Introduction

ESTABLISHING THE CANON

Week 2

Feb. 7: Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*: Read Part One
from *The Education of a British-Protected Child*: "The Education of a British-Protected Child"
"Teaching Things Fall Apart"

from *How to Read World Literature*: "What Is 'Literature'?"

COMBATTING AND CONSTRUCTING TRADITIONS

Week 3

Feb. 14: Finish Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*
from *The Education of a British-Protected Child*: "My Dad and Me"
"Spelling Our Proper Name"

from *How to Read World Literature*: "Reading across Time"

ESSAY # 1 DUE IN CLASS

LITERATURE AND THE NATION

Week 4

Feb. 21: Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun*
from *The Education of a British-Protected Child*: "What Is Nigeria to Me?"
"Africa's Tarnished Name"

A LANGUAGE OF ONE'S OWN

Week 5

Feb. 28: Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*: Read all of Book One and through the chapter titled "All-India Radio" in Book Two
from *The Education of a British-Protected Child*: "Politics and Politicians of Language in African Literature"

GENDER, RACE, AND CLASS

Week 6

Mar. 6: Roy, *God of Small Things*

ESSAY # 2 DUE IN CLASS

MIDSEMESTER RECESS Mar. 9-25

ETHNICITY AND THE NATION

Week 7

Mar. 27: V.S. Naipaul, *Mystic Masseur*

AUTHENTICITY, MULTICULTURALISM, AND HYBRIDITY

Week 8

April 3: Mukherjee, Jasmine

from How to Read World Literature: "Going Global"

MAGICAL REALISM

Week 9

April 10: Garcia Marquez, The Autumn of the Patriarch

ESSAY # 3 DUE IN CLASS

THE QUESTION OF TRANSLATION

Week 10

April 17: Bolano, Monsieur Pain

from How to Read World Literature: "Reading in Translation"

AT HOME IN DIASPORA

Week 11

April 24: Diaz, The Brief, Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao

from How to Read World Literature: "Going Abroad"

CLAIMING INDIGENEITY

Week 12

May 1: Hulme, The Bone People

FINAL PAPER DUE MAY 8