# Migrant Writing
**MA course, 7.5 credits**  
*English Department*  
*Stockholm University*

**Autumn 2013**  
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## Seminars

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Part 1: World literature</th>
<th>Prescribed reading</th>
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| 3 September 10-12 E890   | World literature: writers and books in circulation  
Casanova, chap. 1  
Moretti  
Damrosch  
Thomsen, chap. 1 |
| 10 September 10-12 E890  | *The Tempest* at large  
Casanova, chap. 2  
Césaire  
Gillies  
Hess (Hulme)  
Montaigne (in Norton ed. of *The Tempest*)  
(Retamar)  
Rix  
Shakespeare |
| 17 September 10-12 E890  | *The African Pilgrim’s Progress*  
Bunyan  
Hofmeyr (selected chapters – to be announced) |
| 24 September 14-16 E890  | *Pilgrim’s Progress* cont’d  
What is translation?  
Heilbron  
Hofmeyr |
| 27 September             | Deadline assignment 1 |

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<th>Part 2: Migrant writers</th>
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| 1 October 14-16 E890    | Migrant writers (1)  
*Season of Migration to the North*  
Salih  
Thomsen, chap. 3  
Casanova, chap. 3  
Tymoczko |
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Reading/Topics</th>
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<tr>
<td>8 October</td>
<td>Migrant writers (2)</td>
<td><em>The Enigma of Arrival</em></td>
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<td>14-16</td>
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<td>Naipaul</td>
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<td>E890</td>
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<td>Bhabha</td>
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<td>15 October</td>
<td>Migrant writers (3)</td>
<td><em>The Inheritance of Loss</em></td>
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<td>10-12</td>
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<td>Desai</td>
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<td>E890</td>
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<td>Gurnah</td>
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<td>Masterson</td>
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<td>Orsini</td>
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<td>18 October</td>
<td><strong>Deadline assignment 2</strong></td>
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<td>22 October</td>
<td>Whither world literature?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
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<td>Damrosch</td>
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<tr>
<td>E890</td>
<td>Research issues</td>
<td>Thomsen, chap. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 October</td>
<td><strong>Deadline assignment 3</strong></td>
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**Reading list**

Gillies, John. “The Figure of the New World in *The Tempest*” in Hulme and Sherman (eds.), *“The Tempest” and Its Travels*.
Hulme, Peter and William Sherman (eds.). *“The Tempest” and Its Travels*. Reaktion, 2000. (e-book)
Assignments

Assignment 1
Casanova, Moretti and Damrosch all argue in favour of a transnational and circulational perspective on literary history. The emphases of their theories differ, however. Offer a very brief overview of these differences, and indicate whether or not The Tempest and/or The Pilgrim’s Progress confirm their models of world literature. Please note that this is a short assignment. The intention is to train your ability to be concise.
2-3 pages (12pt font, 1.5 spacing)

Assignment 2
Focus on two of the four novels by Desai, Gurnah, Naipaul and Salih, and compare how they deal with writing in and about migration. Examples of questions you may address are: How do the writers deal with time and focalisation in the narratives? What different versions of migration experiences are presented in the novels, and what do you make of the differences? Do the circulation of literatures and the experiences of migration intersect in the narrative? If so, how? Draw on relevant secondary readings in the course, including but not necessarily limited to Thomsen and Tymoczko.
4-5 pages (12pt font, 1.5 spacing)

Assignment 3
With reference to the prescribed readings and seminar discussions, identify a research question and explain why it would be worth exploring. It is imperative that you reflect – however briefly – on the scope, methodology and theoretical underpinnings of your (imagined) project. The proposed investigation need not be limited to the course syllabus – on the contrary, you are more than welcome to draw on other reading that matters to you.
4-5 pages (12pt font, 1.5 spacing)
Course aims

Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to

- discuss critically the scholarly and literary works on the reading list.
- give a theoretically and historically informed account of the term “world literature”.
- provide an independent interpretation of a given literary work against the backdrop of phenomena such as migration, translation and globalisation.
- to discuss, with appropriate critical terminology, matters concerning literary circulation, transnational canonisation, translation and narratives of migration.
- follow the debate on world literature and migrant writing, and be able to form an independent opinion of it.

This is what we aim for. The means for this is conscientious preparation for each seminar, active participation in seminar discussion, focused responses to given assignments, and the independent production of written work.

Course requirements

To achieve the goals of the course, and be given a passing grade, you will be required to

- Attend the seminars. That is, attendance is compulsory. Notify the seminar instructor by e-mail ASAP if for some reason you will be/have been absent. For each seminar you miss you will be given an extra assignment to make up for your absence, but you are only allowed to miss two seminars. Three strikes and you’re out; that is, if you miss more than two seminars you will automatically fail the course.
- Prepare for the seminars by reading the assigned texts in a critical and active manner. Also prepare by carrying out any other tasks that you have been assigned.
- Participate actively in class discussion. During the seminars every one of us will take part in a discussion that aims at finding and probing the difficult questions that come up when we analyse world literature and migrant writing. Come well prepared and be ready to contribute to constructive and critical exchanges. Since at each seminar you will communicate your main findings and questions to others, it is important to be prepared for this task.
- Write and hand in responses to assignments on or before the deadline. Late submissions will automatically receive lower grades (i.e. an assignment that would been given a B under normal circumstances will receive a C, etc.).

Contact info

Assessment and assessment criteria

You will be continually assessed according to your performance in class, and according to the quality of your submitted assignments: written assignments (70%), seminar work (30%).

OUTSTANDING
For a grade of A the student should …

- Display wide-ranging knowledge of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations as well as a profound familiarity with the texts we have read.
- Show the ability, in written work and in active class discussion, to critically analyze theoretical arguments and literary works in a manner that is on occasion innovative and often illuminating, consistently deploying appropriate critical concepts in an elegant way.
- Present his/her arguments in a persuasive and coherent manner, in correct, fluent and idiomatic English, in a consistently academic style of writing and spoken delivery.

EXCELLENT
For a grade of B the student should …

- Display a broad knowledge of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations as well as a solid familiarity with the texts we have read.
- Show the ability, in written work and in class discussion, to critically analyze theoretical arguments and literary works in a manner that is on occasion illuminating, with frequent and correct use of appropriate critical concepts.
- Present arguments in a solid and coherent manner, in correct and fluent English, in an academic style of writing and in an acceptably formal register of spoken delivery.

GOOD
For a grade of C the student should …

- Display considerable knowledge of most of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations as well as an adequate familiarity with the texts we have read.
- Show the ability, in written work and in class discussion, to critically analyze theoretical arguments and literary works, with at least occasional and correct use of appropriate critical concepts.
- Present arguments in a coherent manner, in adequate English with only minor errors, with only some lapses from an academic style of writing and with a correct and fluent spoken delivery.
SATISFACTORY
For a grade of **D** the student should …
- display basic knowledge of most of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations as well as some familiarity with the texts we have read.
- show the ability, in written work and in class discussion, to critically analyze literary works and theoretical arguments, with some, basic use of appropriate critical concepts.
- present his/her arguments in a largely coherent manner, in adequate English with only minor errors, in a consistent, formal register of writing and with a largely correct and fluent spoken delivery.

ADEQUATE
For a grade of **E** the student should …
- display basic knowledge of some of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations as well as a basic knowledge of some of the elements of plots, characters, settings and narrative structure in most of the texts we have read.
- show some ability, in written work and in class discussion, to critically analyze literary works and theoretical arguments, with at least a minimal employment of technical terms.
- present his/her arguments in an intelligible manner, in adequate English, in a largely formal register of written or spoken delivery, with some fluency and few errors.

INADEQUATE
A grade of **F** will be set if the student
- fails the attendance requirements or fails to hand in assignments in time.
- shows scant or no knowledge of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations; likewise shows very little or no familiarity with the texts we have read.
- fails to reach a satisfactory level of critical analysis in written assignments and in class discussion, a failure that includes inability to properly use critical concepts.
- fails to communicate adequately in English, with many errors and no sense of stylistic register.
Any of these failures is enough for an overall fail.

INCOMPLETE
The **Fx** grade is set if the student has reached most of the Learning outcomes of the course, but must hand in revised or supplementary material in order to fully meet the requirements.