Becoming Global: “Europe” and the World

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Over and over, we are told that the world we live in is becoming increasingly global. All its parts are connected to one another, and goods, people, culture, and information can move from one place to another, seemingly without barriers. Yet how new is this phenomenon? Scholars have pointed to the middle of the sixteenth century as the moment when the economy became global, and the age of exploration and colonization began to connect many parts of the world to each other in a complex network that included cooperation, piracy, and slavery. This course will explore the emergence of a global consciousness in the early modern period. Our primary questions include: to what extent did early modern Europeans begin to imagine and experience the world globally, that is, as an entity whose regions were interdependent rather than separate? How did that globalization influence cultural developments? How were things, places and persons not previously seen by Europeans categorized? What influence did these encounters have on European identities—for example on ideas about, and experiences of, gender, sexuality, class religion, and citizenship? Was this global economy seen as cooperative or competitive? To answer these questions, we will consider how the attempts to create, and the struggle to understand, this global world produced new narratives and forms of interdisciplinary thinking.

Course Aims:
Our primary objective in this course is to come to a better understanding of the ways that the early modern period produced a form of global consciousness and how this global world produced and depended on various kinds of interdisciplinary thinking. My hope is that our explorations will help us to see how the issues surrounding globalization as we understand them today have a long and complex history. Our aim is thus to come to a more nuanced understanding of both the past and present by thinking about them in relationship to each other.

To accomplish these aims, we will discuss a wide variety of primary works, such as travel narratives, plays, poems, early forms of ethnography, and visual representations, as well as secondary works by literary scholars, anthropologists, and historians of labor, the economy, and science. I have also selected a number of texts that put the past in present in conversation with each other in a variety of provocative and innovative ways in order to help us think about how the processes of globalization develop across both space and time. We will thus have to become careful readers and viewers ourselves, attentive to the forms, strategies, and content of the works we are "discovering" and the ways they have contributed to the production, or analysis, of global consciousness.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Class Attendance and Participation:
This seminar is a collaboration. Thus, regular attendance (including arriving to class on time) and thoughtful engagement with the course materials are crucial to its success. Be generous with your ideas and questions, and show up with texts in your hand and ready to think in new ways. Careful preparation is a key component of participation. Complete all readings, viewings, and assignments before you come to class in order to be ready to participate in that day’s discussion. Come to class with questions you have about the material and/or with specific issues or passages from works you would like to discuss. Be ready to contribute meaningfully to our discussions.

If you are absent, I will assume you have a good reason. You do not need to tell me why. (The exception is if something very out of the ordinary happens that requires you to miss more than two classes in a row.) The course, however, moves quickly and the material is challenging, and those that miss seminar will likely find it difficult to keep up. Whenever you miss class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed from one of your classmates and for keeping up with the assignments.

My preference is that you bring hard copies of all reading materials to class. You will be permitted to use laptops in class to view course materials (if you have a very strong preference to do so) and to take notes, but NOT for any other purpose. All other electronic devices should be off—not ringing or vibrating in class and not visible to you or others.

Written Work: A variety of forms of written work will be required for the class. I detail them below. All written work will share in the project of moving toward accomplishing the stated goals of the course, of making connections among the different works and our discussions of them, and, of course, making new discoveries about why studying this material matters to us. Because this course is rapidly paced, it is particularly vital that work arrives on time and in good form.

Reading Responses: In order to help you prepare to participate in discussion and to give you the practice of writing on a regular basis about course materials, you will also be asked to complete a response paper roughly every other week. This paper is a two-page critical response to the materials assigned since the previous response paper was due. These are typed, thoughtful engagements that address a specific issue, question, or section of a work that you would like to explore. They may also engage with issues raised in class discussion. For some classes, I will assign a specific topic or approach. For others the choice will be yours. Due dates by which the responses must be turned in are listed on the syllabus. Response papers are due on the day that the work you are writing about will be discussed. In most cases, you can choose the work and thus the day during the (usually) two-week period when you will be writing. Response papers are due at the beginning of the class period. Please number and date your response papers.

Discussion questions: In addition to the response papers you will also be asked to bring a thoughtful discussion question to class at least twice during the semester. Each class period,
two students will present their questions based on the assigned works for that day. This assignment will help us to bring your questions and concerns to the center of class. You are expected to bring your questions and concerns to every class, but these questions should be particularly designed to stimulate discussion about the issues in which you are interested. I will post your assigned days before the second week of class begins. Please make sure to bring your question to class in writing. When possible, please email your question to me prior to class.

Papers:
In addition to the above, you will be writing two analytical papers for the class. The first paper will be 5-6 pages, and the last will be a research paper of eight to ten pages. Topics for your papers will develop from issues we have discussed in class. The research paper is designed to give you the opportunity to delve more deeply into a topic we have studied that is of great interest to you and inspires you. I encourage you to develop research topics that allow you to connect what we have been studying to your concentration or major if it will be productive for you to do so. You might choose a topic by thinking about how the ideas we've studied in this course add a new dimension to, or way of thinking about, issues that are central to your concentration. A prospectus for this paper will be due in early November, and we will have individual conferences to discuss your topics and ways to research them. There are many ways to conduct research for this paper. These might include: reading additional primary texts from the period, reading works by historians or literary critics, or viewing additional films or other visual works, etc. Many of you will find that a combination of the above will be most useful.

Please keep in mind that all written work must be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides.

Grades are based on the quality of all written work (response papers and papers) as well as class participation (which includes your discussion questions). The following is a rough breakdown of how much each category is worth. If your work gets stronger as the course progresses, I will weigh your later work more heavily. (Attendance and Participation: 30%; Response Papers: 25%; Papers: 45%).

Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon.

Plagiarism: As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website [www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html] for a full description of the academic integrity policy.

Do not plagiarize. If you take an idea or more than two or three words directly from any source (including the Internet), you must cite the source in a footnote. If you are not sure if
you are plagiarizing, please ask me. Similarly, if you are unsure how to complete an assignment, come talk to me.

Required Texts:
All texts should be available at the NYU bookstore and at Shakespeare & Co. (716 Broadway.) In addition to the texts listed below, I will be distributing additional materials. Films will be on reserve at the Avery Fisher Center at Bobst Library.


2) Amitav Ghosh, *In an Antique Land*.

3) Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*

   (You must purchase this edition of *Oroonoko*, as we will be reading additional materials in it.)
**Course Schedule:** *(Schedule May Be Subject to Changes)*

**Week 1:** Introduction and Foundations  
Sept. 4:  
--Syllabus and Introduction  
Sept 6:  
----Turn in sheet on your interests in relation to the course.  
--Writing assignment: What are the connotations of the terms “globe” and “globalization”? How is a globalized world different from a world that is not globalized? What enables globalization or is necessary to it? What are some of the possible advantages or benefits of globalization? What are some of the problems that globalization produces?  
--After your complete the above, read the short excerpts on blackboard. How do these early modern authors envision their world as globalized? How do they engage with the issues you wrote about? How does their early modern global consciousness seem different from, or similar to, our contemporary one?

**Week 2:** Foundations (Continued)/ Becoming Global Through Travel, Exploration, and “Discovery”  
Sept 11:  
--Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History* (Excerpt from the Introduction)  
--Singh, *A Companion to the Global Renaissance* (Excerpt from the Introduction)  
--Brotton, “A Global Renaissance,” and “Brave New Worlds”  
--Loomba, “Outsiders in Shakespeare’s England”  
Come to class prepared to discuss the major issues these texts raise. What information or ideas in these essays came as a surprise to you, or particularly sparked your interest?  
Sept. 13: Seeing the (New) World(s)  
--*The Travels of Marco Polo* (excerpts on The Glory of Kinsay and The Island of Chipangu)  
--*Indography*: Harris, “Introduction: Forms of Indography”; and Singh, “Afterword: Naming and Un-Naming ‘all the Indies’: How India Became Hindustan”  
--*Christopher Columbus and the Enterprise of the Indies* (excerpts from travel logs)  
**First Response Paper Due**

**Week 3:** Becoming Global Through Travel, Exploration, and “Discovery” (Continued)  
Sept. 18: Traveling the Globe: Accounts of Circumnavigation  
-- William Sherman, “Stirrings and Searchings”  
--Hakluyt, “Voyage of Francis Drake About the Whole Globe” (1577)  
-- Hakluyt, “Voyage of Thomas Cavendish Round the Whole Earth” (1588)  
Sept. 20: “Heroic” Explorations
---Hakluyt, “Discovery of the large, rich, and beautiful Empire of Guiana... by Sir Walter Raleigh” (1595)
---Camões, The Lusiad, Opening Invocation, King Manuel’s Dream and Ganges’ Prophecy, and Canto 5 (1572; Vasco da Gama’s voyage to India in 1497-8)

Week 4:
Sept. 25: Colliding Worlds
---Taylor, “Hamlet in Africa 1607”
---Pietz, “The Problem of the Fetish II: The Origin of the Fetish”
Sept 27: From Encounter to Conquest: Global Dominations
---De Bry, Visual Images of the New World

Second Response Paper Due

Week 5: From Encounter to Conquest: Global Dominations (Continued)
Oct 2:
---Shakespeare, The Tempest (Acts 1-3)
Oct 4:
---Finish The Tempest

Week 6: Recounting and Debating The Conquest
Oct. 9: The Tempest and its Futures
---Brathwaite, “Caliban”
---Césaire, A Tempest (excerpts)
Oct 11: Debating The Conquest
---“Spaniards Debate the Conquest and the Nature of the Americas 1547-1553”
---Las Casas, Tears of the Indians
---Montaigne, “On Cannibals”

Third Response Paper Due
(When this paper is returned you will receive a cumulative grade for the first three response papers.)

October 12: First Paper Due by noon

Week 7: Recounting the Conquest
Oct 16: FALL BREAK: NO CLASS
Oct. 18: Crossing Time and Space
---Bollaín, Tambien La Lluvia (Even the Rain) [Film available at AFC in Bobst]

Week 8: Circulations: Crossing Time and Space
Oct. 23:
---Ghosh, In An Antique Land: History in the Guise of a Traveler’s Tale
Oct. 25:
---Ghosh, In An Antique Land: History in the Guise of a Traveler's Tale

Fourth Response Paper Due
Week 9:
Oct. 30:
-- Ghosh, *In An Antique Land: History in the Guise of a Traveler’s Tale*
Nov. 1: The Global Economy and Environmental Transformations
--Flynn and Giraldez, “What did China Have to Do with American Silver?”
--Studnicki-Gizbert and Schechter, “The Environmental Dynamics of a Colonial Fuel-Rush: Silver Mining and Deforestation in New Spain, 1522 to 1810
--Mann, *1493: Uncovering the New World Columbus Created* (excerpt)

Week 10:
Nov. 6: The Global Economy and the Circulation of Knowledge
--Delbourgo, “Sir Hans Sloane’s Milk Chocolate and the Whole History of the Cacao”
Nov. 8: The Global Economy: Competition
--Fletcher, *The Island Princess*

Fifth Response Paper Due

Week 11:
Nov 13:
----Fletcher, *The Island Princess*
Nov. 15: Global Economy of Sugar: Production and Consumption
--Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*

Week 12: Sugar in the Global Economy: Ethnography and Historical Transformations
Nov. 20:
--Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*
--Ligon, *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados* (Excerpt)

Nov 22: THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS

Week 13: Slavery and Literary Experimentation
Nov. 27:
--Behn, *Oroonoko*

Epigraph (Final) Response Paper Due
Nov 29:
--Behn, *Oroonoko*

Week 14:
Dec. 4: Labor on the Sea
--Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* (excerpt)
Dec 6: Connected Histories

Friday December 7: Final Research Papers Due by Noon

Week 15:
Dec. 11: Day for the Unexpected
Dec. 13: Epigraph Discussions