English 290: Global Shakespeare

Section 1
TuTh 1-2:20; HH 139
Winter 2011

Prof. Ken Graham
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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30-12 and 2:30-3:30; Thursdays 11:30-12; or by appointment

Kim Hall, ed., *Othello: Text and Contexts* (Bedford / St. Martin’s)
William Shakespeare, *King Lear* (Pelican)
Djanet Sears, *Harlem Duet* (Scirocco)
Jane Smiley, *A Thousand Acres* (Anchor)
Akira Kurosawa, *Ran* (film)

English 290 Course Reader (available at the Bookstore; includes Derek Walcott, *A Branch of the Blue Nile*, and Murray Carlin, *Not Now, Sweet Desdemona*)

Aims of the Course
This class will introduce you to the study of contemporary international adaptations of Shakespeare. Through consideration of a variety of examples drawn from around the world, we will aim to improve our ability to meet the challenges and to enjoy the rewards of a global Shakespeare. We will try to understand the relationship between modern adaptation and Shakespearean source, focussing on the paradoxical process that turns the act of reading Shakespeare into an act of speaking.

Methods and Requirements
This class will operate largely as a seminar, with some lecture mixed in. We will read four Shakespeare plays together with modern adaptations of them, and we will write about and discuss what we read. Graded work comprises:

1) Class participation. I will expect you to attend conscientiously and to participate in an informed and productive manner. Quality is generally more important than quantity, but I am impressed by a willingness to go out on a limb. I am also as interested in the courtesy and respect with which you listen and respond to what others say as in the sharpness of your own perceptions. Attendance and punctuality count. The occasional informal writing assignment may
also count here. It is your responsibility to inform me promptly of the reasons for an absence if you wish it to be excused. **Weight = 10%**

2) **Response papers (10).** In these informal 2-page (~500-word) papers you will explore your response to a central thematic, formal, or theoretical question that interests you in your initial reading of each play. Your papers should be **focused** and should refer to **specific** words and actions in the text, but they need not argue or take a position. As with any written assignment, you must properly acknowledge all sources consulted. Half this mark is for being on time; the rest is for the focus, specificity, and quality of your response. **Weight = 20%**

3) A shorter essay, 1200-1500 words in length (typed, double-spaced). **Weight = 15%**

4) A longer essay, 1800-2100 words in length (typed, double-spaced). **Weight = 25%**

5) A closed-book final exam, essay-question format, two hours in length. **Weight = 30%**

**Class Schedule**

**Jan.**

4 Tu Introduction to the class
6 Th Bohannan, “Shakespeare in the Bush”
11 Tu *The Tempest*; **response paper #1**
13 Th *The Tempest*; George Will and Stephen Greenblatt, 110-15
18 Tu Césaire, *A Tempest*; **response paper #2**
20 Th Césaire, *A Tempest*
25 Tu *Othello*; **response paper #3**
27 Th *Othello*; Desdemomum: An Ethiopian Burlesque; Walcott, “Goats and Monkeys”

**Feb.**

1 Tu Carlin, *Not Now, Sweet Desdemona*; **response paper #4**
3 Th Sears, *Harlem Duet*; **response paper #5**
8 Tu Sears, *Harlem Duet*
10 Th *Antony and Cleopatra*; **response paper #6**
15 Tu *Antony and Cleopatra*; essay #1 due, 1:00 p.m.
17 Th Soyinka, “Shakespeare and the Living Dramatist”

21-25 **Winter Study Period**

**Mar.**

1 Tu *A Branch of the Blue Nile*, **response paper #7**
3 Th *A Branch of the Blue Nile*
8 Tu *King Lear*; **response paper #8**
10 Th *King Lear*
15 Tu Smiley, *A Thousand Acres*; **response paper #9**
17 Th Smiley, *A Thousand Acres*, “Shakespeare in Iceland”
22 Tu Kurosawa, *Ran*
24 Th Kurosawa, *Ran*
29 Tu Kurosawa, *Ran*; **response paper #10**
31 Th Conclusions; essay #2 due, 1:00 p.m.

**Final Exam TBA** (The Winter semester final exam period is April 8-21.)
Class and University Policies

Although in rare cases an electronic submission may show that an assignment has been completed (e.g. a late essay completed on a Saturday), you must turn in a paper copy of all written assignments to receive credit. Late essays will be accepted without penalty only if prior permission has been granted. Otherwise, the penalty will be 2% per day, including weekends. Late assignments should be turned in either directly to me or to the English Department’s drop box on the second floor of Hagey Hall. Missed exams may be made up only with a valid medical excuse.

I will normally reply to email messages within 24 hours, weekends excepted. In the case of emails requiring lengthy replies, I may indicate to you that you should see me in person.

Laptop computers and other portable electronic devices can become distractions and so may not normally be used in class. E-book readers with limited connectivity may be used only if I grant permission.

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Academic Integrity: in order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm. Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm. When in doubt please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance. Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm. Academic Integrity website (Arts): http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html Academic Integrity Office (UW): http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/

All sources of information that you use in your written work in this class must be cited fully and scrupulously. If I suspect that you have committed an academic offense, including plagiarism, I will report it to the Associate Dean; if the offense is confirmed, the normal result is a failing grade and academic probation.
Essay Assignment #1
Choose a scene from Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* that Césaire rewrites in *A Tempest*. Carefully compare the revision to the original, noting what has been changed and what has not. Then write an essay in which you make an argument about Césaire’s purpose in rewriting this scene, using as evidence the changes he has made (or not made) to Shakespeare’s scene. Your essay should be 1200-1500 words long (12-point Times New Roman type, double-spaced, one-inch margins) and follow a consistent documentation format (e.g. MLA, Chicago). It must argue a clear thesis, and it must take the form of a unified and well-structured defence of that thesis. It will be judged on the strength and originality of its thesis, on the quality, clarity, and coherence of its supporting arguments, and on the felicity and correctness of its expression. Late essays will be accepted without penalty only if prior permission has been granted. Otherwise, the penalty will be 2% per day, including weekends.

You do not need to consult secondary sources to write this essay, and doing so could hinder your creativity. If you do make use of such sources, however, be sure that they do not control or determine your argument; rather, your critical engagement with them, whether it takes the form of agreement or disagreement, must serve to advance, and must be clearly subordinate to, your own original thesis. Also be sure to cite all use of such sources fully and scrupulously.

DUE DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 1:00 p.m.

Essay Assignment #2
Choose one of *Not Now, Sweet Desdemona*, *Harlem Duet*, *A Branch of the Blue Nile*, and *A Thousand Acres*. Write an essay exploring the relationship between this text and the principal Shakespearean play to which it responds. Make an argument about this relationship. Your essay should be 1800-2100 words long (12-point Times New Roman type, double-spaced, one-inch margins) and follow a consistent documentation format (e.g. MLA, Chicago). It must argue a clear thesis, and it must take the form of a unified and well-structured defence of that thesis. It will be judged on the strength and originality of its thesis, on the quality, clarity, and coherence of its supporting arguments, and on the felicity and correctness of its expression. Late essays will be accepted without penalty only if prior permission has been granted. Otherwise, the penalty will be 2% per day, including weekends.

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DUE DATE: MARCH 31, 1:00 p.m.