In his collection of essays, *The World, The Text, and the Critic* (1983), the literary critic Edward Said argues:

> The point is that texts have ways of existing that even in their most rarefied form are always enmeshed in circumstance, time, place, and society — in short, they are in the world, and hence worldly. Whether a text is preserved or put aside for a period, whether it is on a library shelf or not, whether it is considered dangerous or not: these matters have to do with a text’s being in the world, which is a more complicated matter than the private process of reading. The same implications are undoubtedly true of critics in their capacities as readers and writers in the world.

This class explores the “worldliness” of the literary text: that is, the ways in which literature is always anchored in narratives of history and geography, as well as the means through which we, as readers and writers, bring our own worldviews to bear on literature. How do literary texts shape our perspectives of the world? Specifically, what is our relationship to literature from the “Third World”? How does globalization (as a political and cultural phenomenon) impact the production of “world literature,” and its consumption in the U.S. academy? The class will survey a range of twentieth-century literary texts from South Asia, South Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Europe and North America in order to introduce a variety of critical approaches towards contemporary global literatures.

**Primary Texts:**
Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*
Ghassan Kanafani, *Men in the Sun*
Zakes Mda, *Heart of Redness*
V.S. Naipaul, *The Enigma of Arrival*
VS. Naipaul, *Literary Occasions*
Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things*
Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*