“This enormous Babel of a place” is how Scottish writer Thomas Carlyle described London to his brother in 1824, and today about one-third of the UK’s 9 million migrants reside there. This course invites students to engage virtually with multicultural London as a literary mecca for migrants and immigrants, especially those who came from former imperial colonies to seek a new life in the metropolitan capital. Each student will be trained to use the archivist’s digital tools—mapping, timelines, annotation, etc.—to compile an online archive/portfolio on a research topic of their interest. We will be visited frequently by guest speakers involved with immigrant writers and populations in London, and look forward to discussing with them their scholarship and practice.

We will start in the early 19th century, in the course of which the population of London increased from one million to seven million, largely due to migration from rural areas. We’ll follow displaced persons into the Victorian period by reading E. Barrett-Browning’s verse-novel Aurora Leigh and Dickens’ Oliver Twist, as well as “condition-of-England” writing by Mayhew and Booth. In the 1920s, writers such as T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf assessed the traumatic impact of world war on the erstwhile imperial capital, and the course will conclude by reading poetry, fiction and films by immigrants (and their descendants) from former colonial territories in South Asia, the Caribbean, and Africa, and--mostly recently – EU countries such as Poland. This London-focused course is designed for students seeking to explore the global dimensions of literary London.

SYLLABUS: [Required Course books available at Labyrinth Books]

Week 1

Week 2
2/9 Tuesday. Wordsworth: “Tintern Abbey,” (1798); The Prelude, Book VII, “Residence in London” (1805) 2/11 Thursday. Barbauld, “Eighteen Hundred and Eleven” (1812); Keats, “To One Who has Been Long in City Pent,” (1816); Byron, Don Juan XI-XII (1823)

Week 3

Week 4
Week 5

3/1 Monday. PROJECT #1A or #1B: all posts must be up on blog by 6pm (in your time zone).

Week 6

   Visit from Dr. Nadia Valman, Prof. of Urban Literature, Queen Mary, Univ. of London

Week 7

3/16 NO CLASS

Week 8

3/25 Thursday. Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* pp. 93-194 (from “Indeed it was—”)
   Visit from Mr. Kolbassia Haoussou, Activist and Filmmaker

Week 9

4/1 Thursday. McQueen, *Small Axe* (2020)

Week 10

4/5 Monday. PROJECT #2—Text and Context. Post by 6pm (in your time zone).
4/8 Thursday. Evaristo, *The Emperor’s Babe* pp.128-253
   Visit from Ms. Zrinka Bralo, Migrants Organise

Week 11

   Visit from Ms. Julie Begum, Community Activist
4/15 Thursday. Ali, *Brick Lane*

Week 12

   Visit from Mr. Nikesh Shukla, novelist, screenwriter, podcaster
4/22 Thursday. Smith, *NW*

Week 13

   Monday 4/23 PROJECT #3 — Author Portfolio, Components 1-4.
   Post by 6pm (in your time zone).
4/27 Presentations and Reflections
   May 5 (DEAN’S DATE): Project #3—Author Portfolio, Component 5.
   Post on course blog by 6pm EASTERN TIME.
Course Requirements:

There are 3 graded PROJECTS, and you will also be assessed on the basis of class participation. **NB:** Please post them to the course blog on or before the deadline. (Detailed project guidelines will be provided.) Except for the Dean's Date deadline (6pm ET), all deadline times apply to your time zone.

**PROJECT #1. Mapping London. (25%)**
Please choose EITHER 1A or 1B. Write three (3) posts of 350-500 words each for the course blog. You may post any time up to and including the due date.

1A. **Romantic London.** Due 3/1/21 by 6pm.

OR 1B. **London Low Life.** Due 3/1/21 by 6pm.

**PROJECT #2. Text and Context. (25%)**
Due 4/5/21 by 6pm. 750-1000 words, in addition to the text analyzed.

**PROJECT #3. Author Portfolio. (40%)**
Components 1-4 can be posted any time up to and including 4/23/21 by 6pm.
Component 5—the essay (1500-2000 words)—must be posted by Weds. May 5 (Dean’s Date) by 6pm EASTERN TIME.

**Seminar Participation (10%),** including occasional posts and comments.

**Background reading (optional):**

2.2.21