

# IS322: Global Modernisms (Spring 2024)

Seminar Leaders: James Harker, Anastassia Kostrioukova, Laura Scuriatti

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Times: Tue & Thurs 10:45-12:15 OR 14:00-15:30

Modernism is generally thought of as a period characterized in literature and art by radical experimentation, by the invention and re-invention of new forms, and by an aesthetic that privileged the present, the modern, the new. As such, it also reacted to and reflected on the process of modernization and different notions of modernity. Modernism was, in fact, a complex constellation of phenomena that saw close interaction among the arts, literature, politics, philosophy, science and economics, and that questioned the most basic categories of aesthetic, political and philosophical thought. The course will focus on three related topics, which will be investigated in relation to each other through a variety of philosophical and theoretical texts, literature, artworks and architecture from across the globe: 1) theories of modernism, modernity and modernization; 2) the role played by cities as increasingly dominant cultural centers, hegemonic forces and subject matter of modernist literature and the arts; 3) the increasing expansion of industry, colonization and global commerce, with a particular focus on literary responses to the perceived dehumanization brought about by technological advancement, bureaucracy and exploitation of the environment.

## Requirements

### Course texts

Students are expected to own or borrow three course texts. Other texts will be uploaded to Brightspace, the course's learning management system.

**The syllabus on Brightspace will be the official, updated version for this course.**

The library owns a few copies of the course texts, which can be consulted or borrowed by students. A reserve shelf with relevant texts and suggested readings will be available for study and research connected to the course.

Please make sure you buy or borrow the following texts:

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

Mulk Raj Anand, *Untouchable*

Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*

### Attendance

Attendance is mandatory, and active participation in discussions will be an essential part of the course. Participation consists in contributing productively to class discussion in a respectful manner,

and in demonstrating a sound knowledge of the texts assigned. Readings should be done in advance of the class for which they are assigned. Participation also requires coming to class with the relevant texts and seminar materials.

To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin may not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

### Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

### Assessment

Students will be assessed on the basis of regular participation and on the basis of written and oral assignments (listed below).

**All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.**

#### Assignments

- Midterm quiz: 1000 words
- Padlet posts: 1000 words in total (ongoing) - calculated as part of the participation grade
- Two response papers: 1000 words each; each paper responds to an assigned text, due the night before class on the day on which the text is assigned. Sign-up in advance.
- Final presentation: 1000 words (the presentation notes should be handed in to the instructor after the presentation and will be evaluated together with the presentation.)

### Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Assignments that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept assignments that are more than 24 hours late. If an instructor agrees to accept a late assignment, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

### Grade Breakdown

Participation (including posts on Padlets):	30%
Midterm quiz:	20%
Response papers (combined):	30%
Final presentation:	20%

## Schedule

### Week 1: Modernity, Modernism, Modernization

Tuesday, January 30

Special Joint Session in the Lecture Hall (12:30-13:30)

Thursday, February 1

Reading:

Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903); Robert Musil, *The Man without Qualities* (excerpts); Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* (excerpts), Sigmund Freud, "A Note Upon The 'Mystic Writing Pad'" (1925), Viktor Shklovsky (excerpts)

### Week 2: Foundational Texts and Modernist Manifestos

Tuesday, February 6

Reading:

Continued discussion of Simmel, Musil, Benjamin, Freud, Schklovsky

Thursday, February 8

Reading:

Marinetti, F.T. "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" (1909); Mina Loy, "Feminist Manifesto" (1914); Tristan Tzara, "Dada Manifesto" (1918); Normil G. Sylvain, "La Revue Indigène: Program" (1927); Ahmet Haşim, "Some Thoughts about Poetry" (1921)

### Week 3: Modernist Manifestos

Tuesday, February 13

Reading:

Oswald de Andrade, "The Cannibalist Manifesto" (1928); Joaquin Torres-Garcia, "Art-Evolution" (1917)

Thursday, February 15

Reading:

Victoria Ocampo, "Woman and Her Expression" (selection, 1935); Lu Xun, "Some Thoughts on Our New Literature" (1929); Mulk Raj Anand, "Manifesto of the Indian Progressive Writers' Association" (1936).

#### Week 4: Modernist Poetry

Tuesday, February 20

Reading:

Poems by Charles Baudelaire, Marianne Moore, William Carlos Williams, Vladimir Maiakovsky, Alexander Blok, Anna Akhmatova, and/or Marina Tsevtavaeva

Thursday, February 22

Reading:

Poems by Mina Loy, Rabindranath Tagore, Eugenio Montale.

Extra reading:

Calligrammes, words in freedom and modernist poetry, typography, concrete poetry.

**Padlet Assignment #1**

#### Week 5: Critical Perspectives on Global Modernism, *Mrs. Dalloway*

Tuesday, February 27

**Special Joint Session in the Lecture Hall (12:30-13:30)**

Reading:

Moody, Alys and J. Ross Stephen "Introduction" in *Global Modernists on Modernism: An Anthology* (2020). (Focus on pp. 1-8)

Susan Stanford Friedman, *Planetary Modernisms. Provocations on Modernity Across Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018) (Focus on pp. 167-178)

Warwick Research Collective, "World-Literature in the Context of Combined and Uneven Development" (2015) (Focus on pp. 10-15)

Thursday, February 29

Lecture by James Harker (meet in Lecture Hall at your regularly scheduled time)

Reading:

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (pages 1-55 [Oxford World's classics]/1-70 [Penguin]/1-64 [Harcourt]/ until "It was over. He went away that night. He never saw her again")

Week 6: *Mrs. Dalloway*

Tuesday, March 5

Reading:

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (up to p. 128 [Oxford Classics]/165 [Penguin]/151 [Harcourt]/until "So that was Dr. Holmes")

Thursday, March 7

Reading:

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (to the end)

**Week 7: Mrs. Dalloway and Quiz**

Tuesday, March 12

Final Discussion of *Mrs. Dalloway*

**Padlet Assignment #2**

Thursday, March 14

In-class Quiz

**Week 8: *Untouchable*, Mulk Raj Anand**

Tuesday, March 19

Reading:

Mulk Raj Anand, *Untouchable*, pp. 1-73

Chaudhuri, Supriya, "Modernisms in India", in *The Oxford Handbook of Modernisms*, ed. Peter Brooker, Andrzej Gąsiorek, Deborah Longworth, and Andrew Thacker (Oxford: OUP, 2010)

Thursday, March 21

Reading:

Mulk Raj Anand, *Untouchable*, pp. 73-end

Spring Break

**Week 9: The Problem of Tradition**

Tuesday, April 2

Reading:

Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, "Modern Arabic Literature and the West," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 2 (1971): 76-91; T.S Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent (1919)," in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 955-61; Jorge Luis Borges, "The Argentine Writer and Tradition" (1951)

Thursday, April 4

Continued Discussion of Jabra, Eliot, Borges

**Padlet Assignment #3**

**Week 10: Guest Lecture and Caribbean Modernism**

Tuesday, April 9

Guest Lecture

Thursday, April 11

Lecture by Laura Scuriatti on the Windrush Generation (meet in Lecture Hall of your regularly scheduled time)

**Week 11: *The Lonely Londoners*, Sam Selvon**

Tuesday, April 16

Reading:  
Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* - pp. 1-75 (Penguin edition)

Thursday, April 18

Reading:  
Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* - pp. 76-end (Penguin edition)

**Week 12: Modernism and Film**

Tuesday, April 23

Discussion of *Man With a Movie Camera* (Vertov 1929)

Thursday, April 25

Reading:  
Excerpts from *Film Form*, Sergei Eisenstein

**Padlet Assignment #4**

Saturday, April 27

Class trip to the Hufeisensiedlung, time and meeting location TBA

Reading:

Texts on Bauhaus and international modernism

**Week 13: Final Presentations**

Tuesday, April 30

Class rescheduled for Berlin Social Housing Site Visit

Padlet Assignment #5

Thursday, May 2

Final Presentations

**Week 14: Final Presentations**

Tuesday, May 7

Final Presentations

Thursday, May 9 (Federal Holiday)