

EN123-30 Modern World Literature

24/25

Department

English and Comparative Literary Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

Michael Niblett

Credit value

30

Module duration

23 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

To introduce students to the defining concerns, historical contexts, and formal features of modern world literatures from 1789 to the present, with a focus on the question of cultural and literary modernity. The module also forms a foundation for the global requirement at level 6.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

To introduce students to the defining concerns, historical contexts, and formal features of modern world literatures from 1789 to the present, with a focus on the question of cultural and literary modernity. The module also forms a foundation for the global requirement at level 6.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

TERM 1

1. Introduction: Modernity, Manifestoes and the Module

Unit I (1789-1848): Enlightenment, Revolution, Romanticism

2. Johann von Goethe, *Faust Part 1*, trans. David Luke (*Oxford World's Classics)
3. Olaudah Equiano, *Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, African* (Dover Thrift)
4. William Blake, "Auguries of Innocence"; Percy Shelley, "Ode to the West Wind" and "The Mask of Anarchy"; Alexander Pushkin, "The Bronze Horseman" [handout]
5. Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* [1818 Text] (Norton Critical Editions)

Unit II (1848-1914): Modernity, Capital, Empire

7. Charles Baudelaire, "I. Beauty, Fashion and Happiness," "II. Manners and Modes," "III. An Artist, Man of the World, Man of Crowds and Child," "IV. Modernity," "IX. The Dandy," from "The Painter of Modern Life"; "The Swan" from *Fleurs du Mal*; "The Eyes of the Poor," "Lost Halo," "Bash the Poor!" from *Paris Spleen*; Arthur Rimbaud, "The Drunken Boat" [handout]
8. Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll's House* (four major plays, Oxford World's Classics)
9. Natsume Soseki, *Kokoro* trans. Meredith McKinney (Penguin Classics)
10. Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (Penguin Popular or Penguin Classics)

TERM 2

Unit III (1914-1945): Modernisms and World War

1. Rabindranath Tagore, *Home and the World* (Penguin Classics)
2. Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*, trans. Samuel Beckett [handout]; T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (Dover Thrift)
3. Katharine Anne Porter, *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* (Penguin Classics) (covering title story only)
4. Bertolt Brecht, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, trans. John Willett (Methuen)

Unit IV (1945-1989): Cold War, Decolonisation & the Long Boom

7. Samuel Beckett, *Endgame* (Faber)
8. Clarice Lispector, *The Hour of the Star* (Penguin)
9. Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a return to the Native Land*; Frank O'Hara, "Ode: Salute to the French Negro Poets" and "The Day Lady Died"; Elizabeth Bishop, "Questions of Travel"; Kamau Brathwaite, "Letter Sycorax" [handout]
10. Bessie Head, *A Question of Power* (Heinemann)

TERM 3

Unit V (1990-present): Contemporary World Literatures

1. Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis* (Vintage)
2. A work of contemporary world literature chosen by MWL tutors for their individual seminars; group presentations of these works to the module take place during the final session of the year

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- To discuss a work of literature in relation to questions of modernity, the dynamics of innovation and tradition, and the role of social, cultural, and international formations in

shaping the context of literary production. To participate in discussions and exercises regarding the role of literature in relation to other media, questions of institutional authority and contemporary cultural debates. To give students the necessary knowledge to make informed choices at level 5 and 6 with regard to world literature and modern literature.

Indicative reading list

(*Asterisks mark particularly useful general sources)

- Albright, Daniel. *Untwisting the Serpent: Modernism in Music, Literature, and Other Arts*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1999.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. ed. London and New York: Verso, 2006.
- Beaumont, Matthew, ed. *Adventures in Realism*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007.
- Baudelaire, Charles. *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*. Trans. Jonathan Mayne. London: Phaidon, 1995.
- Benjamin, Walter. *The Writer of Modern Life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2006.
- *Berman, Marshall. *All that is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982.
- Brantlinger, Patrick. *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1990.
- Brooker, Peter et al., eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Modernisms*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010.
- *Casanova, Pascale. *The World Republic of Letters*. Trans. M. B. Debevoise. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2005.
- Connell, Liam and Nicky Marsh, eds. *Literature and Globalization: A Reader*. London: Routledge, 2010.
- *Damrosch, David. *What is World Literature?* Princeton: Princeton UP, 2003.
- D'haen, Theo, César Domínguez and Mads Rosendahl Thomsen, eds. *World Literature: A Reader*. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Doyle, Laura and Laura Winkiel, eds. *Geomodernisms: Race, Modernism, Modernity*. Bloomington: Indiana University P, 2005.
- Everdell, William R. *The First Moderns: Profiles in the Origins of Twentieth-Century Thought*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998.
- Gilroy, Paul. *Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. London and New York: Verso, 1993.
- Harootunian, Harry. *History's Disquiet: Modernity, Cultural Practice, and Everyday Life*. New York: Columbia UP, 2002.
- *Harvey, David. *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. *The Age of Revolution: Europe, 1789-1848*. London: Abacus, 1988.
- , *The Age of Capital, 1848-1875*. London: Abacus, 1989.
- , *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914*. London: Abacus, 1989.
- , *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991*. London: Abacus, 1995.
- James, C. L. R. *Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*. London: Penguin, 2001.
- Kolocotroni, Vassiliki, Jane A. Goldman and Olga Taxidou, eds. *Modernism: An Anthology of Sources and Documents*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1998.

- Lazarus, Neil, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004.
- Levenson, Michael, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999.
- *Löwy, Michael and Robert Sayre. *Romanticism against the Tide of Modernity*. Durham: Duke UP, 2001.
- Lyon, Janet. *Manifestoes: Provocations of the Modern*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1999.
- *Moretti, Franco. *Modern Epic: The World-System from Goethe to Márquez*. Trans. Quintin Hoare. London and New York: Verso, 1996.
- *—. "Conjectures on World Literature." *New Left Review* 1 (January-February 2000): 54-68.
- *—, ed. *The Novel*. Vols. 1 and 2. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2006.
- Nicholls, Peter. *Modernisms: A Literary Guide*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.
- Puchner, Martin. *Poetry of the Revolution: Marx, Manifestos, and the Avant-Gardes*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2005.
- Rainey, Lawrence. *Modernism: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005.
- *Ramazani, Jahan. *Transnational Poetics*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2009.
- Rothenberg, Jerome and Jeffrey C. Robinson, eds. *Poems for the Millennium: The University of California Book of Romantic and Postromantic Poetry*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2009.
- Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. 1993. New York and London: Vintage, 2007.
- *Warwick Research Collective (WReC). *Combined and Uneven Development: Towards a New Theory of World-Literature*. Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2015.
- Williams, Raymond. *Culture and Society, 1780-1950*. Rev. ed. New York and London: Columbia UP, 1983.
- . *The Politics of Modernism*. Reprint. London and New York: Verso, 2007.
- *—. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Reprint. London: Fontana Press, 2010.
- Wollaeger, Mark, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Global Modernisms*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012.

Subject specific skills

Grasp some of the defining concerns, historical contexts, and characteristic formal features of modern world literatures from 1789 to the present

Transferable skills

Discuss a particular work of literature in relation to questions of modernity, the dynamics of formal innovation and tradition, and the role of social, cultural and (inter)national formations in shaping the context of literary production

Write a close reading analysis of a particular passage from a work of modern literature; compile an annotated bibliography on a topic in preparation for writing an essay; research a text outside the syllabus for comparative purposes; prepare a presentation on a work or movement of modern literature

Engage in discussions and exercises regarding the role of literature in relation to questions of contemporary media, institutional authority, aesthetic distinctiveness, and sociocultural impact
Prepare to make module choices in modern and world literature at level 5 and 6; prepare for the global requirement module at level 6.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	22 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Seminars	21 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Private study	257 hours (86%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Reading & research.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A9

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessed Essay 1 1 x 2500 word essay	50%		Yes (extension)
Assessed Essay 2 1 x 2500 word essay	50%		Yes (extension)

Feedback on assessment

Electronic feedback via Tabula; consultation and advice from seminar tutors.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 1 of UFRA-QR3A Undergraduate English and French
- Year 1 of UHPA-QR34 Undergraduate English and Hispanic Studies
- Year 1 of UPHA-VQ72 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of UENA-Q300 Undergraduate English Literature
- Year 1 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- Year 1 of UPHA-VQ72 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature

This module is Core option list A for:

- Year 1 of ULNA-QR37 Undergraduate English and German
- Year 1 of ULNA-QR38 Undergraduate English and Italian

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 1 of USOA-L301 BA in Sociology