

Course Name: British Literature in the Twentieth-Century

Credit: 3

Instructor: Yi-Chuang E. Lin

Course Description: Twentieth-Century has seen a flourishing development in new writing styles and genre innovations in response to an age of unprecedented changes. The magnitude of the cultural upheavals during the first half of the century is of a “cataclysmic” level. How to register or even better to transcend the *zeitgeist* that comprises both hope as well as despair and generally much dominated by the market forces becomes the quintessential task of the twentieth-century writers. In the first half of the century, the so-called “high modernist” writers, still holding onto a certain utopian vision, seek to conserve a high culture that is threatened by both science and the bourgeois culture of capitalism. And yet, the aesthetic (and metaphysical) idealism continues to clash with material reality. To bring forth their idea, they realize the problematic nature of language itself or, as John Barth has put it, the general means of literature. Therefore, there’s this continuous experiment with language and the method of writing that persists throughout the twentieth century, from modernism to postmodernism. In this course, we will peruse writers from Ezra Pound, W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, George Orwell, Samuel Beckett to Martin Amis, Doris Lessing, Salman Rushdie.

Required Reading:

T. E. Hulme, *Romanticism and Classicism*
Ezra Pound, *In a Station of the Metro*
W. B. Yeats, *Sailing to Byzantium*
T. S. Eliot, *The Love Songs of J. Alfred Prufrock*
James Joyce, *The Dead*
Virginia Woolf, *Kew Gardens*
D. H. Lawrence, *The Fox*
W. H. Auden, *The Shield of Achilles*
Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*
Doris Lessing, *To Room Nineteen*
Martin Amis, *Time’s Arrow*
Salman Rushdie, *East, West*

Grading: Class Participation and Contribution 20%

Midterm paper 30%, Final paper 30%, Quiz 20%

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction (Terry Eagleton, Criticism and Ideology)

Week 2: T. E. Hulme, Romanticism and Classicism

Week 3: Pound and Yeats

Week 4: T. S. Eliot, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*

W. H. Auden, *The Shield of Achilles*

Week 5: James Joyce, *The Dead*

Week 6: James Joyce, *The Dead*

Week 7: Virginia Woolf, *Kew Gardens*

Week 8: D. H. Lawrence, *The Fox*

Week 9: D. H. Lawrence, *The Fox*

Midterm Paper Due

Week 10: Doris Lessing, *To Room Nineteen*

Week 11: Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*

Week 12: Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*

Week 13: Martin Amis, *Time's Arrow*

Week 14: Martin Amis, *Time's Arrow*

Week 15: Salman Rushdie, *East, West*

Week 16: Rushdie, Ishiguro, and Naipaul

Final Paper Due