

E680: Ed Comentale
G625: William Rasch

TENTATIVE (as of 4/29/08)

A Colder Modernism: Connections in British and German Modernism

This course will track the evolution of a provocative, if often overlooked counter-modernist tendency within early twentieth-century thought and culture. Rather than look to traditional milieus of Paris or New York, we will study Anglo-German crossovers and collaborations and thus outline the origins of an equally committed, yet more thoroughly critical modernist practice and its continued value for contemporary critical theory. We will consider the ways in which dissident British and German moderns pursued radical theories of aesthetic and political form to confront not only the material changes and attendant social structures brought on by modernization, but also the aesthetic values and practices of their more celebrated contemporaries. In addition to art and literary movement such as Decadence, Primitivism, Imagism, Vorticism, Expressionism, Surrealism, and Bauhaus, we will consider a range of issues pertinent to modernist studies today: nationhood, gender, translation, historicism, humanism and anti-humanism, cultural relativism, technology, cultural transmission, aesthetic politics, etc. Authors will include Friedrich Nietzsche, Ludwig Wittgenstein, T.E. Hulme, H.D., Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, D. H. Lawrence, Robert Musil, Bertolt Brecht, Mina Loy, Carl Schmitt, Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, Georges Sorel

Students will be required to complete either two conference-length papers (10-12 pages each) or one longer seminar paper (20-25 pages).

The course will be co-taught by Professors Ed Comentale (English) and William Rasch (Germanic Studies)

Course Books:

Wittgenstein – *Tractatus*

Pound – *Personae*

Lawrence – *Women in Love*

Lewis – *Art of Being Ruled*

Brecht – *Threepenny Opera; Measures Taken*

Musil – *Five Women; Precision and Soul*

Schmitt – *Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*

Course Schedule:

S. 1: M: Labor Day

W: Nietzsche: “On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense”

S. 8 M: Nietzsche: *The Genealogy of Morality* (short selection)

Wittgenstein: *Tractatus* (Numbered items: 1; 2.04 – 2.06; 2.1 – 2.141; 2.172; 3.262; 4 – 4.0312; 4.12 – 4.122; 5.6 – 5.641; 6.4 – 7)

W: Hofmannsthal: “A Letter” (aka: “The Lord Chandos Letter”)

Eliot: “The Metaphysical Poets”

- S. 15 M: Worringer: *Abstraction and Empathy* (chp. 1)
 Hulme: “Cinders”; “Romanticism and Classicism”
 “Humanism and the Religious Attitude”
 W: *Blast* (Lewis, et al)
- S. 22 M: Ezra Pound: *Personae*
 Nietzsche: (short selection on philology)
 W: Ezra Pound: *Personae*
 H.D.: Selections
- S. 29 M: Lewis: *Tarr*
 W: “ “
- O. 6 M: Lewis: *Tarr*
 W: “ “
- O. 13 M: Musil: “Perfecting of a Love”
 W: Expressionism
 Pinthus: “Dawn of Humanity”
 Poetry by Benn, Trakl
 Hamburger: “1912”
- O. 20 M: Musil: “Tonka”
 W: New Sobriety:
 Musil: “Toward a New Aesthetic”
 Poetry by Brecht
 Weimar Republic reportage
- O. 27 M: Brecht: *The Threepenny Opera*
 W: Musil: “On Stupidity”
- N. 3 M: Nietzsche: *The Genealogy of Morality* (short selection)
 Sorel: *Reflections on Violence* (selections)
 W: Walter Benjamin: “Critique of Violence”
- N. 10 M: Wyndham Lewis: *Art of Being Ruled* (selections)
 W: “ “
- N. 17 M: Carl Schmitt: *Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*
 W: Brecht: *Measures Taken*
- N. 24 M: Modern Times
 Kracauer: “The Mass Ornament,” Weimar Republic reportage
 Jacob Epstein – “The Rock-Drill”
 W: **Thanksgiving Break**

- D. 1 M: Mina Loy: *Lost Lunar Baedeker* (selections)
W: Weimar era reportage
Musil: "Woman Yesterday and Tomorrow"
- D. 8 M: Art and Architecture I: Lewis, Omega Workshop
W: Art and Architecture II: Bauhaus
Paintings: Grosz, Dix, others
Photographs: Sander, Heartfield, Hoch