

Instructor: Hyo Kyung Woo (hkwoo@ntu.edu.sg)
Class Schedule: Mon. 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (LT26)
Office Location: HSS 04-45
Office Hours: Mon. 14:00-16:00 (or by appointment)

Spring 2018
HL8027 Visions of the Modern: An Interdisciplinary Approach

Course Description

This course will introduce students to the contexts of literary and film texts in the late nineteenth to twentieth-century. This course will focus on the rise and implementation of mass technology and science, which affects all aspects of our modern life. Because the concept of modernity lies at the heart of contemporary understanding of global history, this course is designed to navigate the different forms of modernity both in the West and the East, and ultimately aims to challenge the Euro-centric perspective on singular modernity. We will begin with six weeks on the Western (European/American) modernities, before turning to the nexus of Non-Western modernities. Students will study how rapid industrial and technological changes affect modern living and how literature responds to and is driven by these changes. The course will include short stories, novels, films, and poetry.

** I reserve the right to alter the syllabus at any point before or during the semester.*

Learning Objects

1. Introduction to the intellectual and cultural contexts of modernities through artistic works of late nineteenth to twentieth century literature.
2. Examination and discussion of a sample of literary and film texts and their responses to the phenomenon of mass technology and mechanization.
3. Examination and discussion of the different trajectories of modernities in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Books to Purchase (Other readings will be uploaded at NTUlearn.)

Tayeb Salih, *Season of Migration to the North*. NYRB Classics, 2009.

Course Outline (*Recommended)

Week 1: Introductions: What is Modernity? When is Modern?

Charles Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life" (1863)

Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography* (1907) (excerpt)

*Marshall Berman, "All That Is Solid Melts into Air"

*Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire"

Week 2: Industrial Age and Modern Times

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Communist Manifesto" (1848)

Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854) (excerpt)

Film in Class: Charlie Chaplin's Modern Times (1936)

Week 3: Empire and the Modern World

Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden" (1899)

Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (1987) excerpt

*Hubert Harrison, "The Black Man's Burden: A Response to Kipling"

*Peter Hamilton, "The Enlightenment and the Birth of Social Science"

Week 4: City and Modern Consciousness

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (excerpt)

Park Tae-won, "One Day of Novelist Mr. Gubo" in *On the Eve of the Uprising and Other Stories from Colonial Korea*

Week 5: Money, Love, and Technology in Modern Life

F. Scott Fitzgerald, "My Last Flappers," "May Day" in *Tales of the Jazz Age*

Film in Class: The Great Gatsby (2013)

Week 6: Gender and Modernity: Modern Girl and City (1)

Stephen Crane, "Maggie: A Girl of the Streets" (1893)

Week 7: Gender and Modernity: Modern Girl and Technology (2)

Na Hye-Seok, "Kyenghee" (1918) in *Questioning Minds: Short Stories by Modern Korean Writers*

Mina Loy, "Feminist Manifesto" (1914) <https://oncomouse.github.io/loy/feminist.html>

Film in Class: The World of Suzie Wong (1960)

Week 8: Modernity and its Discontent (1): Asian Modernity

Takeuchi Yoshimi, "What Is Modernity?" (1910)

Lu Xun, *The True Story of Ah Q*.

*S.N. Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities"

Week 9: Modernity and its Discontent (2): Caribbean Modernity

Derek Walcott, "A Far Cry from Africa"; "After The Storm," "Forest of Europe," "A City Death by Fire," "Love After Love," "The Sea is History," "Midsummer Tobago"

*Dipesh Chakrabarty, from *Provincializing Europe*

*Gregor McLennan, "The Enlightenment Project Revisited"

Week 10: Mobility and Modern Technology (1): Travelers and Tourism

Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place* (1988).

*Enrique Dussel, "World-System and Transmodernity"

Week 11: Mobility and Modern Technology (2): Migration

Tayeb Salih, *Season of Migration to the North*.

*Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*.

Week 12: Singaporean Modernity

Hock Chye, *The Art of Charlie Chan* (graphic novel)

*Aihwa Ong, from *Flexible Citizenship: The Culture Logics of Transnationality*

*Arjun Appadurai, from *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (1996)

Week 13: Conclusion: Visions of the Modern

Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*

Student Assessment

Students will be assessed by:

- a. Final 2-hour written examination (50%)
- b. Mid-term Paper (30%)
 - 1) Essay Proposal (5%)
 - 2) Essay (25%)
- c. Group Project Presentation (10%)
- d. Quiz (10%)

*Students cannot make up for quizzes without official documentation for the absence.

*Late submission is not permitted, and the letter grade will be lowered by a third. (Ex. B+ -> B)

*Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in automatic failure on the assignment.

*Students must bring assigned readings each week (either course packet or book) to class.