

English 543: 20th Century British Fiction
“Modernism and Empire”
MW 11:30-1:18, Denney Hall 214
Winter 2007

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Course Description

*“Things fall apart; the center cannot hold,
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world...”*

W.B. Yeats, “The Second Coming”

Between the late 1800s and the 1940s, things in Europe were indeed falling apart. Industrialization, colonization, world wars, and revolutions instigated an intense upheaval in society and corresponded, in turn, to a shift in the way Europeans thought about society. “Modernism” is the name given to a diffuse grouping of European art that broke sharply with the dominant conventions of nineteenth-century art during this period.

This course will study race, empire, and British writing within and around the modernist period, taking up both canonical authors and less famous figures. How did being an imperial superpower impact British writing of the early 20th century? What notions of self and nation (Englishness in relation to Irishness, Africanness, Indianness) emerged amidst two brutal world wars and crumbling colonial regimes? How did the radical aesthetics of modernism – highlighting fragmented subjects and narratives – reveal and shape such ideas?

Required Texts – available at SBX bookstore (1806 N. High Street)

Mulk Raj Anand, *Untouchable*

Joseph Conrad and Rudyard Kipling, *Heart of Darkness*, *The Man Who Would be King*, and
Other Works on Empire

James Joyce, *Dubliners*

Sean O’Casey, *Three Dublin Plays*

George Orwell, *Burmese Days*

Other course readings will be posted on Carmen or handed out in class.

Course Web Page(s) and Email:

Log on at www.carmen.osu.edu for

- Interactive Syllabus
- Articles marked “C” on the syllabus
- Dropbox for turning in papers

- Discussion threads for journal entries

Go to my personal webpage: <http://people.cohums.ohio-state.edu/jani4/> for

- links to the broader literary and political context of class material
- links to world and alternative media
- information about campus news and events

Note: Important and personal messages requiring a response from me should be sent to jani.4@osu.edu. Please keep the discussion on Carmen focused on themes and questions of general interest to the class.

Course Requirements

Class Participation	15%
Carmen (10 entries)	10%
Paper #1 (3-4 pages)	20%
Paper #2 (5-6 pages)	25%
Paper #3 (7-8 pages)	30%

Grading

- **Class Participation:** Engaged, active participation in the class will be crucial to your grade. This includes, but is not limited to: arriving to class on time, bringing in the texts we're reading that day, being alert during lecture and discussion, raising questions and comments in the discussion period. Multiple absences, as described below, can detract from your participation grade.
- **Carmen:** To receive the full 10% of the grade, you must post at least 10, paragraph-length entries to the discussion threads on Carmen. These may be anything from general observations on the reading to close readings of passages to comments about issues raised in the class but not discussed fully. You may either initiate a new thread or respond to others' comments. Balancing original comments and responses, of course, will help develop online interaction.
- **Papers:** The courses' three papers make up 75% of your grade. Assignments will be posted on Carmen through the quarter, as I tailor my questions to the interests and abilities of the class. Papers for this class should be formal and analytical, seeking to develop interpretations of the texts we are studying in class; please leave informal observations for the Carmen discussion board. I expect papers to always include a "Works Cited" page and to employ standard MLA format. **Papers should be left in the Carmen dropbox by the deadline.** If you have questions about any of this, please ask for help: come by to my office hours, use the writing center (see http://cstw.osu.edu/writing_center/) for individual discussion of your ideas and projects, or at least drop me a line. I will attempt to return papers as quickly as possible so you can get feedback on how you're doing in the course.

Course Policies

- **Absences:** More than 2 absences from class will harm your participation grade, with a loss of 1/3 of a grade for each day lost. Emergencies should be reported to me as soon as possible, and may require documentation from the University.

- Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own: it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. All cases of suspected plagiarism, in accordance with university rules, will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.
- Help with Disabilities: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. We will coordinate something with the Office for Disability Services, located in 150 Pomerene Hall, which offers services for students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS at 2-3307.

Course Outline

Introduction: Modernism and Empire

- W Jan 3 Imperialism and Britain in 1900
Rudyard Kipling, “White Man’s Burden” (in class)
 - <http://www.boondocksnet.com/ai/kipling/kipling.html>Sixto Lopez, “The Filipinos Will Not ‘Take Up the White Man’s Burden’” (in class)
 - http://www.boondocksnet.com/ai/kipling/lopez_wmb.htmlPears Soap advertisement--
http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/whc/3.1/images/gilbert_fig01b.jpg
Further Reading: Various responses to the “White Man’s Burden” (from www.boondocksnet.com)

- M Jan 8 Themes and Styles of Modernism
 - Virginia Woolf, “Modern Fiction” (C)
 - Woolf, “Street Haunting” (C)

Empire and the (White) Self - I

- W Jan 10 Conrad’s Narrative Style
 - Josef Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* -- Part I (page 160)
- M Jan 15 **MLK Day – NO CLASS**
- W Jan 17 The Horror
 - Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* -- complete the text
- Th Jan 18 **DUE: Paper #1** -- MSWord attachment to Carmen dropbox, 9am
- M Jan 22-W Jan 24 Coppola, *Apocalypse Now*

Nations, Wars, Artists

- M Jan 29 Nations as Imagined Communities
 - Benedict Anderson, preface to *Imagined Communities*:
<http://www.nationalismproject.org/what.htm>
 - Selected Poetry from World War I, from “An Introduction to World War I Poetry”: <http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ltg/projects/jtap/tutorials/intro/>
- W Jan 31 The Colonized Intellectual
 - W. B. Yeats, “The Lake Isle of Innisfree”
 - <http://www.bartleby.com/103/44.html>
 - Yeats, “Easter 1916”
 - <http://www.litfix.co.uk/yeats/part110.html>
 - Edward Said, “Yeats and Decolonization” (C)

Ireland and Empire

- M Feb 5 James Joyce, from *Dubliners*
- W Feb 7 Joyce, from *Dubliners*

M Feb 12 Sean O'Casey, from *Three Dublin Plays*
W Feb 14 O'Casey, from *Three Dublin Plays*
Th Feb 15 **DUE: Paper #2** -- MSWord attachment to Carmen dropbox, 9am

Empire and the (White) Self - II

M Feb 19 George Orwell, *Burmese Days*
W Feb 21 Orwell, *Burmese Days*

M Feb 26 Orwell, *Burmese Days*
W Feb 28 Orwell, *Burmese Days*

Third World Modernism

M Mar 5 Mulk Raj Anand, *Untouchable*
W Mar 7 Anand, *Untouchable*

M Mar 12 **DUE: Paper #3**, as MS Word attachment in Carmen dropbox by 5pm