ANG1033: TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERATURES IN ENGLISH

Hiver 2018: Friday 8:30-11:30
Room Z-255 Pav. Claire-McNicoll
Zen Shweiry, PhD candidate
zein.shweiry@umontreal.ca
Office & office hours: C-8119 Pav. Lionel Groulx/ Friday @ 12

The objective of this course is to explore a range of 20th Century Literature conditioned under three major features. The first defining feature is a historic one: the emergence of new nations out of European colonial rule. The texts chosen to reflect this feature will be based on African and Postcolonial novels that are characterized with literary attempts that portray violent cultural struggles in colonial and postcolonial times. The second feature is the subject of global wars that unleashed death, loss, and suffering on an unprecedented scale. How did writers, playwrights, and poets treat such occasions? We will be looking at the British novel, War poetry, and at the Theatre of the Absurd to understand how these literary reactions were expressed. Finally, the third feature entails avant-garde experimental innovations in poetic aesthetics. This feature will examine an American modernist and postmodernist perspective of poetry that stretches across a century of technique innovations in the need to create “new” 20th Century writing aesthetics.

TEXTS:
Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness
Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart
Virginia Woolf, To The Lighthouse
Samuel Beckett, Waiting for Godot
Harold Pinter, The Dumb Waiter

*All poems selected can be found online
COURSE POLICIES:

1- **Attendance** is crucial and participation is graded! (10%) Make sure not to miss class and please do the required readings before class.

2- **Plagiarism** of any kind will not be tolerated. You have to be familiar with MLA style in order to cite properly your sources in your essays and final papers. Please check the university’s policies regarding academic integrity [here](http://integrite.umontreal.ca/reglementation/officiels.html)

3- **Assignments and grading**: Other than your required weekly readings, you will be responsible for 2 Quizzes (15% & 25% respectively) based on your primary reading material. You will also be responsible for a poetry workshop (10%) in the last week of the semester and a final Exam (40%).

SCHEDULE:

**Week 1 (12 Jan)**: Introduction to course and to the first feature of 20th C. Literature

**Week 2 (19 Jan)**: *Heart of Darkness* (by Joseph Conrad)
- Movie adaptation: F.F. Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now*
- Discussion of art form (Novella & Film)

**Week 3 (26 Jan)**: *Things Fall Apart* (Achebe)
- “The Novelist as Teacher” (Achebe)
- **Extra Reading**: “Chinua Achebe: A Tribute” (Chapter 14 of *African Literature: An Anthology of Theory & Criticism*, 2007)

**Week 4 (2 Feb)**: **Quiz I (15%)** + introduction to the 2nd feature and its effect on Modernism (Handout) + Sigfried Sassoon’s war poem: “Christ & the Soldier” & Philip Larkin’s “MCMXIV”

**Week 5 (9 Feb)**: Virginia Woolf’s *To The Lighthouse*
- “Thoughts of Peace in an Air Raid” (Woolf), “Spaces of Time: Virginia Woolf’s Life-Writing” (Elizabeth Abel)

**Week 6 (16 Feb)**: Theatre of the Absurd (Handout) + *Waiting for Godot* (Samuel Beckett)
- “A Desperate Comedy: Hope and Alienation in Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot”” (Alan Scott)
**Week 7** (23 Feb): *The Dumb Waiter* (Harold Pinter)

**Week 8** (2 Mar): **Quiz II** (25%) + introduction to the 3rd feature and American poetry

**Week 9** (9 Mar): *Early Modern* with Amy Lowell and William Carlos Williams
- “September, 1918”, “St. Louis”, “Venus Transiens”

**Week 10** (16 Mar): Robert Frost: “Mending Wall”, “The Road Not Taken”, “Stopping by Woods on A Snowy Evening”, “Fire and Ice”.

- “Tradition and the Individual Talent”

**Week 12** (30 Mar): The Beat generation and postmodern poetry
- Allen Ginsberg: “Howl” (part I)

**Week 13** (6 Apr): Selections by other Beats (Creeley, Snyder, Di Prima, Guest)

**Week 14** (13 Apr): Poetry workshop (Visual meets Auditory) (10%)

**Week 14** (20 Apr): + **Final Exam** (40%) [TBA]