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  ENGLISH 539A:

Exilic Modernisms

Term 2 Winter 2022

**(This quotation was chosen by Edward Said as the epigraph to the original version of his essay “Reflections on Exile” as it appeared in Harper’s Magazine in 1984 under the title “The Mind of Winter: Reflections on life in exile” and the images were illustrations in the original essay.**

### Land Acknowledgement

The Department of English Language and Literatures at UBC Vancouver is on the unsurrendered traditional territories of the Musqueam people; our departmental offices are located on ?əlqsən, called Point Grey in English, a promontory claimed by the British as a Colonial Admiralty reserve in the mid-nineteenth century and occupied by the University of British Columbia since 1914.

This territory has been a site of learning for many generations before UBC stood here, and we recognize our obligations as teachers, researchers, scholars, and learners in ensuring that our classrooms and our work uphold the best of that longstanding learning context now and into the future.

We also recognize the myriad ways that English as a discipline has been informed, shaped, and challenged by both colonizing violence and decolonial commitment, and that these complexities continue to impact much of what we do in and beyond the classroom regardless of our areas of teaching and research focus. As a department, and as a community, we are working to do better, to think better, and to be a better place for faculty, staff, students, and community members to understand the profound power of language and literature to impact our lives and relationships in good as well as harmful ways.

We are committed not to simply acknowledge Musqueam territory, but to realize that acknowledgment in an active dedication to more just, more accountable relations.

We invite all members of our community to review the [Musqueam-UBC Memorandum of Affiliation](https://indigenous.ubc.ca/files/2011/01/UBC-Musqueam-MOA-signed1.pdf%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) to understand more about this important relationship, and to consider how we can all help realize the commitments in that document and in UBC’s renewed [Indigenous Strategic Plan.](https://indigenous.ubc.ca/indigenous-engagement/indigenous-strategic-plan/)

### Course Information

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| **Official Course Title** | **Course Code Number** | **Credit Value** |
| Studies in the Twentieth Century | ENGL 539A: 001 | 3 credits |

### Contact INFO

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| **Course Instructor(s)** | **Contact Details** | **Office Location** | **Office Hours** |
| Prof. Judith Paltin | judith.paltin@ubc.ca | BUTO 502 | M 1-2, W 1-2, and by appointment, in-person or via video chat in a Zoom meeting room:https://ubc.zoom.us/j/7635718208?pwd=dXJ3VHdycUp2c2s5MWQ1QTFEcnU1dz09 |

### Course Structure and vital information

This course meets on Mondays from 9:30 am-12:20 pm Pacific Time (Vancouver’s time zone) in BUTO 321 on UBC Vancouver campus, and also synchronously online in the course Zoom meeting room supplied on Canvas. The Zoom meeting option for attendance is intended to support your learning when you choose not to attend in person, such as when UBC’s COVID-19 Campus Rules advise you not to attend on campus because you may be infectious. Attending on Zoom counts as full-credit attendance. Those learning in person may also choose to join the Zoom meeting in order to benefit from the chat function. The Canvas discussion forum and zoom meeting room are backup and fully active alternative venues for course learning and participation during any events such as snow days, pandemic recurrence, or other emergencies that may arise around meeting in person.

Class methods are student presentation- and discussion-based, supplemented by brief periods of lecture, when I judge that will be helpful. As this kind of active student learning relies heavily on your collective contributions, I encourage you to prepare to speak at least once in every class meeting, and weekly online in the discussion forum.

**Course description**: This course looks especially but not exclusively to the revolutionary and radical lefts of modernism, including avant-garde, queer, anti-racist, anti-colonial, socialist, and feminist writers, in order to understand the relationship of modernist literary practice to modernist commitments, and whether or what in modernism is antagonistic to fascism, as well as to what new politics were being generated, if any.

1. How did feminists and other politically marginalized figures of the avant-garde evolve politically and artistically through the decades between and after the world wars?
2. How were traditional major attachments such as to conventional ideations of the home and nation under pressure and becoming otherwise among exilic groups?
3. How did modernists correspond and produce expressive creative work critiquing the ideologies of the time and constructing/representing their identities as networked exilic public intellectuals?

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

LO 1.  Identify and explain fundamental concepts and arguments of critical and literary theory, focusing (though not exclusively) on writers that reflect anti-capitalist, decolonial, feminist, environmental, and critical race concerns, among other social, political, and economic issues.

LO 2.  Engage with the ways that theories and issues of concern interact with other theories and positions historically and in current scholarly conversations.

LO 3.  Identify and integrate into their own research appropriate research frameworks and methods, and critically evaluate the scholarly quality of research sources.

LO 4.  Evaluate and participate in lines of argument and critique relating to cultural change and theories about literature as a field by cultural theorists and stakeholders of diverse origins.

LO 5.  Recognize and appropriately utilize methods of English studies’ disciplinary modes of reading and criticism.

###  Learning Activities

In this course, you will read and analyze a range of writing on theory and criticism which will give you the opportunity to identify, define, compare, explain and discuss various aspects and issues of social, political, economic, and literary criticism, anticolonial praxis, gender/sexuality and cultural theory, and historical materials. Our activities include close readings and analysis, periods of lecture providing contextual and background information, library and media research, theoretical discussions, discussions of controversies and issues, and writing activities.

Reading critical theory is not intrinsically different from other kinds of reading, although the norms and conventional moves may be unfamiliar. If you meet a term you don’t know, please ask about it in class, via email, or on the Canvas discussion forum. Some terms are not easily defined, because they are a kind of shorthand for a lengthy set of historical academic discussions, so you may need to be patient in order to acquire that knowledge. It is helpful and effective to take notes and to form questions while you are reading and to bring notes and queries to class meetings. How you read is important. Select a quiet place, if possible, and try to read a chosen amount without interruption.

During class meetings, you should listen to each other carefully, and think about the matter at hand as you take notes, adding your own ideas and connections where you can. I welcome a conversational style during class meetings, with interaction among all of us. If I am talking, feel free to intervene with questions and contributions. Your own curious and imaginative contributions are always welcome in class, as long as you are not talking over other people, failing to share class time fairly, or taking the class too far away from the day’s assigned topics for an extended period. Barring that, please explore your venturesome public intellectual self!

### Learning Materials

Please see the schedule of readings for required texts.

Most of the course materials will be supplied as pdfs under the doctrine of fair dealing, or as a physical course reserve, or presented via UBC-paid subscription to students at no charge on Canvas, in the LOCR, or via URL links to online open-access or UBC-subsidized subscription to web-based materials. Physical course reserves (materials in print form) have a time limit to help everyone who wishes to access the materials to receive the opportunity. The copy on reserve may not be the only one available to you through library resources… if the text you want is checked out, do see if it is available in a different edition, a collected volume, or in some other form.

### Schedule of Readings and assignments

The reading schedule shows you which readings we will be discussing each day. You are always welcome to bring in other examples, literary, historical, mediatic, or otherwise, that may shed light on our discussions. The reading schedule may change if in my opinion the class would benefit from slowing down, or readings become unavailable, or for other reasons. Please have the assigned texts available to refer to during class.

January 9 (Monday): Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile” (available on LOCR and in welcome announcement). Wallace Stevens, “The Snow Man” (supplied in class or easily Googled). Hannah Arendt, Part II, Imperialism, Ch. 9 II. “Perplexities of the Rights of Man” in The

Origins of Totalitarianism (1958) (via LOCR and welcome announcement). Other poems or short texts may be supplied in class (this and any other week).

January 16: Joseph Conrad, “Amy Foster,” “The Secret Sharer.” Rebecca Walkowitz, “Conrad’s Naturalness” (in *Cosmopolitan Style : Modernism Beyond the Nation*, Columbia UP, 2006). Homi Bhabha, “Introduction,” “DissemiNation” (in *The Location of Culture*).

January 23: Nella Larsen, *Passing.* James Baldwin, “On Being White…And Other Lies.” Paul Gilroy, "Without the Consolation of Tears": Richard Wright, France, and the Ambivalence of Community”(*The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Verso, 1993, pp. 146-86).

January 30: Sam Selvon, *Lonely Londoners.* Karl Marx, “Estranged Labour,” “The Commodity.” Fredric Jameson, “Realism and Desire: Balzac and the Problem of the Subject” (in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*).

February 6: Jean Rhys. *Voyage in the Dark.* Daniel Zalewski, “The Vagabonds” (in *The New Yorker*, March 26, 2007). Susan Stanford Friedman, “Diasporic Modernisms” in *Planetary Modernisms*.

February 13: James Joyce, “Proteus,” “Cyclops,” ”Penelope” (in *Ulysses*), *FInnegans Wake* 1.8. Frantz Fanon, “On National Culture” (in *The Wretched of the Earth*).

February 20-24: **Reading Week (midterm break); no class.**

February 27: I.B. Singer, “Gimpel the Fool,” “Two.” Excerpt from André Schwarz-Bart, *The Last of the Just*, pp. 1-21.  Eve Sedgwick, “paranoid reading and reparative reading, or, you’re so paranoid, you probably think this essay is about you” (in *Touching Feeling*, Duke UP, 2002)*.*

March 6: Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood*. Walter Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator,” “The Storyteller.” Rosi Braidotti, “By Way of Nomadism” (in *Nomadic Subjects*)*.*

March 13: Miné Okubo, *Citizen 13660*. Giorgio Agamben, “The Camp as Biopolitical Paradigm of the Modern” (in *Homo Sacer)*.

March 20: Sean O’Casey “The Plough and the Stars,” Frank O’Connor, “Guests of the Nation.” Declan Kiberd, “Revolution and War” (in *Inventing Ireland*).

March 27: Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*. Ehrhard Bahr, “A ‘True Modernist’: Arnold Schoenberg” (in *Weimar on the Pacific*, U California P, 2007).

April 3: Samuel Beckett, *The Unnamable*. Alain Badiou, “Sequel S8 Beckett: The Uncovering of the Covering-Over of an Infinity” (in *The Immanence of Truths*, Bloomsbury, 2022).

April 10: **Easter Monday stat holiday; no class**

### Assessments of Learning

Requirements consist of course contributions, four response paragraphs, a presentation, and an analytical essay.

10% Contributions to Class Learning. This is a holistic assessment of your course engagement and activity outside the major assignments, including listening and interacting in class, participating in learning activities such as in-class discussions, reading and replying to discussion posts, asking questions or otherwise contributing to class learning. [LO1, LO2, LO4, LO5]

20% Four critical response paragraphs. These are intended to act as preparation for the week’s class and to be submitted before attending class in the week the reading is assigned; out of our 12 meetings, you will choose which four you wish to address with a response. In your response you will read closely and incisively explain a significant passage, a concept, a critical position on a specific question, or course-related theoretical matter of interest to you within 500 words (maximum). [LO2, LO3, LO4]

20% Presentation. In this assignment, you will present and lead a few minutes of class discussion on an assigned reading of the day. Usually, a presentation includes background and contextual information about a work, or some information about its reception and influence; it sometimes might offer an original reading, though that is not required. Your presentation should include a handout or powerpoint which summarizes the issues of your presentation, lists key points, and offers one or two specific examples. [LO1, LO2, LO4, LO5]

50% An analytical essay of at least 3000 words. This essay assignment includes a library research component (using professional-level peer-reviewed secondary sources) and an analysis component. The analysis component includes producing an analytical thesis, close readings, and an incisive interpretation of course-assigned texts. {LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5]

### University Policies

The following statement is composed by and mandated to appear in the syllabus by the UBC Academic Senate in support of [**Senate Policy V-130**](https://senate.ubc.ca/sites/senate.ubc.ca/files/downloads/Policy-20190207-V-130-Syllabus.pdf)**.**

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are availableon[**the UBC Senate website**](https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success)**.**

### Other Course Policies

Our classroom space, even when virtual, is intended to be warmly welcoming, enriching, and respectful in all its interactions. I request that you kindly self-monitor your own contributions for civility, including off-topic phone or computer use. Your thoughtful and engaged participation affects other people’s experience and enhances your own impact and learning.

Readings, discussions, and class materials may reference mature themes, violence, sexual matters, or conflictual ideas (this is a “content warning”). If you feel you do not wish to read one of the assigned texts because it may emotionally distress you, please see me well in advance of the assigned reading’s due date to request a substitute reading assignment; if we cannot agree on an appropriate substitution, you may be obliged to follow the original schedule of readings to complete the course.

Study at university-level is more than knowing a collection of facts, and class participation is crucial to developing your academic skills at this level. I hope we can cooperate creatively together to find techniques and activities to make this course experience enriching, satisfying, and intellectually profitable to each of you. The Department of English webpage (under “Resources for Students”) details the English department’s agreed-upon marking and attendance standards for your reference: https://english.ubc.ca/resources/resources-for-students/#attendance.

The course adheres to the university’s strict rule against plagiarism. If you represent the words, productions or ideas of anyone else as your own, you become subject to the disciplinary processes of the university concerning plagiarism, and may face a disciplinary process. If you have any questions about what counts as plagiarism, please ask me before you submit the assignment.

Students may record course materials for personal study purposes only, and may not share any portion of their recordings or lecture notes with any other person not currently enrolled in the course nor upload them to any online platform.

### Learning Analytics

This course will be using the following learning technologies: Canvas. This tool captures data about your activity and provides information that can be used to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In this course, I plan to use analytics data to:

* View overall class progress
* Track your progress in order to provide you with personalized feedback
* Review statistics on course content being accessed to support improvements in the course
* Track participation in discussion forums
* Assess your participation in the course

### Learning and other support Resources

There is a student Writing Centre with coaching available in the Chapman Learning Commons in Barber: please see <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/tutoring-studying/writing/> for more information. Anyone with a documented disability is gently encouraged to contact the Access and Diversity Office in Brock Hall, 1203- 1874 East Mall (tel. 604.822.5844) for accommodations and support services. Other helpful programs are the academic services described at http://students.ubc.ca/success, and UBC Counselling Services tel. 604.822.3811 or, after hours, for anyone in distress, the Vancouver Crisis Line, tel. 800.784.2433. I am a resource person with UBC’s Positive Space Campaign. As its website announces, “the Positive Space Campaign is an initiative intended to help make UBC more receptive to and welcoming of its lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans\* (transgender, transsexual, trans-identified), two-spirit, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual (LGBT\*TQIA+) communities, individuals and issues of sexual and gender diversity on campus.” If you would like more information about this campaign, or to be put in touch with campus resources, please feel free to talk to me, or to contact the Office of Equity and Inclusion in Brock Hall, tel. 604-822-6353.

### Copyright

All original materials of this course (syllabus, recordings, course handouts, lecture slides, assessments, curation of course readings, etc.) are the intellectual property of the course instructor. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline.

*Finis.*