
PARIS ATTRACTION: MODERNIST EXPERIMENTS IN MIGRATION in Fall 2018 (ES3043)

Course Code	ES3043	Professor(s)	Geoffrey Gilbert
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G107
Class Schedule	MR: 09:00-10:20 in PV-1	Office Hours	Monday and Thursday, 14:00-15:00 and by appt
Credits	4	Email	ggilbert@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2018	Office Tel. Ext.	Better to email

Course Description

Modernist Experiments in Migration

Those of us who have come from elsewhere to live and work in Paris join a long and celebrated tradition. Writers and painters have found that leaving their homes to come to Paris has been variously liberating and alienating. We shall concentrate on a series of variously 'modernist' writers – Henry James, Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, James Baldwin, Djuna Barnes, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Jean Rhys – who came to Paris for very different reasons and stayed for very different lengths of time (we will also look at shorter works by other writers). For each, a period of exile in Paris was an important spur to their development of new formal techniques. To place their experiences, and their writings, in relation to another context, we shall contrast them with one more recent work by Mehdi Charef, who writes about the *beur* experience of exile from Algeria to France in the 1980s. As always, we shall make connections between these moments in the past, and questions and problems emerging in our world.

Accounts of modernism that situate it contextually - within the experience of urban modernity; in relation to scientific, political, and philosophical revolution - are in danger of forgetting about the mobilities of modernity; about the shifty interactions *between* contexts. These writers are best understood not in terms of where they are from nor even in terms of where they ended up, but in terms of the incomplete movement between liberation from one context and integration into a new one: they cease to be British or American or Algerian writers, but they don't become French or Parisian. This course will explore the hypothesis that three factors support personal and formal experiment. The first is the loosening of context that comes from leaving; a sense of liberation from the strictures of culture. The second is a palette of new experiences; a new world of forms which don't yet make a significant integrating demand on the writer. This space of formal possibility might be unbearably alienating – as it is in Charef's case, and perhaps also in Rilke's narrator's - without the presence of the third factor: the informal and often temporary social networks of other artistic, sexual, or political fugitives that these writers developed or relied upon. The individual experience of exile is thus supported and formalised by a tradition; and that tradition itself becomes one of the attractions of Paris.

The course will look at each of these elements - what was escaped in coming to Paris, what was experienced as new and strange, and the subcultures that sustained and made liveable the state of experimental exile - in order to build a structure of experience for each of the writers. We will then trace that structure as it operates within their writings, and as it bleeds beyond their works into the world that we inhabit, and the resources we draw upon it in our own experiments in migration, within our own modernity.

We will organise - once our schedules are clear - some excursions and some experiments of our own in the city.

Readings for the class are available from the AUP bookstore; they have revised their pricing policy so this is now a reasonable option. I do not require that you purchase your books there; however, I do ask that you use the prescribed editions, so that we can stay on the same page.

If you wish to read Mehdi Charef's novel in French, I would strongly encourage that ambition.

Further readings, including those marked on the course schedule with an asterisk, will be available on the course blackboard site.

NB - There are no formal prerequisites for this course; however, those students without very good reading and writing skills in English should expect to make exceptional – enjoyable, but exceptional – efforts if they wish to succeed in this course. I will do all I can to accommodate all serious and committed students – come talk to me if you are struggling.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students who complete this course successfully will have a good grasp of the specific characteristics of modernist writing
they should be able to analyse closely the details of literary texts in relation to historical contexts and appropriate theoretical frameworks
they should demonstrate the results of responsible and exuberant reflection on the cognitive elements of creativity

General Education

Course Outline

Draft schedule for the semester

This is to give you an idea about the rhythm of the written assignments and the pace of the readings. This is our class though, and we are not machines. If we invent other projects, and have better ideas, we will re-organise and re-invent the class.

Reading – you should have read and made notes on these readings (the whole of the novel) before the class, and come ready to discuss them. I'll specify particular passages for discussion before we meet.	Possible topics for discussion	Work to submit	Documents to circulate; further readings
Monday 10 September			
No preparatory reading	Introduction to the aims of the class, looking at the syllabus, finding out about each other		Readings for Monday 17 and Thursday 20 September; brief for short creative introduction
Thursday 13			
	Introduction – Migration, Modernism, Experiment	<i>Short creative introduction to you in Paris</i>	
<u>NB – Sunday September 16 is the last day to drop or add courses online</u>			
Monday 17			
Gwendolyn Bennet, 'Wedding Day' (circulated in class and by email)	Introduction, continued; Discussion of Gwendolyn Bennet's text	<i>Come see me in my office at some point this week to discuss and sign up for contextual presentations</i>	Guidelines for contextual presentations

Thursday 20			
Mary Butts 'From Altar Piece to Chimney Piece' (circulated in class and by email)	Discussion of Mary Butts's short story; brief and dull introduction to the class 'Blackboard' site.		
Monday 24			
Rilke	When we discuss Rilke, we will consider particular scenes, and our topics may include: writing and the fine arts, neurosis, exile, urban modernity, memory, and creativity.	<i>5-minute contextual presentations begin today, and continue throughout the semester; you should submit short written versions of these to Blackboard after the class</i>	Guidelines for communication 1
Thursday 27			
Rilke		<i>Post to Blackboard on Rilke by Wednesday 26 September at 12:00 mid-day.</i>	
Monday 1 October			
Kristeva* (and Rilke)	In order to enhance our reading of Rilke and other modernists, we will look at Bulgarian theorist Julia Kristeva's essay 'Tocatta and Fugue for the Foreigner', to understand what is at stake psychically in making the division between 'native' and 'foreigner'.		
Thursday 4			
Hemingway	When we read Hemingway we might discuss gender and modernism, the	<i>Post to Blackboard on Hemingway by Wednesday 3 October at 12:00 mid-day.</i>	

	perception of Parisians, relations between modernist writing and modes of movement in the modern city, the experience of intoxication, and the idea of Paris as a transitory experience		
Monday 8			
Hemingway		<i>Communication 1 due today</i>	
Thursday 11			
Certeau* (and Hemingway)	We'll thicken our reading of Hemingway and modernism by looking at a key article on 'walking in the city' by Michel de Certeau.		<i>Prompt for the mid-term essay will be distributed today</i>
Monday 15			
James	Henry James is an outlier for us (as a 19th century writer), but perhaps the most influential antecedent for modernists. As we discuss his novel, we might consider the mapping of US/Paris before modernism; the prose of late realism; the relations between art and capitalism, the tradition of the grand tour and the commodification of aesthetic experience (we might think more		<i>Prompt for the short creative city exploration exercise distributed today</i>

	generally about tourism through this), and ways in which distinctions between Catholicism and Protestantism play out in developing modernity.		
Thursday 18			
James			
Monday 22			
James (and Clifford*)	We'll add a third theoretical model to our arsenal, by looking at an important piece by anthropologist James Clifford, which aims to disturb the opposition between settled cultures and migrant persons.	<i>Mid-term paper due today</i>	
Thursday 25			
Hope Mirlees, <i>Paris*</i>	I wanted us to look at one great, under-read, modernist poem about Paris. We'll think about the relation between modernist prose and poetry, and about the elements of political life that Mirlees considers, and most of the other modernists ignore.		<i>Arrange viewing of Sylvain Georges's film; guidelines for final paper proposal circulated today</i>
<i>Mid-semester grades are posted, where necessary, by Friday 26 October</i>			
<u>Monday 29</u>			
Viewing of Sylvain Georges, <i>Paris est une fête</i> (2017)	What is at stake in representing Paris? Sylvain Georges's film – seeing Paris poetically through	<i>Post to Blackboard on Georges's film by Sunday 28 October at 12:00 mid-day.</i>	

	the eyes of a young foreign migrant – might help us design fresh ways of seeing the city we live in.		
<i>Fall break is from 31 October until 2 November, inclusive. There are no classes on these days</i>			
Monday 5 November			
Rhys	When we discuss Jean Rhys, we might think about gender, about mapping the city, about labour, about place and memory, and about the position of Paris within the complex emerging politics of 1930s Europe. The novel is also a very complex exercise in identificatory reading.	Final paper proposals due today.	<i>Guidelines for final paper and for communication 2</i>
Thursday 8 November			
Rhys			
<i>Friday 9 November is the last day to withdraw from a course, and the last day on which you can choose to take a course credit/no-credit</i>			
Monday 12 November			
Stein (and Rhys)	Stein's text offers complex counterpoint to Rhys, and a more extreme account of how formal experiment works		
Thursday 15 November			
Stein			
Monday 19 November			
Baldwin	Baldwin's great late-modernist novel opens up questions about the sexual	Communication 2 due today	Guidelines for the creative and documentary projects

	structure of flight from home, about the space of race within exile, about the libidinal mapping of the psyche onto the city. We might discuss the history of sexuality in Paris in the context of this novel		circulated today – we'll have individual conferences to discuss these projects and the progress of the final papers.
Thursday 22 November			
Baldwin			
Monday 26 November			
Charef	Do the experiments of the modernists have anything to say to other populations? We'll look in an open way at <i>Tea in the Harem</i> , one of the first 'beur' novels, and consider what the relationship might be between the argument we have been building and the experience of migrants whose movement is less free than that of the modernists.		
Thursday 29 November			
Charef			
Monday 3 December			
Barnes	We close the semester with Barnes's extraordinary baroque modernist text, which will allow us to think again about the shape of Paris, about desire	Final paper due today	

	and the city, about the body in movement, and about the ongoing relevance of creative experiment in a technologically shifting world, in which migration is still a key concern.		
Thursday 6 December			
Barnes			
Monday 10 December			
Barnes			
Monday 17 December	Final examination session, 08:30-11:00 – you will present your creative and documentary work		

Textbooks

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
Fiesta (The Sun Also Rises)	Hemingway	Vintage	9780099285038	Yes
Good Morning Midnight	Rhys	Penguin	9780141183930	Yes
Giovanni's Room	Baldwin	Penguin	9780141186351	Yes
The American	Henry James	Oxford	9780199555208	Yes
The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge	Rilke	Oxford	9780199646036	Yes
Nightwood	Barnes	Faber	9780571235285	Yes
Paris, France	Stein, Gertrude	Peter Owen	9780720614954	Yes
Tea in the Harem	Charef	Serpent's Tail	9781852421519	Yes

Attendance Policy

Class policy: I expect you to be present, on time, for all sessions, having done the reading, prepared to contribute actively to the work of the class. If there is good reason for you to have to miss class, I will be grateful if you can let me know in advance, but I do not excuse absences. I

will formally penalize excessive absence, or regular failure to participate.

I prefer that the class be a space without screens, so that we can share a focus while we are together. If you have good reason to need to use a screen in class, speak to me in advance.

Generally, this class is reasonably challenging in terms of quantity and difficulty of reading, and rather free in terms of how you make use of that reading. You will succeed if you work hard, take risks, and if you communicate any concerns you have as soon as possible.

University attendance policy: Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

Students will be evaluated on the basis of:

- Presence in class; timely completion of readings; active participation in class discussion; and imaginative and scrupulous completion of ungraded assignments, including the informal 'communications', the short contextual presentations, and the brief postings to blackboard (30%).

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- A mid-term paper, due on 19 October, will combine textual analysis with consideration of theoretical material (20%).
 - The final examination, on 20 December, will comprise the oral presentation of *either* a piece of documentary work, annotating, through the analytical gathering of contextual materials, a moment in one of the writers we study (further information will be given early in the semester), *or* a piece of creative work in the tradition we have been studying, with a brief commentary on how your creation relates to the themes discovered in the texts studied (20%).
 - The term paper – a minimum of 3000 words (under-length papers will be penalized), with no upper limit, although your professor becomes irritable and spiteful when bored – may should consist in more detailed study of the work of one of the writers studied in the course, and may include work on other approved authors (30%). The term paper is due on 3 December (I'll ask you to submit a proposal just after mid-semester, and we'll meet to discuss that soon afterwards). Papers submitted late may be rejected, and will certainly be penalized.

An **A** grade is reserved for exceptionally good work, which is elegantly written and presented, intellectually original or independent, unusually creative, and which demonstrates outstanding mastery of information and concepts. A **B** grade is awarded to recognize solid effort, good presentation, serious understanding of information and concepts. A **C** grade is given for acceptable work, which shows some comprehension and knowledge, and which is acceptably presented. A **D** grade is awarded for work that does not demonstrate adequate work, or which is poorly presented, or which shows that you have not understood the material to an appropriate level. An **F** grade will be given for work which is grossly inadequate, or when you have failed to complete a requirement, or if you miss an examination.

Plagiarized work and other forms of cheating will be failed and reported, and may result in a direct failing grade for the class.

Other
