

LS 801: Reflections on Reason and Passion II: The Making of the Modern

Spring 2021

Wednesdays, 6:30 - 9:20 PM

Sasha Colby, Instructor

Course outline:

While many have called “the new” the central aspect of modernism/modernity, others have argued that the invention of the modern was a massive recycling project as writers and artists scavenged older texts and images for signs of the future. This paradoxical chronology will be key to our study as we unearth and examine traces of Ancient Greece and China, Medieval England, Renaissance Italy, and traditional Igbo Africa in modernist works and seek to understand the nature of their transformation and re-emergence. In turn, we will consider how modernism’s radical renovation of the old created the conditions and challenges to traditional power structures associated with our own global postmodern moment. Consistently, we will use the lens of reason and passion to shape our study as we consider fundamental questions of where we have come from – and where we are going.

Required texts:

9780199536009 *Mrs. Dalloway* Woolf (Oxford)

019506167 *Antigone* Sophocles, Trans. Braun (Oxford)

0679722068 *Death in Venice* Mann (Vintage)

0140449744 *Phaedrus* Plato (Penguin)

0385667833 *Things Fall Apart* Achebe (Anchor)

0805202412 *Illuminations* Benjamin, Trans. Zhon (Shoken)

9780920079447 *The Rez Sisters* Highway (Fifth House)

9780140109627 *All that is Solid Melts into Air* Berman (Penguin)

0865478155 *Dear Elizabeth* Ruhl (Farrar)

0345434072 *The Analects* Confucius, Ames/Rosemont (Ballantine)

Online/Canvas:

Euripides, *The Bacchae*

Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues," "Notes of a Native Son"

Rossetti, "Goblin Market"

Morris, "Useful Work versus Useless Toil"

Adichie, "The Danger of the Single Story"

Clarke, "Privilege"

Didion, "Goodbye to All That"

Nietzsche, "On the Use and Abuse of History for Life"

Pound, "Papyrus," "The River Merchant's Wife, A Letter"

H.D. "Fragment 40"

Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society"

North, "The Making of 'Make it New'"

Marinetti, "The Futurist Manifesto"

Freud, "Civilization and Its Discontents"

Paintings by Picasso Maar, Rossetti, Millay, Kahlo

Assignments:

Reason and Presentation: 10%

First essay: 20%

Second Essay: 35%

Creative Re-telling: 20%

Participation through Zoom seminars and weekly letters: 15%