

B.A. Seminar
Transatlantic Modernism
Wed. 16.15-18.00
Prof. Elisabeth Bronfen

What is Modernism? What notion of innovation does the claim to be modern entail? What does this international art style respond to and what is it responding against? How does the claim to novelty on the part of artists who considered themselves to be modernists find itself reflected in the themes, the rhetorics as well as the style of the literary and cinematic texts they come to produce? And is there a difference between the American and the British version of Modernism, as they reflect on the great political, social and cultural changes that led to the first world war and marked the period of its aftermath.

(1.) 16 Sept Introduction

Dramas of Modern Life

(2.) 23 Sept – Sydney Lumet. *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1962)

(3.) 30 Sept – Charles Baudelaire. *The Painter of Modern Life* (1863)

(4.) 07 Oct – Henry James. "The Beast in the Jungle" (1903), "The Art of Fiction"* (1884)

(5.) 14 Oct – Edith Wharton. "Ethan Frome" (1911)

Reflections on War and Death

(6.) 21 Oct – Joseph Conrad. *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* (1897)

(7.) 28 Oct – William Faulkner. *As I Lay Dying* (1930); Sigmund Freud. "Zeitgemäßes über Krieg und Tod"* (1915)

(8.) 04 Nov – Ford Madox Ford. *The Good Soldier* (1915)

(9.) 11 Nov – Virginia Woolf. *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925)

(10.) 18 Nov – F. Scott Fitzgerald. *Tender is the Night* (1934)

Europe in Hollywood

(11.) 25 Nov – Frank Capra. *It Happened One Night* (1934)

(12.) 02 Dec – Edmund Goulding. *Grand Hotel* (1932)

(13.) 09 Dec – Mark Sandrich. *Top Hat* (1935)

(14.) 16 Dec – Charles Chaplin. *Modern Times* (1936)

Texts marked with an asterisk (*) will be made available as pdfs on Olat. Please buy your own copies both of all the other novels and short stories, as well as of the films.

Requirements for the class:

- All students must prepare **a one page preliminary discussion for each class**, to be posted on Olat (course forum) by Tuesday, 9 a.m. of the respective week. This can entail a thesis, a series of questions, comments or associations; it will facilitate class discussion and allow me to see in what directions you have been thinking while preparing for the class sessions. This will also count towards your class participation and, thus, is compulsory for each session (no more than two misses will be tolerated otherwise you will fail the seminar).
- In addition, all students must compile written minutes (*Sitzungsprotokolle*) for one of the class sessions (to be sent to my assistant Hannah Schoch hannah.schoch@es.uzh.ch one week after the respective session at the latest).
- Finally, students taking the class for 6 KP must write an essay, to be handed in by February 15, 2016. It is wise to use the class discussions to test your ideas for this written assignment.