Sop 206, PPCU, Autumn 2018

**English Literature at Mid-Century (1930s-1950s)**

BBLAN23300

Instructor: Mária Palla ([mariabj.palla@gmail.com](mailto:mariabj.palla@gmail.com))

**Course content:** The course focusses on English literature in the interim period between Modernism and Postmodernism by discussing various genres and trends that emerged from the 1930s to the end of the 1950s. Students will read and discuss seminal works from the era while learning about the cultural and historical context in which they were written.

**Schedule of classes:**

Sep 14, 15:45-17:15. English poetry in the 1930s and the 1940s: the Auden Generation and

Neo-Romanticism

W. H. Auden, “Musée des Beaux Arts” [www.magyarulbabelben.net/works/en/Auden%2C\_W.\_H.-1907/Mus%C3%A9e\_des\_Beaux\_Arts/hu/15244-Mus%C3%A9e\_des\_Beaux\_Arts](http://www.magyarulbabelben.net/works/en/Auden%2C_W._H.-1907/Mus%C3%A9e_des_Beaux_Arts/hu/15244-Mus%C3%A9e_des_Beaux_Arts)

W. H. Auden, “In Memory of W. B. Yeats”

[www.sas.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Auden\_InMemoryOfWBYeats.pdf](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Auden_InMemoryOfWBYeats.pdf)

Dylan Thomas, “Fern Hill”

[www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/fern-hill](http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/fern-hill)

Oct 12, 15:00-17:15. A novel of ideas: Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*

The poetry of the 1950s: The Movement

Philip Larkin, “Toads”

[www.poeticous.com/philip-larkin/toads](http://www.poeticous.com/philip-larkin/toads)

Philip Larkin, “The Whitsun Weddings”

[www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/48411/the-whitsun-weddings](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/48411/the-whitsun-weddings)

Nov 16, 15:00-17:15. The Angry Young Men

Alan Sillitoe, *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner*

John Osborne, *Look Back in Anger*

Dec 7, 15:45-17:15. The Theatre of the Absurd

Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*

**Required reading:**

The works listed above. It is the students’ responsibility to bring the literary texts with them to the classes.

**Recommended reading:**

Bradbury, Malcolm. *The Modern British Novel 1878-2001*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2001.

Innes, Christopher. *Modern British Drama 1890-1990*. Cambridge: CUP, 1992.

Perkins, David. *A History of Modern Poetry*. Vols I-II. Harvard, 1976.

Sanders, Andrew. *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*. Oxford: OUP, 2004.

**Assessment**:

1. attendance and participation 20%--only 1 absence is allowed during the semester

2. three quizzes (text recognition and contents): 30%

3. home essay 50%--to be handed in in a hard copy or sent by e-mail no later than Dec 9

**Topics to choose from:**

1. The Narrative Technique and Its Function

2. The Use and Function of the Setting

3. Interesting Speakers/Narrators

4. The Treatment of History, Myth and Legend

5. Heroes and Heroism

6. Society and the Individual

7. The Treatment of “Love”

8. The Treatment of “Marriage”

Length of essay: cc. 1500 words written in Times New Roman 12’ with 1.5 line spacing.

Students are required to give a title and develop an argument supported with quotations.

All primary and secondary sources (at least TWO of the latter) used must be documented in the MLA style (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01>)

Academic rules related to plagiarism will apply.

**Essays may be written on the works assigned or some additional ones such as**

AUDEN, W. H.

Five Songs, The Wanderer, Adolescence, Our Hunting Fathers, As I Walked Out One Evening,

In Memory of Sigmund Freud, Leap before You Look, Mundus et Infans, The Sea and the Mirror, In Praise of Limestone, The Shield of Achilles, A Lullaby

THOMAS, Dylan

And Death Shall Have No Dominion, The Hand That Signed the Paper, The Force That through

the Green Fuse Drives the Flower, When All My Five and Country Senses See, Twenty -Four

Years, Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night, In My Craft or Sullen Art, Poem on

His Birthday

LARKIN, Philip

Church Going, Faith Healing, The Trees, Going, Going, This Be the Verse, The Explosion,

Mr Bleaney, High Windows, Homage to a Government, Aubade

GOLDING, William

*Lord of the Flies*

AMIS, Kingsley

*Lucky Jim*

BECKETT, Samuel

*Endgame*

PINTER, Harold

*The Caretaker*

*The Dumb Waiter*

*The Birthday Party*