

# **Modern World Poetry and the Decolonization of Time (LTMO 145A)**

**Instructor: Tim Willcutts**

**Earth and Marine Sciences, B214, TuTh, 9am – 12:30pm**

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Office Hours: Stevenson 235, TuTh, 1:30 – 2:30pm

**\*\*This syllabus is subject to change\*\***

## **Course Description**

This course considers early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century poetry from Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, and the United States that challenges prevailing conceptions of time and the experience of time. Through close-readings of selected poems by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Mina Loy, César Vallejo, Vicente Huidobro, Gertrude Stein, and Aimé Césaire, we will explore ways in which time is political – not a neutral or self-evident dimension of life, but a mode of representation that can exclude, coerce, rationalize, destabilize, and perhaps liberate. We will ask how the formal resources of poetic language – its musicality and figural dynamism – make alternative expressions of time possible. The course covers a historical period that witnessed radically shifting accounts of temporality – the establishment of Greenwich standard time, the invention of the wireless telegraph, telephone, cinema, automobile, airplane, and wristwatch, Einstein’s theory of relativity, the feminist movement, and anti-colonial struggles, to name just a few technological, cultural, and political developments. While we will consider all these issues to some degree, we will pay special attention – beginning in weeks 2 and 3 – to the temporality of decolonization, how resistance to French colonialism, the legacy of Spanish colonialism, and neocolonial forces from the United States and Europe involved also a resistance to predominant modes of representing time. In this vein, we will direct our focus increasingly to the work of César Vallejo and Aimé Césaire as the course proceeds.

Manifestos and critical essays by each poet – along with essays by Clayton Eshleman, José Carlos Mariátegui, and Jean-Paul Sartre – will complement and orient our readings of the poetry. Students will turn in four 1-2 page weekly response papers, due every Thursday through the fourth week, and a final 5-7 page essay due on the last day of class. In week five, students will also briefly present their essay projects to the class.

**Required Text, available at the Literary Guillotine (204 Locust Street, Santa Cruz)**

1.) Course Reader

## **Grading**

Participation (including presentation of final essay project) – 30%

Four Weekly Response Papers (1 – 2 pages each) – 30%

Final Essay (5 – 7 pages) – 40%

**Attendance** – Because this is an accelerated summer class – an entire quarter in just 5 weeks – the attendance policy has to be especially strict. To be eligible for an A, you cannot miss more than one class, that is, one *excused* absence is acceptable, but no more. If you get sick or have a personal emergency and need to miss class, e-mail me before class begins. I am not allowed to ask for doctors' notes, and I will not excuse more than one absence this quarter. If you experience a prolonged illness or crisis, I recommend dropping or withdrawing from this course. If this is a particularly challenging time for you, please consider taking the class at a better time.

Missing more than 2 classes means missing more than 20% of the course, which is not acceptable. If you miss more than 2 classes, I will ask you to drop the course or withdraw. The deadline to drop the course is June 27<sup>th</sup>. The deadline to withdraw is July 8<sup>th</sup>, in 140 Hahn. There is a separate procedure for Medical Withdrawal, in the case of severe illness. Finally, repeated tardiness will lower your participation grade.

### **Students With Disabilities**

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first week of the session. Contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089, or by email at [drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu) for more information.

### **Plagiarism Policy**

All work submitted for this course must be your own. If you do not understand fully the standards of academic integrity enforced at UC Santa Cruz, inform yourself by consulting *The Navigator* at [reg.ucsc.edu/navigator](http://reg.ucsc.edu/navigator), Section 1, Academic Integrity. Breaches in academic integrity will result in failure of this course and may incur suspension or dismissal from the university.

### **Additional Resources: On-Campus Recovery Meetings**

Are you or someone close suffering from compulsive use of food, alcohol, other drugs, gaming, gambling, love, sex and/or co-dependency? Is your life feeling unmanageable? Students like you have found relief from mental obsessions of all kinds. The solution is simple: We help one another and practice 12 steps of recovery. Join us. Coffee and treats provided! See website for times, locations, and other information:

<http://healthcenter.ucsc.edu/shop/aod-program/aa.html>

### **WEEK ONE – Futurism and Feminism**

**Tuesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>** – Introductions; various critical and artistic approaches to time and temporality, practice close-reading.

**Reading:** Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, manifestoes and poetry

Mina Loy, “Feminist Manifesto,” poetry, and “Aphorisms on Futurism,” p. 1-67

**Thursday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Discuss Marinetti and Loy

**Reading:** César Vallejo, from *Trilce* and “Poesía Nueva,”

Vicente Huidobro, from *Altazor* and “El Creacionismo,”

Clayton Eshleman, “Afterword: Vallejo’s Succulent Snack of Unity,” p. 68-146

**WEEK TWO – The Broken Lyric, Creationism, and The Continuous Present:  
The Latin American Vanguard and Gertrude Stein**

**Tuesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>** – Close-read *Trilce* and *Altazor*; Consider Vallejo and Huidobro’s essays; Consider Eshleman’s reading of Vallejo

**Reading:** Gertrude Stein, “Orta or One Dancing,” “Matisse,” “Picasso,” “Portraits and Repetition,” and selections from *Tender Buttons*, p. 147 - 208

**Thursday, June 30<sup>th</sup>** – Discuss Stein’s representational project – “the continuous present,” repetition vs. insistence, and alternatives to description.

**Reading:** Aimé Césaire, “Notebook of a Return to the Native Land,” and “Discourse on Colonialism,” p. 209 - 288

**WEEK THREE – Négritude and the Poetics of Decolonization:  
Césaire, Vallejo, and Mariátegui**

**Tuesday, July 5<sup>th</sup>** – Close-read “Notebook of a Return to the Native Land.”

Discuss “Discourse on Colonialism” and the Négritude Movement

**Reading:** Vallejo, from *Trilce*

Mariátegui, from “Literature on Trial,” p. 289 - 312

**Thursday, July 7<sup>th</sup>** – Close-read *Trilce*; Discuss “Literature on Trial”

**Reading:** Césaire, poems, p. 347 - 370

Sartre, “Black Orpheus,” p. 427 - 467

#### **WEEK FOUR – The Temporality of Decolonization**

**Tuesday, July 12<sup>th</sup>** – Close-read Césaire’s poetry; Discuss “Black Orpheus”

**Reading:** Vallejo, from *Trilce*, p. 313 - 346

Césaire, poems, p. 371 - 390

**Thursday, July 14<sup>th</sup>** – Close-read Vallejo and Césaire

*\*Due: One-Paragraph Proposals for Final Essay*

**Reading:** Vallejo, from *Trilce*, p. 469 - 476

Césaire, poems, p. 391 - 425

#### **WEEK FIVE – Student Presentations of Essay Projects, Final Thoughts on Césaire and Vallejo, Final Essays Due**

**Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>** – Close-read Vallejo and Césaire; Student Presentations

**Readings:** Vallejo, poems, p. 477 – 480

Césaire, poems, p. 481 – 500

**Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup>** -- Final Essays Due; Student Presentations; Concluding Discussion and Close-reading of Vallejo and Césaire.

