

Modern Exilic Imagination in the Twentieth Century

CMLT 8130 – Spring 2007

Katarzyna Jerzak – office hours: Tu. 9:30 – 10:45 and by appointment; 235 Brown Hall.

One of the important modern topoi, exile is nonetheless among those most understudied. Its recent notoriety -- as the pseudo-aristocratic academic condition claimed by a lucky few and begrudged by everyone else -- is an example of the general malleability of this portemanteau notion. We will analyze the modern exilic imagination in twentieth-century painting, photography and film as well as literature. Despite the problematic status in the twenty-first century of the concept of home, exile persists as part of our conceptual horizon. More than a metaphor, exile as represented by the authors and artists we shall consider is one of the defining human experiences that continues to inform our aesthetic and ethical sensibility.

Jan. 9, Tu. Introduction

Charles Baudelaire, "Le cygne" ("The Swan")

Jan. 11, Th. Walter Benjamin: *The Writer of Modern Life*: "Baudelaire" and "Paris, the Capital of the Nineteenth Century"

Jan. 16, Tu. Walter Benjamin: *The Writer of Modern Life*: "Central Park," "The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire" (III. Modernity), "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire"

Jan. 18, Th. Giorgio de Chirico, paintings

Jan. 23, Tu. Georg Simmel, "The Stranger"; Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*

Jan. 25, Th. Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*

Jan. 30, Tu. Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*

Feb. 1, Th. Rilke, *Malte Laurids Brigge*; John Neubauer, "Bakhtin versus Lukacs: Inscriptions of Homelessness in Theories of the Novel" (in Suleiman, *Exile and Creativity*)

Feb. 6, Tu. Andre Kertesz, photography, Siegfried Kracauer, "Photography" in *Weimar Essays*

Feb. 8, Th. Kertesz, photography, Siegfried Kracauer, "Photography" in *Weimar Essays*

Feb. 13 Tu. Siegfried Kracauer, *Weimar Essays*: "Travel and Dance," "The Mass Ornament," "Those Who Wait," "The Hotel Lobby"

Feb. 15, Th. Siegfried Kracauer, *Weimar Essays*: on Simmel, Benjamin and Kafka

Feb. 20, Tu. Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, part I

Feb. 22, Th. Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, part II

Feb. 23, Friday MIDTERM ESSAY DUE BY 5 pm

Feb. 27, Tu. Witold Gombrowicz, *Diary*

March 1, Th. Witold Gombrowicz, *Diary* and Alicia Borinsky "Gombrowicz's Tango" in Suleiman, *Exile and Creativity*

March 6, Tu. Andrei Tarkovsky, *Nostalghia*

March 8, Th. Andrei Tarkovsky, *Nostalghia*

March 12-16 SPRING BREAK

March 20, Tu. Pavel Florensky, essay on perspective

March 22, Th. Piero della Francesca, "Madonna del Parto" and Russian icons

March 27, Tu. André Aciman, *False Papers*: "Shadow Cities," "Alexandria, the Capital of Memory"

March 29, Th. André Aciman, *False Papers*: "Pensione Eolo," "Underground," "Square Lamartine," "St. Urban" (handout)

April 3, Tu. NO CLASS – PASSOVER

April 5, Th. Henryk Grynberg/Pawel Lozinski: "Birthplace" (documentary shown in class) plus Zygmunt Bauman, "Assimilation into Exile: the Jew as a Polish Writer" in Suleiman

April 10, Tu. Henryk Grynberg, essays ("Duty," "We, the Jews of Dobre")

April 12, Th. Henryk Grynberg, essays ("Duty," "We, the Jews of Dobre")

April 17, Tu. Tove Jansson *Summer Book*

April 19, Th. Tove Jansson *Summer Book*

April 24 Tu. Towards a conclusion

April 26, Th Conclusion

Requirements: Frequent participation in discussions. Reasonable attendance. One short (5 pages) midterm paper. One oral presentation (15 minutes). Comparative final paper (15 pages).