

World Literature: Time and Narrative (ENGL 1315)

MW 1:05-2:20 p.m. | Spring 2022 | Office Hrs.: W 10-12

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Still from Christian Marclay's The Clock

Literature manipulates time—speeding it up, slowing it down, or freezing it altogether. These experiments with time take place at the level of the syllable, the sentence, the paragraph, and even the whole book. We will consider why and how authors play with different time scales, and what literary devices help them achieve their desired temporal effects. In the process, we will pose fundamental questions about the nature of time. Is it always linear? Or can it be cyclical, reversible, or surreal? Is there a universal time, or is it inherently plural? Why are the concepts of temporality and secularity seemingly entwined? And does time even exist? We will raise these questions by looking to a global constellation of writers and theorists.

Required Texts

1. Augustine, *Confessions* [[Oxford](#)]
2. Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* [[Harcourt](#)]
3. Clarice Lispector, *Água viva* [[New Directions](#)]
4. Shakespeare, *Hamlet* [[Folger](#)]

5. W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* [[Modern Library](#)]
6. Octavia Butler, *Kindred* [[Beacon](#)]
7. Naguib Mahfouz, *Miramar* [[Anchor](#)]

Assessment

- 1) Attendance, participation, & weekly discussion posts [25%]
- 2) 500-700-word close reading [15%]
- 3) 4-5-page creative assignment OR second critical essay [15%]
- 4) 10-minute presentation on a global calendar or an author [15%]
- 5) 7-8-page final essay [30%]

Course Schedule

Unit One: Chronos vs. Kairos

- 1/31: Introduction
- 2/2: Jorge Luis Borges, “New Refutation of Time” & “The Aleph”;
Tobias Wolff, “Bullet in the Brain”
- 2/7: Clarice Lispector, *Agua viva*
- 2/9: Lispector, continued.
- 2/14: Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 11 & 15
- 2/16: John Smith, “Time and Qualitative Time”; excerpt, Kermode, *Sense of an Ending*
- 2/21: Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, “Time in Bursa” (poem), “Bursa” (chapter)
Touraj Atabaki, “Time, Labour-Discipline, and Modernization in Turkey and Iran”
- 2/23: Orhan Pamuk, excerpt from *The Museum of Innocence*.
Avner Wishnitzer, excerpt from *Reading Clocks, alla Turca*

***2/25: Essay One (500-700-word close reading) due at midnight**

- 2/28: W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz*
- 3/2: Sebald, continued.

- 3/14: Sebald, continued.
Excerpt from Vanessa Ogle, *The Global Transformation of Time*
- 3/16: Sebald, finish *Austerlitz*

Unit Two: Time Is Out of Joint

3/21: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*.

3/23: Shakespeare, continued.

Margreta de Grazia, "Anachronism"

3/28: Octavia Butler, *Kindred*.

3/30: Butler, continued.

***4/1: Creative project or second critical essay due**

Unit Three: Modernist Temporalities

4/4: Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*

4/6 Woolf, continued.

4/11: Naguib Mahfouz, *Miramar*

4/13: Mahfouz, continued.

4/18: Forough Farrokhzad, "Let Us Believe in the Coming of the Cold Season,"

"Another Birth"; "The Wind Will Carry Us"

optional poems by Nazik al-Malaika

Unit Four: The Time of Your Life

4/20: Abbas Kiarostami, *The Wind Will Carry Us*, *Certified Copy*, and *Rug*

4/25: EP Thompson, "Time, Work Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism"

4/27: Adorno, "Free Time"; Jia Zhangke, *Still Life*

5/2: Shape of an argument

5/4: Course evaluation; share theses

***5/9: Final essay (7-8 pages) due**

Course Policies

Essays: I am happy to discuss drafts of your essays. If you would like to talk to me about a draft, please let me know in advance and email it to me at least three hours before our