Lecture 3:2: “The Interwar Years”

Source 4

(Excerpt from)

“The Waste Land” (1922)

By T. S. Eliot

Unreal City,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.
Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.
Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours
With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.
There I saw one I knew, and stopped him, crying ‘Stetson!
‘You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!
‘That corpse you planted last year in your garden,
‘Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?
‘Or has the sudden frost disturbed its bed?
‘Oh keep the Dog far hence, that's friend to men,
‘Or with his nails he'll dig it up again!
‘You! hypocrite lecteur! - mon semblable, - mon frère!’...
**Context:**

T. S. Eliot’s groundbreaking poem portrays the human soul as it goes in search of meaning and redemption in a world torn asunder by war and madness. *The Waste Land* has gained its notoriety for the issues with which it deals and the methods it employs to convey its message. Eliot broke from traditional poetic style in his use of historical references, literary devices, and unconventional language. He joined many artists from around the world in post-war Paris that comprised what came to be known as the Lost Generation.

Source: http://www.bartleby.com/201/1.html

**Questions:**

1. Was it true that almost all of the cultural developments after the Great War were attempts to undermine existing convictions and principles, and if that was the case, why?
2. What made the artists who worked in the wake of World War I come to be known as the Lost Generation and was that title appropriate?

**Assignment:**

Each of the following artists was involved in the post-World War I Parisian and art world - Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, Man Ray, Josephine Baker, T. S. Eliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Dos Passos, E.E. Cummings, Archibald MacLeish, Hart Crane, Langston Hughes, Ezra Pound, Sylvia Beach, Tristan Tzara, Andre Breton, and Juan Miro. Identify and expound upon each person’s contribution to the output of the Lost Generation.

**Bibliography:**


