Syllabus

POETRY AFTER AUSCHWITZ : PAUL CELAN - 32527

Last update 21-01-2014

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: German, Russian and East European Studies German Language and Literature Section

Academic year: 2

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English
(with comparisons of the German originals and the Hebrew translations)

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Vivian Liska

Coordinator Email: vivian.liska@uantwerpen.be

Coordinator Office Hours: Wednesday 16:15-17:15
Teaching Staff:  
Vivian Liska

Course/Module description:  
This course begins with an overview of the situation of poetry in Germany after 1945 and of the issues involved in the debate about lyrical poetry after Auschwitz. This contextualization constitutes the background for an introduction to some of the major theoretical statements about this topic (Adorno’s “Education after Auschwitz,” George Steiner’s “The Hollow Miracle” and others). The main part of the course is devoted to an analysis of individual poems by Paul Celan from his early poetry written during the war to his latest enigmatic poems written shortly before his death in 1970. The course will also address authors referred to in Celan’s work such as Franz Kafka and Nelly Sachs as well as poets who refer to Celan in their own poetry in the aftermath of Celan’s death such as Erich Fried, Robert Schindel and others.

Course/Module aims:  
Enable students to interpret modern poetry in its historical and literary context.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
- Analyze and interpret modern German poetry
- Recognize the specific aspects of post-Auschwitz poetry
- Interpret poetry in terms of the relationship between form and content
- Understand the effect of a specific use of language as a performative act
- Identify intertextual elements and biographical, historical, philosophical references
- Examine the relationships between poems and theoretical reflections about poetry after Auschwitz

Attendance requirements(%):
100%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lectures, discussions, collective close reading, class presentation and related final paper

Course/Module Content:  
1. Introduction: Paul Celan and Poetry after Auschwitz
2. Theoretical Texts: Theodor W. Adorno, Georges Steiner

3. Paul Celan – Life, Work, Context

4. Selected Early Poems

5. Selected Poetry and Prose

6. Selected Late Poems

7. Celan and other Poets: Nelly Sachs, Ingeborg Bachmann and others

8. Celan and Kafka

9. Student Presentations

10. Student Presentations

11. Workshop – Reading Paul Celan

**Required Reading:**
A Reader including all the poems to be discussed in class will be made available to the students. The reader will also include poems the students can choose from for their presentations.

**Additional Reading Material:**
Recommended Editions:
German: Die Gedichte, edited by Barbara Wiedemann, Suhrkamp
Hebrew Editions:


Anthologies including poems by Paul Celan

*Benjamin Harshav: Shira Modemit, TelAviv 1990.
*Dan Omer. Tluim al zlav ha'barsel, Tel Aviv: Sifriat Prosa
*Shimon Sandbank: Ha'garzen poreach, Tel Aviv 1986

Secondary literature
John Felstiner, Paul Celan. Poet, Survivor, Jew, by John Felstiner, Yale UP 1995

A Paul Celan Homepage
http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/german/celan/


Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 40 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 60 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:
Topics for Final Papers / Seminar Papers

Interpretation of the following poems:
Psalm
Tenebrae
Count the Almonds
Mandorla
Anabasis
Conversation in the Mountains (prose)
Wolfsbohne
In the air
Recurrent motifs, topics or poetic forms (Flower, Almond, Mouth, geological vocabulary.)
Enjambement, Neologisms,
Polyglottism, Jiddish/Hebrew

Topics: Romantic elements in the poetry of Paul Celan