



Syllabus

Imagining Society: Civil Values and Aesthetic Practise in German Literatur 1785-1929 - 32806

Last update 28-08-2016

HU Credits: 2

Responsible Department: german, russian & east european studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: German

Campus: Mt. Scopus

*Course/Module Coordinator: Prof Birgit Erdle
DAAD Walter Benjamin Professor
DAAD Walter Benjamin Chair*

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Coordinator Office Hours: Sunday, 14-16, and by appointment

*Teaching Staff:
Prof Birgit Erdle*

Course/Module description:

How does the literature of the period between 1785 and 1929 give voice to new conceptions of selfhood? Which knowledge of social norms and social fragmentation is negotiated in novels such as Karl Philipp Moritz's *Anton Reiser* (1785/1786/1790), Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* (1795/1796/1821/1829), Heinrich Mann's *Im Schlaraffenland. Ein Roman unter feinen Leuten* (1900) or Alfred Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1929), which all aim, in different ways, to tell the story of a life's struggle for coherence, purpose, and social advancement? How is this communicated through narrative style or aesthetic form? In this seminar, we will discuss these questions by closely reading canonical German language novels and by placing them in their historical context.

Course/Module aims:

open up seminal German language novels of the period between 1785 and 1929, examining them as a literary reflection, reproduction, or counterdiscourse of social and political norms

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

analyze the literary structure of seminal German language novels (late 18th to early 20th century) in its various aspects and layers;
reflect methodologically on questions of interpretation;
discuss literary/aesthetic ways of writing/representing "social reality";
reflect and contextualize historically literary conceptions of selfhood and community;
critically evaluate arguments in secondary texts.

Attendance requirements(%):

80 %

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: seminar discussion
student presentation
reading reports

Course/Module Content:

close reading of seminal literary texts (in German) in 18th, 19th and early 20th century

Required Reading:

Literary texts and secondary literature will be provided

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

Additional information: