

Faculty of Arts and Letters



GERM2205 Contemporary German literature

[30h] 4 credits

This two-yearly course is taught in 2007-2008, 2009-2010,...

This course is taught in the 2nd semester

Language: German

Level: Second cycle

Aims

Capacity to analyze a narrative text belonging to contemporary German literature and to define the narrative and strategic techniques used by the author.

Main themes

The course is entitled "The Crisis and Rebirth of Story-Telling in German Literature after World War II". In all European literature this crisis goes back to the beginning of the 20th century. It consists essentially in questioning the role of the narrator as a story-teller. The young authors of the immediately post-war period are not really concerned by this crisis. It is around 1960 that the "modern novel" begins to imply the dismantling of the traditional function of the story-teller. After the crisis of 1968 many young writers want to replace the arbitrariness of fiction by the authenticity of the document; their literature is characterized by a radical Marxist commitment. Others want to unmask the illusion of the autonomous subject. In the seventies we see a "rebirth of story-telling" which is also inspired by left-wing thought aiming at liberating the desires hindered by later capitalism. The "rebirth of story-telling" also characterizes post-modern texts, this time in their refusal of authenticity and commitment.

Content and teaching methods

During the academic year 2003-2004, we will study the 1920-1950 period in the history of German literatures. This periodization allows us to consider the decisive impact of literary modernism since the end of the 19th century and the numerous consequences of World War I on society. The interbellum is characterized by new forms of realism (Neue Sachlichkeit, Magischer Realismus, réalisme poétique#), by the crisis of 1929 in Europe, and by the tragedy of the rising national-socialism in Germany, which will force many important German writers (Bertolt Brecht, Thomas Mann, Alfred Döblin#) to exile. The immediate postwar years constitute a permanently moving field - before the creation of the two German States - which will polarize the ideological positions at all levels. Theoretical considerations will be practically applied in texts analyzed with the active participation of students in a seminar.

Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)

Evaluation : Exam, in which the analyses built up by the students play an important role.

Other credits in programs

GERM21	Première licence en langues et littératures germaniques	(4 credits)
GERM21/BD	Première licence en langues et littératures germaniques (Anglais et Allemand)	(4 credits)
GERM21/DB	Première licence en langues et littératures germaniques (Allemand et Anglais)	(4 credits)
GERM21/DN	Première licence en langues et littératures germaniques (Allemand et Néerlandais)	(4 credits)
GERM21/ND	Première licence en langues et littératures germaniques (Néerlandais et Allemand)	(4 credits)
GERM22	Deuxième licence en langues et littératures germaniques	(4 credits)
GERM22/BD	Deuxième licence en langues et littératures germaniques (Anglais et Allemand)	(4 credits)
GERM22/DB	Deuxième licence en langues et littératures germaniques (Allemand et Anglais)	(4 credits)
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