

Modern German Literature: 1900-1945
(IES Freiburg – German Program)

Description: The course deals with some of the most significant authors and developments in German literature from the turn of the century until 1945. Special emphasis is to be given to the literary movement Modernity, viewed as an epoch interpreted from a historical aspect and as defined by literary theory. In order to identify the distinctiveness of so-called Classical Modernity, the seminar will examine the first modern literary forms which appeared in Vienna at the turn of the century and will progress on to Exile Literature via German Expressionism. Modernity as a European movement will be depicted using Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Arthur Schnitzler in Vienna as examples of authors who paved the way; then Georg Heym, Alfred Döblin and Gottfried Benn as important representatives of German Expressionism. Preoccupation with Franz Kafka as a special example of modern literature and finally with Thomas Mann as a central representative of Modernity and Exile Literature will complete the picture. Thomas Mann is simultaneously pivotal for the comprehension of European cultural history. For his tale "Death in Venice" provides a connection to Weimar Classicism, in particular to Goethe's "Diary of an Italian Journey". The latter is characterized as a recollection of Antiquity – with Johann Winckelmann as precursor– and brings the history of the Occident to the fore. We shall be pursuing the transformation of perception. This includes an incessant enthusiasm for Italy and the Old World up to the defragmentation of the protagonists and the morbidity in Mann's tales, two central characteristics typical of Modernity. We shall retrace the literary elements of Modernity precisely using text samples. This will take place on two levels: those of content and form. The works of expressionist Modernity are set in the city and at war, for which the authors of Modernity have developed their own language in both their aesthetic and factual realm of experience. By analyzing the language in chosen text segments, the students will not only learn about the characteristics of the epoch of Modernity in theory, but will also experience them vividly.

CREDIT / CONTACT HOURS: 3 credits, 45 contact hours

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Sabine Rothemann

PREREQUISITES: Advanced knowledge of German and/or permission of the instructor. High willingness and readiness to read, active class participation, knowledge of German history from 1900-1945.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Lectures
- Discussions
- Individual and pair work
- Creative writing.

The aim is to encourage the students to speak about literature.

Additional material will be posted on Moodle. This platform is also the place to share assignments and to follow recent developments in the field.

LANGUAGE OF PRESENTATION: German

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- integrate the concept and phenomenon of Modernity in a context of occidental history as an individual and far-reaching epoch
- appreciate the change of perspective projected in the language of the literature of Modernity as a value in its own right in form and content by comparing it with Classical literature (the concept of Mimesis in the works of Winckelmann as reflected in his thoughts about the imitation of ancient times, excerpts from Goethe's journey to Italy and his Prometheus poem)
- use their new tools for language analysis of individually chosen text segments to become familiar with the language of literature in comparison to general language, and learn to approach experimental literary writing
- acquire fundamental knowledge regarding the most important authors of European literary history and thereby develop a greater attentiveness towards their own culture

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Compulsory readings: see below
- Oral participation (33%): Students are expected to participate in the debate with questions and points related to the readings and with their own ideas related to the course topic in general
- Midterm (16.5%): Oral exam, consists of a number of questions on different aspects of the topics discussed in class
- Final (16.5%): written exam, consists of a number of questions on different aspects of the topics discussed in class
- 2 Essays (34%) of approx. 3-5 pages on a topic related to a literary work or a comparison of two texts. The pieces and topics can be chosen freely or from a list proposed by the instructor

ATTENDANCE:

IES Abroad courses are designed to take advantage of the unique contribution of the instructor, and the lecture/discussion format is regarded as the primary mode of instruction. Regular class attendance is mandatory. Every unexcused absence will lower a student's grade by 5%. Tests/presentations missed during unexcused absences cannot be made up. If a student misses a class it is his/her responsibility to catch up on everything that was covered in class. If a student cannot attend class due to illness then he/she should arrange to see a doctor who can issue a doctor's note. Without a doctor's note, an absence will count as unexcused absence.

Content:

Session		Readings
1	Introduction – Modernity as an epoch; outline of seminar content: bridge to Weimar Classicism, worship of antiquity as utopian concept, the new utopia	"Aufbruch und Moderne" (20 pages)
2	Viennese Modernity	"Sprachkrise und Sprachkritik zur Jahrhundertwende" (20 pages)
3	Hugo von Hofmannsthal: the fiction of the so-called "Chandos-letter"	"Brief des Lord Chandos an Francis Bacon" (10 pages);
4	Arthur Schnitzler's "Leutnant Gustl"	"Leutnant Gustl"
5	Writing experiment: inner monologue	
6	Literary Expressionism: Georg Heym	"Der Dieb" (volume of stories, 20 pages)
7	Textanalyse der Erzählung "Der fünfte Oktober"	Textabsätze extrahieren, Sprachbilder bestimmen
8	Literary Expressionism: Alfred Döblin	"Die Ermordung einer Butterblume" (13 pages)
9	Overview presentation Modernity: Döblin, "Berlin Alexanderplatz. Die Geschichte vom Franz Biberkopf"; Robert Musil: "Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften"	"Berlin Alexanderplatz. Die Geschichte vom Franz Biberkopf" (novel excerpt);
10	Robert Musil: "Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften"	"Mann ohne Eigenschaften" (novel excerpt from Vol. 1, 25 pages)
11	Franz Kafka as a special variation of Modernity	Eintauchen in die Literatur von Kafka Lesen: "Die Verwandlung" (44 pages)
12	Franz Kafka: "Die Verwandlung"	Interpretation der Erzählung von Kafka
13	Expressionistische Lyrik: Gottfried Benn, Georg Heym	Lesen: Einleitung von Gottfried Benn Gedichtinterpretation (2 poems)
14	Jakob van Hoddis: "Weltende"	Jakob van Hoddis: "Weltende"
15	Writing experiment Lyrical Poetry	
16	Goethe: incarnation and self-determination of mankind as a bourgeois ideal	Goethe: „Prometheus" (poem);
17	Goethes Italiensehensucht. Die Antike als Ideal	Goethes italienische Reise, seine Reiseroute
18	Italien: Reisetagebuch von Goethe	"Journey to Italy: visiting Venice" (in "Reisetagebuch der Italienischen Reise. Viertes Stück, Venedig, " 25 pages)
19	Thomas Mann and Goethe	"Goethebild bei Thomas Mann und sein

		Selbstbild" (40 pages)
20	Thomas Mann: Reden und Essays Weimar and Buchenwald: Speech by Thomas Mann in Weimar 1949	"Ansprache im Goethejahr 1949", held after the award of the Goethe prize in Frankfurt/Main, Frankfurt speech "Goethe und die Demokratie" (33 pages)
21	The modern alternative Venice: Thomas Mann's "Tod in Venedig" (1911/12) Determination of structure and interpretation of the story	"Tod in Venedig" (1911/12, 65 pages)
22	Screen adaptation: Luchino Visconti, "Tod in Venedig" (1971)	
23	Final: Debriefing and outlook: contemporary literature in the German language	

Required readings:

At the beginning of the course students will receive a Reading Packet as well as a list of required books to buy.

- Reading Packet with prose excerpts, lyrical poetry and theoretical background texts
- Arthur Schnitzler „Leutnant Gustl“, Stuttgart 2002 (Reclam Universal-Bibliothek)
- Franz Kafka „Die Verwandlung“, Stuttgart 1995 (Reclam Universal-Bibliothek)
- Thomas Mann „Tod in Venedig“, Frankfurt a. M. 1992 (Fischer Verlag)
- Thomas Mann: Ansprache im Goethejahr 1949, in: Gesammelte Werke, Bd. 11, ed. by Peter Demenelssohn, Frankfurt 1990, S. 481–497. Also available as an E-Book, Fischer Klassik Plus, Frankfurt a. M., SBN: 978-3-10-401573-6

Recommended readings:

- Arthur Schnitzler: Traumnovelle, München 2004
- Hugo von Hofmannstal: Das Salzburger große Welttheater, Frankfurt a. M. 1977
- Alfred Döblin: Die Ermordung einer Butterblume und andere Erzählungen, in: Gesammelte Erzählungen, Frankfurt a. M. 1971
- Alfred Döblin: Berlin Alexanderplatz. Die Geschichte vom Franz Biberkopf, München 2002
- Robert Musil: Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften, Band 1, Berlin 1994
- Robert Musil: Grigia, in: Drei Frauen, Erzählungen, Hamburg 1993
- Thomas Mann: Der Zauberberg, Frankfurt a. M. 1981
- Johann Wolfgang Goethe: Tagebuch der Italienischen Reise, Frankfurt a. M. 1976. Contains: fourth piece, Venice
- Johann Joachim Winckelmann: Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerey und Bildhauerkunst, Stuttgart 2013
- Thomas Mann: Goethe und die Demokratie, in: Essays 1945–1955, Bd. 6: Meine Zeit, ed. by Hermann Kurzke und Stephan Stachorski, Frankfurt 1997, S. 104–130. Also available as an E-Book, ISBN: 978-3-10-401561-3.

Brief Biography:

Sabine Rothemann studied German Literature, Philosophy and French Literature in Tübingen, Frankfurt am Main and Paris. She earned her doctorate on Robert Walser and Franz Kafka. Today she lives in Freiburg and works as a writer and lecturer. She writes essays on literature, politics and society in journals and was co-editor of a three volume book publication on the history of literature and European Modernity. Apart from her numerous journal contributions and work for radio and text collages for the Frankfurt House of Literature she is also represented in publications with lyrical poetry and prose in notable literature anthologies.

Mrs. Rothemann's most recent book publications are "Kafka und das alte Prag" (Essay on Kafka's early works), Bonn 2008.

"Grau, Grün und andere Ungereimtheiten", Tales, Leipzig 2013.