

IIT Mandi
Proposal for a New Course

Course Number: HS 503

Course Name: German Literature from World War II to Reunification

Credit: 3

Distribution: 3-0-0-3

Intended for: Free Elective for UG/ PG/ Ph.D.

Prerequisite: None

Mutual Exclusion: None

1. Preamble:

This course examines post war German history through a literary perspective, with main focus on the period after the end of World War II (1945), the division of Germany leading up to the reunification of Germany (1990). Select short stories, poems and excerpts from relevant German novels will be discussed to get a better understanding of some key historical events of post war Germany. Core idea is to introduce German literature to students and the question of reading history through literary texts will be central.

2. Course Modules with quantitative lecture hours:

Unit 1: Trümmer-literature – The Zero Hour (8 lecture hours)

- Immediate consequences of World War II and Holocaust
 - Stunde Null
 - Trauma and memories of the War and Holocaust
 - Wolfgang Borchert, Paul Celan, Günter Eich et al.
-

Unit 2: Literature from a divided Germany (9 lecture hours)

- Division of Germany
- Vergangenheitsbewältigung – coming to terms with the past
- Inner Emigration
- Gruppe 47
- Heinrich Böll, Günter Grass, Paul Celan et al.

Unit 3: Exile Literature (9 lecture hours)

- Literary texts from authors of East Germany or GDR
- Division of Germany and socio-political consequences thereof
- Life in exile and under communist surveillance in GDR
- Question of Heimatlosigkeit (homelessness)
- Bertolt Brecht, Christa Wolf, Wolf Biermann et al

Unit 4: Jewish authors and survivors of the Holocaust (8 lecture hours)

- Select Jewish authors who have lived and survived the Holocaust
- Victim's perspective of the Third Reich
- Rose Ausländer, Nelly Sachs, Paul Celan et al

Unit 5: Re-unification of Germany (Wendeliteratur) (8 lecture hours)

- Fall of the Berlin Wall (die Wende)
- Immediate after-effects of the re-unification of Germany
- Identity crisis of the citizens

3. Laboratory/practical/tutorial Modules: None

4. Text books:

1. Peter Demetz, Post War German Literature. A Critical Introduction, Pegasus, New York, 1970
2. Ingo R. Stoehr, German Literature of the Twentieth Century, Camden House, London 2001

References:

Suggested Reading:

- Wolfgang Borchert: The Kitchen Clock (Die Küchenuhr, 1947)
- Paul Celan: Death Fugue (Todesfuge, 1948)
- Heinrich Böll: The Train Was on Time (Der Zug war pünktlich, 1949)
- Günter Eich: Inventory (Inventur, 1947)
- Wolfdietrich Schnurr: On The Run (Auf der Flucht, 1950)
- Bertolt Brecht: On The Term Emigrants/ Über die Bezeichnung Emigranten, 1937/ To Those Who Follow in Our Wake (An die Nachgeborenen, 1939)
- Christa Wolf: Der geteilte Himmel, 1963 (Divided Heaven: Film 1964)
- Anna Seghers: The Seventh Cross (Das siebte Kreuz, 1942)
- Nelly Sachs: In the Houses of Death (In den Wohnungen des Todes, 1947)
- Thomas Brussig: Heroes Like Us (Helden wie wir, 1995)
- Christa Wolf: What Remains (Was bleibt, 1990)
- Sven Regener: Berlin Blues (Text or Film: 2003) (Herr Lehmann, 2001)
- Rose Ausländer: The Luck (Das Glück, 1939)
- Johannes Bobrowski: Shadowland/ The Latvian Autumn (1994)
- Marcel Reich-Ranicki: Videos from Literarische Quartett (Youtube)
- Hans Egon Holthusen: A Literature in Transition. Main Currents of Post War German Writing, The Atlantic
- Aaron Denis Horton: Catastrophe and Identity in Post War German Literature, 2005

Films:

- Schindler's List (1994)
- The Boy in Striped Pyjamas (2008)
- The Pianist (2002)
- The Lives of Others (2006)
- The Tin Drum (1979)
- The Reader (2008)

- Downfall (2004)
- Enemy at the Gates (2001)

Similarity with the existing courses:

(Similarity content is declared as per the number of lecture hours on similar topics)

S. No.		Course Code	Similarity Content	Approx. % of Content
1.		HS-363: Post War Germany: A Literary Perspective	The title of this course and my proposed course seems to cover similar ground in terms of chronology. However, I have completely overhauled the modules and also updated the readings.	~10% The older course mentioned here was a 300-level course. It was felt that an updated and more rigorous 500-level course is required for students, esp. those pursuing a German Minor.

Justification of new course proposal if cumulative similarity content is >30%: --