

Close-Reading of 20th Century Literary Texts (LT20)

Course Description

Lecturer: Mgr. Renáta Lengyel-Marosi, PhD.

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Office hours: Wed 10.30-11.15; Thurs 12.15-13.00 (R207)

COURSE OBJECTIVES: The seminar focuses on the intensive analysis of the 20th-century literary works. During classes various British and American literary works are analysed. The main goal of the subject is to provide a chance for students to deepen their analysis of given literary works. Students will get acquired with the method of deep reading which puts emphasis on intensive work on the literary pieces and not on the length of the texts they have to read. The seminar sheds light on the techniques used by given literary schools, as well as gives a great chance to practice them.



Franz Marc: Deer in Woods, 1914

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS:

1. Introduction

2. Virginia Woolf: 'Kew Gardens' (1919)

3. Vladimir Nabokov: 'Signs and Symbols' (1948)

4. Ray Bradbury: 'The Veldt' (1950)

5. Joyce Carol Oates: 'Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been' (1966)

6. Ursula K. LeGuin: 'The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas' (1973)

7. Mid-term test

8. Kazuo Ishiguro: 'A Family Supper' (1982)

9. Agatha Christie: 'Sing a Song of Sixpence' (*Miss Marple and Mystery. The Complete Short Stories*, 1985; first in 1929)

10. Angela Carter: 'The Werewolf' (*The Bloody Chamber and Other Tales*, 1979)

11. Neil Gaiman: 'Snow, Glass, Apples' (*Smoke and Mirrors*, 1994)

12. Margaret Atwood: 'Stone Mattress' (*Stone Mattress: Nine Wicked Tales*, 2014)

13. End-of-term test

ASSESSMENT BASED ON:

- **regular class attendance:** no more than two absences are excused. The first lesson does not count as an absence. If you get sick, submit a doctor's note, and your absence will be deleted.
- **active participation** during the class. You have to participate in the discussions about literary works
- **mind-term test and end-of-term test:** the content of both tests will cover questions based on the questions of the worksheets – available at Moodle – each sheet is accompanied by an answer key ☺

EVALUATION: For each test, you can collect 50 points (altogether 100 points). If you fail to obtain at least 50 points, you have two more chances to improve your mark by writing a test that will cover the topics of the whole course.

GRADING SCALE:

100-90% - A

89-80 - B

79-70 - C

69-60 - D

59-50 - E

49-0 - Fx

RECOMMENDED LITERATURE:

- ❖ Best, S. -Kellner D.: Postmodern Theory. New York: The Guilford Press, 1991.
- ❖ Collier, P. -Geyer-Ryan H. (ed.): Literary Theory Today. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990.
- ❖ Eco, U.: Interpretation and Overinterpretation. Cambridge: CUP, 1992.
- ❖ Fish, S.: Is There a Text in This Class? Cambridge: CUP, 1980.
- ❖ Ricoeur, P.: Time and Narrative (I-II). Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1984-1985

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Enjoy the course! ☺

☺ Some close-reading tips:

- focus on detail
- proceed slowly and deliberately
- be curious and ask questions
- look up unusual, significant, and strange words
- consider multiple meanings
- make connections to other texts and ideas
- think expansively - do not try to decode the text