

GERM 411: SPECIAL TOPIC 1: THE GDR IN LITERATURE AND FILM

School of Asian & European Languages & Cultures

Trimester 1 + 2/3 2008

30 points

STAFF

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CLASS TIMES AND ROOMS

The course is taught by Dr Margaret Sutherland in her office. Times for the classes will be arranged at the first meeting for students of the course on Wednesday, 27 February at 10.00 a.m. in vZ 615. Dr Sutherland is happy to provide additional information about the course at any time, or to discuss students' problems with them.

GERM 411 is a full-year course of two hours per week, involving lectures and seminar discussions. The course is taught in English and/or German.

COURSE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of GERM 411 is to introduce students to examples of literature and film that either appeared during the time of East Germany's existence from 1949 to 1990 or have appeared since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and nevertheless deal with aspects of life in the GDR. The works are chosen to reflect different decades and events that occurred during the history of the GDR and the way in which these have been represented in literary and visual form. We will also be looking at examples of music and art, and how the GDR dealt with the translation of works of minority peoples into German.

In addition, the course aims at developing students' ability to read and analyse lengthy German texts, to comprehend the medium of film, to use bibliographies and evaluate secondary literature, and to formulate their own ideas about the works in the form of class seminars, two essays, and examination answers.

Qualities especially valued at Honours level are those fundamental to all scholarly disciplines: accuracy of knowledge, independence of judgement, lucidity of thought and precision of statement.

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GERM 411 Course Outline**

SET TEXTS

Examples of poetry by Wolf Biermann and other poets

Volker Braun, *Unvollendete Geschichte* (Suhrkamp Taschenbuch)

Christian Friedrich Delius, *Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus* (Rowohlt)

Christoph Hein, *Der Tangospieler* (Luchterhand)

Jana Hensel, *Zonenkinder* (Rowohlt)

Stefan Heym, *The Architects* (Northwestern University Press) – this book was originally written in English and will be studied in English but students may read the translated version if they prefer.

Monika Maron, *Stille Zeile Sechs* (Fischer)

Peter Theek, *Tims Fahrt ins Land der Kängurus* (Der Kinderbuchverlag)

Tom Wittgen, *Schatten in Grün. Kriminalerzählungen* (Verlag Das Neue Berlin)

Christa Wolf, *Störfall* (Luchterhand)

FILMS

Das Kaninchen bin ich – Director: Kurt Maetzig

Das Leben der anderen – Director: Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck

Der Tangospieler – Director: Roland Gräf

Die Legende von Paul und Paula – Director: Heiner Carow

Goodbye Lenin – Director: Wolfgang Becker

Nikolaikirche – Director: Frank Beyer

Spur der Steine – Director: Frank Beyer

COURSE PROGRAMME

Students are expected to study in depth 5 of the texts and 4 of the films prescribed for the course. The works will all be studied in chronological order of their subject matter, rather than date of publication or completion. While most of the works appeared during the time of the GDR, a few have appeared since 1989 and fall into the category of “Ostalgie”. They will be studied towards the end of the course.

Trimester 1:

Peter Theek, *Tims Fahrt ins Land der Kängurus*

Tom Wittgen; *Schatten in Grün. Kriminalerzählungen* (Verlag Das Neue Berlin)

Stefan Heym, *The Architects* (Northwestern University Press) – this book was originally written in English and will be studied in English but students may read the translated version if they prefer.

Das Kaninchen bin ich – Director: Kurt Maetzig

Christoph Hein, *Der Tangospieler* (Luchterhand)

Der Tangospieler - Director: Roland Gräf – film version

Spur der Steine – Director: Frank Beyer

Examples of poetry by Wolf Biermann and other poets

MID-YEAR STUDY & EXAMINATION PERIOD & BREAK (2 JUNE – 6 JULY)

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Trimester 2:

Volker Braun, *Unvollendete Geschichte* (Suhrkamp Taschenbuch)

Christa Wolf, *Störfall* (Luchterhand)

Monika Maron, *Stille Zeile Sechs* (Fischer)

Post-Wende Works:

Christian Friedrich Delius, *Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus* (Rowohlt)

Nikolaikirche – Director: Frank Beyer

Jana Hensel, *Zonenkinder* (Rowohlt)

Goodbye Lenin – Director: Wolfgang Becker

Das Leben der anderen – Director: Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck

TEACHING METHOD

There will be introductory lectures on the works studied, but all other classes will take the form of seminar discussions in which students will be expected to give class papers. Students should regard such classes not as “teaching sessions” in which the teacher plays an active and the students a passive role, but as collaborative meetings to which all contribute.

ESTIMATED WORKLOAD

Individual workloads are difficult to assess, since (a) students’ reading speeds vary; (b) in order to arrive at a satisfactory understanding of a text or film or to prepare a class paper, one student may want to read more secondary literature than another; (c) the time spent reading the texts or watching a film, while considerable, is not time spent working in the sense that reading secondary literature or writing an essay constitutes work. However, the University considers that students doing a 4-paper BA(Hons) programme should expect to work for 12 hours weekly for each full-year paper. This includes the class contact hours.

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ASSESSMENT

The assessment programme is designed to evaluate the extent of the student’s understanding of the texts and films studied, and the depth and sensitivity of the student’s response to those texts and films as shown in essays and in examination answers. The essays also provide a means of assessing the student’s ability to research and think on a topic, organise thoughts and insights, and express them in a lucid, well-documented way. While an essay at Honours level should above all demonstrate the student’s own independent understanding of the subject being treated, it should also draw on relevant secondary literature, and if necessary take issue with it.

- Two essays of about 2000 words in length (25% each) 60%
 - Final three-hour examination 40%
- (No texts are permitted in the exam room.)

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Students enrolled in the course are expected to be available during the examination period 17 October – 8 November 2008.

Both the essays and the final examination are subject to External Assessment by the German Department of another New Zealand university. Note that at Honours level the arithmetical computation of marks is less important than the teachers' and examiners' overall assessment of the student's abilities and performance. See the statement to this effect on p. 57 of the European Languages and European Studies Prospectus, 2008.

THE ESSAYS

The essays for GERM 411 are due on **Friday, 16 May** and **Friday, 19 September**.

Topics will be given out at least four weeks prior to the deadline, and the essays may be written in either English or German, as the student prefers. When preparing their essays, students should observe the guidelines given in the German Section's *Notes on the Presentation of Essays*.

Essays *must* be handed in on time to the lecturer concerned. Students prevented by uncontrollable circumstances from completing an essay on time must, *in advance of the deadline*, formally request an extension of time from the lecturer. In cases of illness, accident or bereavement, this can be done by telephone. Essays submitted late without explanation will have penalty marks deducted at the rate of two 5 marks a day; in the case of extreme lateness, the essay will not be marked.

All assignments must be submitted in two forms: first, by email to the German Programme Administrator german@vuw.ac.nz and second as a print-out to be handed in to the German assignment box located to the left of the SAELC Reception area on Level 6 of von Zedlitz. The print-out must include a cover sheet available from SAELC Reception or Blackboard. Assignments will not be considered complete until submitted in both forms.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The minimum course requirements which must be satisfied in order to complete the course are: attendance of a minimum of 80% of classes and satisfactory completion of the essays and the examination. Unless notified to the contrary, students may assume that they have been awarded Terms, i.e. have met the mandatory course requirements.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

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Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

TURNITIN

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Student work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <<http://www.turnitin.com>>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES AND STUDENT EVALUATIONS

In the second week of lectures, staff will facilitate the election of a class representative. Student reps are a valuable means of communication between teaching staff and students. Each trimester student reps of SAELC courses will meet together with the Head of School. At the end of the course all students will be asked to fill out questionnaires prepared by the University's Teaching and Development Centre in order to evaluate individual lecturers' performance and/or the course as a whole.

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GENERAL UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS, POLICIES AND STATUTES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support