

Summer Semester 2023

Vorlesung: Survey of British Literature and Culture: Shakespeare and the Early Modern Period

Prof. Dr. Claudia Lillge

The great Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt considered the Renaissance not only as “a modern culture created by a modern society” but also as a prosperous epoch in which art and literature were reborn. In this lecture, we will study the multifaceted profile of this epoch, with its characteristic worldviews (views of the cosmos and society), its social framework (religious and political organization, gender roles and relations, self-fashioning and identity), as well as its diverse manifestations in the field of the arts (literature, music, visual arts). The lecture will include a more extensive engagement with the lyrical and dramatic works of William Shakespeare, as well as with the playwrighting of his contemporaries Ben Jonson, Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe, and Elizabeth Cary. Comparing *Hamlet* with Kyd’s *The Spanish Tragedy* and Cary’s *The Tragedy of Mariam*, *Twelfth Night* with Jonson’s comedy of humours *Volpone, or The Fox*, *King Richard III* with Marlowe’s *Edward II*, we will focus on the multiple relationships of inspiration and differentiation that introduce us not only to the richness and variety of forms but also, as Harold Bloom puts it, to “[t]he invention of the human” in the early modern drama that has, in fact, forever changed the world of Western theatre.

This lecture will continue the series of surveys in literary and cultural history. It is designed for advanced students (Masters) as well as for the preparation for the state exam. Still, it can also be attended by students of all semester levels for introduction and consolidation. In preparation for the lecture, participants are advised to study the respective sections in Paul Poplawski, ed., *English Literature in Context*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2017) – see especially the following chapter: Andrew Hiscock, “The Renaissance, 1485-1660”.

Oberseminar: Literatur- und Kulturtheorie

Prof. Dr. Claudia Lillge

Das Oberseminar richtet sich an fortgeschrittene Studierende in der Examensphase, Doktoranden und Postdoktoranden aus dem Bereich Anglistische Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft. Es bietet allen Teilnehmenden ein Forum für die Präsentation, Diskussion und Weiterentwicklung von Qualifikations- und Forschungsprojekten. Darüber hinaus dient es der kritischen Auseinandersetzung mit aktuellen Forschungsthemen und -texten, die in die gemeinsame Vorbereitung des “Researcher in Residence”-Formats einmünden.

Hauptseminar: “Global Crusoe”: The Robinsonade Across Anglophone (Media) Cultures

Prof. Dr. Claudia Lillge

There are seldom works of literature which were crowned with as much success as Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*. Thus, since the publication of the novel in 1719, the so-called Robinsonade has become one of the most flourishing genres of world literature. Therefore, it is virtually impossible to count all the numerous adaptations across the media landscape. But what might be the reason for this unbroken success story? What may have attracted modern and contemporary authors to *re-write* the story of a castaway’s survival on a desert island again and again, and what might be so fascinating about transferring it to other spaces, times, and cultures? This seminar is for students who like to (*re*)-read and study Defoe’s classic in detail, *to compare* it to some of its famous transformations such as William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, (1954), J.G. Ballard’s *Concrete Island* (1974), Yann Martel’s *Life of Pi*

(2001), Robert Zemeckis' *CAST AWAY* (2000), Ridley Scott's *THE MARTIAN* (2015), and to explore new approaches to this corpus with different theories of alterity.

Examensseminar: Neuere englischsprachige Literaturen

Prof. Dr. Claudia Lillge

Die Formation der Postcolonial Studies stellen ein interdisziplinäres Forschungsfeld dar, in dem sich u.a. Forschungsfragen der Geschichtswissenschaft, der Soziologie, der Anthropologie und Ethnologie treffen und miteinander verschalten. Während 'post-colonial' (mit einem Bindestrich) eine Periode bezeichnet, die chronologisch 'nach' dem Kolonialismus beginnt und dadurch impliziert, dass sich die Geschichte in klar unterscheidbare Phasen von prä- bis post-kolonial entfaltet, wird mit dem Begriff 'postcolonial' (ohne Bindestrich), wie ihn auch die heutigen Postcolonial Studies verwenden, ein weiterer Rahmen gesetzt. Denn die Postcolonial Studies gehen von einer Gleichzeitigkeit des Kolonialismus und Postkolonialismus aus; ihr Interesse richtet sich folglich auf die Erfahrungen des Kolonialismus sowie auf seine vergangenen 'und' gegenwärtigen Auswirkungen. Dementsprechend argumentieren auch Elizabeth Bronfen, Benjamin Marius und Therese Steffen: Postkolonialismus wird zu einem umfassenden Konzept von Kultur als "Widerstreit [...] zwischen Repräsentationen von Welt, Subjekt, Geschichte usw. ausgeweitet." Eben dieser "Widerstreit" zielt auf eine Kritik an Modellen des heutigen Denkens, darunter fallen zum Beispiel Modelle der Identität, der Nation oder der globalen Ordnung. Binarismen, mit denen Weltordnungen zugleich beschrieben und konstruiert werden (wie Eigenes/Fremdes, Identität/Alterität, Schwarz/Weiß, Okzident/Orient, Natur/Kultur usw.) werden kritisiert; darüber hinaus werden vielfach neue Denkfiguren entworfen, die zum Teil mit eigenen Begriffen – wie 'hybridität', 'third space' oder 'diaspora' – einhergehen. Im Rahmen dieses Seminars lesen wir Schlüsseltexte der Postcolonial Studies (Edward Said: *Orientalism*; Homi Bhabha: *The Location of Culture*; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: *Can the Subaltern Speak*; Stuart Hall: *Familiar Stranger*), die in den Literaturwissenschaften Perspektiven und Blickwinkel auf Texte verändert haben; ferner widmen wir uns ausgewählten Texten der neuen englischsprachigen Literaturen sowie Theorien des postkolonialen Schreibens. Dieses Seminar dient zur Vorbereitung auf das Staatsexamen, daher werden die genannten Inhalte gezielt auf mögliche Klausurinhalte hin abgestimmt und eingeübt.

Hauptseminar: The Sentimental Disposition of Popular Posthumanism

Dr. Christian Krug

Popular trans- and posthumanist fictions do not just inquire into the politics of what it means to be 'human', they also use sentimental tropes and scripts in the process. Our focus will be on contemporary TV (HBO's *WESTWORLD* [2016–20] and Channel 4's *HUMANS* [2015–18]) and late 19th-century fiction, specifically H.G. Wells' 1896 work of science fiction, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. In addition, a conference-like section will look at scientific romances and gothic novels that were all published in 1897: H.G. Wells' *The Invisible Man*; two vampire novels, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and Florence Marryat's *The Blood of the Vampire*, and Richard Marsh's horror novel *The Beetle: A Mystery*. Students will focus on one of these texts respectively. In a final section, they will also have the opportunity to bring their own trans-/posthumanist fiction to class.

Proseminar: Contemporary British Historical Fiction

Dr. Dennis Hennebühl

In the last couple of years, there has been a significant tendency in British culture and society to look back to the country's past. This can for instance be observed in Brexit's central slogan 'take back

control', which nostalgically promises the restoration of an allegedly lost golden age, or the popularity of the historical fiction genre. Drawing on current research, we will discuss the main characteristics of this genre and compare different ways in which these cultural products represent and engage with British history. In doing so, the seminar will also touch upon key issues such as national identity, gender, class, nostalgia, and revisions of history. In our analysis, we will take different media forms such as novels, films or TV series and the differences between them into consideration.

Proseminar: Class and Gender in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, then and now

Marlene Compton

In this course we will examine the role of class and gender in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and how these categories intersect in a close reading of the text. We will try to understand how the novel is embedded in its specific time and place, but also take a look at a modern adaptation of the work, YouTube's *THE LIZZIE BENNET DIARIES*. *THE LIZZIE BENNET DIARIES* was the first adaptation of a literary text that was created primarily for an online audience and made significant changes in order to fit the format and the socio-political climate of the YouTube space in the 2010s. We will look at the same intersection of categories in the web series and compare the two works.

Kombiseminar: Mediality

Dr. Christian Krug

This interdisciplinary module will explore questions of mediality, specifically TV and film, from the perspectives of both cultural studies and linguistics. For example, we will look at *The Man with the Golden Gun* (1974), *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* (1998) and two adaptations, *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE* (2005) and Baz Luhrmann's *WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S ROMEO + JULIET* (1996). In addition, short scenes from *THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E* (2015), *LIFE ON MARS* (2006), and *BRIDE AND PREJUDICE* will also be used, but there is no need to watch these in advance.

Aufbauseminar: Literature

Alina Aulbur

Building on the knowledge acquired in *Grundseminar Literature*, this class serves as an introduction to literary theory. We will discuss several approaches and methods in depth and critically analyze their potential and limits by applying them to exemplary primary texts. In doing so, we will also reflect on how these different approaches and methods impact our understanding of literature.

Aufbauseminar: Culture

Dr. Christian Krug, Dr. Dennis Henneböhl

Aufbauseminar Culture extends the knowledge and skills acquired in the *Grundseminar* and covers cultural theory, cultural history and cultural analysis. The course is structured around short, seminal texts in cultural theory and exemplary case studies to illustrate and test their applicability.

Grundseminar: Culture

Dr. Christian Krug

This seminar provides a first insight into the field of contemporary Cultural Studies, with a special emphasis on definitions of culture and on the different approaches and methods of cultural analysis. The course also introduces students to special topics such as Media Studies, constructions of otherness, the role of myths in the production of social meaning, and Gender Studies.