

COURSE DETAIL

LITERATURE AS THEORY: BLANCHOT AND BATAILLE

Country

Ireland

Host Institution

Trinity College Dublin

Program(s)

Irish Universities, Trinity College Dublin

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

French

UCEAP Course Number

102

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

LITERATURE AS THEORY: BLANCHOT AND BATAILLE

UCEAP Transcript Title

LITERATUR AS THEORY

UCEAP Quarter Units

4.00

UCEAP Semester Units

2.70

Course Description

What is literature? The question has fascinated writers and philosophers alike for centuries, and this course looks at some of the most engaging and powerful responses the 20th century has to offer. The course provides students with conceptual tools to think about literature by examining writers and thinkers whose works – literary and theoretical – have laid some of the foundations of modern literary thought. What does it mean to theorize literature? Does a theory of literature adequately address the experience of literature? And can literature actually convey experience in the first place? What happens when literature produces its own experience and its own theory, when literature becomes the experience of its theory or the theory of its experience? This course explores these and other related questions by introducing students to two key French figures of the 20th century: Maurice Blanchot (1907-2003) and Georges Bataille (1897-1962). The focus of this course is twofold: first, students concentrate on works of fiction by the two authors under discussion (THOMAS L'OBSCUR and MADAME EDWARDA) and see how a close-reading of these works raises theoretical questions about literary experience; second, students look at the ways in which these thinkers have sought to account for the experience of literature in their theoretical writings. Taught in French, the course offers students an opportunity to address the issues at stake from a variety of perspectives (aesthetic, philosophical, affective, anthropological, mystical, etc.) and is assists them in developing and enhancing both their analytical skills and their conceptual language. As such, this course is useful as a preparation for those wishing to explore critical thought and literary theory in the post-war and post-1968 periods in more advanced classes. While prior knowledge of literary theory is not a requirement, students should be prepared to engage with theoretical questions.

Language(s) of Instruction

French

Host Institution Course Number

FR3020

Host Institution Course Title

LITERATURE AS THEORY: BLANCHOT AND BATAILLE

Host Institution Campus

Trinity College Dublin

Host Institution Faculty**Host Institution Degree****Host Institution Department**

French

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