

## **An Hour with the Classics – Close Readings of Canonical Poems**

Dr. Martin Kindermann

Course number: **53-560**

Time: Thursday, 13-14h

Room: Ü35 – 11041

First session: 18.10.2018

In this course we will focus on the big names in British poetry: from William Shakespeare to T. S. Eliot and beyond. Primary goal of this one-hour format is to explore and widen analytical skills in close readings. We will not consider any secondary material, instead, each week we will discuss one or two texts in a detailed analysis of the poems poetological content and design. We will unlock the often complex (and daunting?) structure of the poems and confront different attempts at famous works we all have repeatedly stumbled across in literary histories, secondary material and intertextual references. Of course, “canonical” is a term that needs to be proplematised and we will definitely do so. Over the course of semester, we will therefore also take a look at modes and mechanism of canonisation, trace discourses of inclusion versus exclusion and question methods of selection. Herein we will talk about cultural, social and political discourses, which influence and determine the selection perceived as a canon of British poetry. Yet, engaging with the texts by authors such as John Donne, William Blake, Mary Robinson or John Keats and W.B. Yeats will be our primary goal. In close readings we will take the time to explore modes of constructing meaning as well as poetic arguments and hopefully enjoy some of the must-reads in British poetry.

All the material will be available online via agora.

**Course Requirements:** Regular attendance and active participation.