

<b>Veranstalter.....</b>	<b>Paul Hamann</b>
<b>Thema.....</b>	<b>Contemporary Fiction: Ian McEwan and Graham Swift</b>
<b>Art der Veranstaltung.....</b>	<b>Sem. II (Sem. Ib für Zulassung bis WS 14/15)</b>
<b>Veranstaltungsnummer.....</b>	<b>53-541</b>
<b>Zeit.....</b>	<b>Mi 10-12 c.t.</b>
<b>Raum.....</b>	<b>Phil 1219</b>
<b>Beginn.....</b>	<b>14. Oktober 2015</b>

### Course description

This course revolves around two notions of ‘contemporary’. To begin with, this course addresses selected works of two of the most prominent contemporary British authors: Ian McEwan and Graham Swift. Further, this course will pursue a theme common to both these writers, namely a pronounced concern for contemporary history. One goal of this course will hence be to investigate the texts at hand with regard to their relations to their historical context in order to find out how these texts appraise, interpret and portray the times of their production. Along the way, students will engage with different conceptions of what we understand as history and historical forces as well as with the diverse strategies the texts under consideration employ to comment on historical events, moods or processes – be it Britain under Thatcher, the fall of the Berlin Wall or personal narratives in the face of a post credit crunch economy. What will accompany participants throughout this course is a focus on how and to what purpose history – primarily the very recent but also the more distant past – is represented in the works by Ian McEwan and Graham Swift. And because doing so requires a closer look at what actually happened historically at the time of writing, this course also effectively allows for a brief history of Great Britain since the late 1970s, which is the time both McEwan and Swift started to publish.

### Course material

We will set out by reading selected short stories from the authors’ early story collections before turning to a screenplay McEwan wrote in the early 1980s called *The Ploughman’s Lunch* and the film that was subsequently produced from it. In addition, we will consider two novels, McEwan’s 1992 *Black Dogs* and Graham Swift’s 2011 *Wish You Were Here*. The course will close by discussing stories from Swift’s latest collection *England and Other Stories* from 2014.

All material except the two novels will be made available to you via Agora. For the film an obligatory screening session will be organised. The two novels you will have to buy, preferably the following editions:

Ian McEwan. *Black Dogs*. London: Vintage, 1998.

Graham Swift. *Wish You Were Here*. London: Picador, 2012.

### Course requirements

Regular and active participation, a number of reading quizzes, a short research assignment as well as a ten- to twelve-page research paper.

<b>Sprechstunde in der Vorlesungszeit:</b>	<b>Mondays, 4 p.m. - 5 p.m.</b>
<b>Sprechstunde in der vorlesungsfreien Zeit:</b>	<b>appointments via email</b>