

CHAPTER 23

GERMANIC AND ROMANCE STUDIES

Doctoral Theses

01. NARAG (Noorie)
Contestations of Media Driven Perceptions in the Works of Peter Handke and Elfriede Jelinek.
Supervisors : Prof. Shaswati Mazumdar
Th 24507

Abstract
(Not Verified)

The title of my Ph.D. thesis is ‘Contestations of Media-driven Perceptions in the Works of Peter Handke and Elfriede Jelinek’. Peter Handke and Elfriede Jelinek are undoubtedly two of the most significant authors of contemporary German literature. They also happen to be diametrically opposite in their choice of themes and their writing styles. Although it is true that works of both have been extensively analysed individually, there are very few studies which look at these two authors together. The objective of this thesis is to investigate if a comparison can be drawn between these two authors, with respect to two key elements. The first is the representation of reality in various forms of mass media, popular culture, and genres of popular literature. The ‘conventional’ representations of reality in media—like television, newspapers and in the genres of popular literature—agitate both authors and they react strongly to these in their own works. Secondly, both authors experiment with genres of popular literature to create their own literary alternatives. ‘Myth’ and ‘emptiness’ are crucial creative tools for both authors to give expression to the models of literary representations of reality in their own works. The main hypothesis of this research is to show, through a comparative analysis of a few of their works, that Peter Handke strives to revive and reinstate myth in his literary texts, while Elfriede Jelinek is determined, in contrast, to deconstruct all myths once and for all. The comparison should demonstrate how both apply the same philosophical concepts in two opposite ways to offer critical and authentic alternative modes of representing reality in Literature as opposed to the preconceived, predetermined and clichéd modes of representation in mass media and popular literature.

Contents

1. Massenmedien und realität 2. Mythos, literature und realität 3. Populare kunst and realität. Peter Handkes und Elfriede jelineks mythen der metamorphose 4. Eine andere realität: Peter handkes und Elfriede jelineks schreibkunst der differrance. Schluss. Literaturverzeichnis.

02. SHARMA (Navreeti)
Space, Gaze, Identity in the Works of Assia Djebar.
Supervisors : Prof. Kusum Aggarwal
Th 24508

Abstract
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The thesis explores the works of the Algerian writer Assia Djebar from the vantage point of three essential themes, Space, Gaze and Identity, in a bid to retrieve her depiction of Algerian history and

society from the French conquest of Algeria in 1830 till the 1990's when Algeria came under the influence of fundamentalist forces. Placing her writings within the field of Algerian literary production since the 1920's, I argue here that, as in the case of postcolonial writers, Djébar endows fiction with the power to document real life experiences, particularly of women, systematically silenced and condemned to anonymity with the purpose of reclaiming their rightful place in the annals of history, as social and political actors with a sense of agency. Hence Djébar, a trained historian, skillfully uses the art of the novel to bring alive Algeria's troubled past as she raises several questions about the colonial system, the tensions that defined socio-political relations between the colonizer and colonized, the alienation experienced by the latter. History and memory (Halbwachs, Le Goff, Todorov) converge to seek out those who remember, and capture their stories; pen them or film them, so as to keep alive the past in its imbrications with the present. Her writings blur the boundaries between past and present. Djébar's novels read like as sociological treatises that uncover the postcolonial condition, much like the essays of colonial theorists like Albert Memmi, Franz Fanon and Fredrick Cooper. With her commitment toward the retrieval of women's voices, Djébar's works clearly demonstrate a feminist perspective. Her novels portray the role of women in Algerian society, sometimes through a depiction of their collective predicament, and others through their individual testimonies, as in the case of her personal autobiography, *Nulle part la maison de mon père* (2007), bearing a dedication to Gayatri Spivak.

Contents

1. Assia djébar en relation avec la littérature algérienne d'expression française 2. Le thème de l' espace dans la disparition de la langue française 3. Le thème du regard dans *L'Amour, la fantasia* 4. Le thème de l'identité dans *nulle part de la maison de mon père*. Conclusion Générale. Bibliographie. Annexe.

03. SOLANKI (Surabhi)
Representations of French Culture in Textbooks and the Perception of France by French Learners in India (A Case Study: University of Delhi).
 Supervisors : Dr. Farida Irani
Th 24941

Abstract (Not Verified)

It is often said that for a learner of foreign languages, it is not only the learning of the language that is important but also the knowledge of the target culture. But there are various factors that influence this "knowledge of the foreign culture". Hence in this research work, using a questionnaire we have tried to find out the initial perception of a French language learner regarding France and French culture. In addition to the initial representation of France and French culture, we have tried to find out if at the end of the course this initial perception has been changed through foreign language textbooks that have been used to teach the language or the textbooks have fossilized the initial representation of the student. Our field of study is restricted to learners of French of the BA (Hons.) Program of Delhi University. This leads us to the second part of this research work. The analysis of the cultural content of the textbooks of French language used in schools as well as in the University of Delhi by trying to find the answer of the following questions: What image do the textbooks portray of France and French culture ? i.e. culture with a 'C' or 'c'. Is it a real or a stereotyped image? Do textbooks in India consider the learner's own culture? If yes, how? Do textbooks through activities allow the learner to reflect and compare their culture to that of the target language, French in this case and hence promote an intercultural dialogue/communication?

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Quelques notions clés: Définitions 3. L'analyse du questionnaire 4. L'analyse comparative des manuels. A: L'analyse des manuels indiens B: L'analyse des manuels français. C: L'analyse comparative des manuels indiens et français 5. La conclusion. Bibliographie. Annexe. La table des matières.