

Key Works of Czech Literature

As this year we are marking the centenary of the foundation of Czechoslovakia as well as the 25th anniversary of the emergence of the Czech Republic, the aim of this course is to reflect on the main developments in Czech literature in the last one hundred years, with a special focus on the contemporary period.

Lecturer: Dr Jana Fischerova

17 September 2018 – Opening lecture on the history of Czech national literature – on the various movements, trends and themes prominent at different times, as well as the key figures of the hundred years.

24 September 2018 – Czech literature during the First Republic (1918-1938). This was the time when Czech literature could finally spread its wings and begin to flourish in the democratic environment of independent Czechoslovakia. We shall discuss the richness of the interwar literary scene, considering, among other things, the significance of the theatre and literary avant-garde in the context of Czech cultural identity. Key text: Jaroslav Hašek, *The Good Soldier Schweik* (1923) – Parts I and II

1 October 2018 – Czech literature under Communism (1948-1989). Many of the integral components of Czech literary culture, as reflected in the production of the earlier period, were prohibited and classed as taboo by the post-war Communist regime. We shall discuss, among other things, the challenges presented to writers by state censorship and other prohibitive measures, considering at the same time how these were at times overcome to produce some of the best works of Czech literature. Key text: Bohumil Hrabal, *The Death of Mr Baltisberger* (1966)

8 October 2018 – Seminar with our guest speaker, the writer and illustrator Renáta Fučíková: <https://www.tcd.ie/trinitylongroomhub/whats-on/details/event.php?eventid=128691757>

15 October 2018 – Czech literature since the fall of Communism. We shall examine the thematic and other links between the works of contemporary writers and their predecessors, aiming to establish, among other things, whether there is such a thing as a specifically ‘Czech’ theme or feature running through the literature. We shall also discuss Czech authors’ relationship with world literature and consider the importance of translation. Key text: Patrik Ouředník, *The Opportune Moment, 1855* (2006)