



the  
**future**  
its history  
and its future

GER 4016

Dr Bernhard Malkmus

taught in German  
assessment:  
30% exam | 70% essay

for more information,  
please contact:  
[sml@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:sml@ncl.ac.uk)



This module investigates important shifts in how time has been conceptualized over the past 250 years in European cultures, with a particular focus on the idea of the future in German-speaking cultures.

We will investigate how concepts of the future have changed in the light of the Cold War, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the current global ecological crisis, and how these changes have shaped our perception of the present. We will engage with a selection of contemporary literature and visual arts, for example Ingeborg Bachmann, Max Frisch, W.G. Sebald; Neo Rauch, Werner Herzog, and Berlin School movies.

Excerpts from Enlightenment philosophy, 19th-century science writing, and 20th century political theory in the German language tradition will provide additional historical contexts.

With contemporary thinkers such as Aleida Assmann, Arjun Appadurai and Lucian Hölscher we are asking ourselves:

**What kind of future do we have as humans in an increasingly anthropomorphic world?**