

**Problem** ▶ Question ▶ Why the Renewed Interest in Linguistics in Modernism and Postmodernism

**Context:** Modernism and Postmodernism

**Cultural Background previous to**  
Modernism and Postmodernism

- the myth of progress and the idea of a self-made man
- religious crisis = man felt lost; no reference points
- philosophical crisis (F. Nietzsche) = necessity of Meaning after the loss of GOD
- new paradigms in the concept of space and time (Albert Einstein's theory of Relativity)
- the idea of simultaneity of time (H. Bergson -> the present is in our **consciousness** as the sum of our past memories and future expectations -> William James)
- the discovery of the Unconscious (Sigmund Freud) Unconscious (man's

folly) -Ego (self)-Superego  
(conventions)

- meaning is the object of a quest
- the nature of the human being across time (Anthropology > myths and rituals > J. Weston's From Ritual to Romance and J. Frazer's The Golden Bough)
- **linguistics** tries to find out the true nature of meaning (**arbitrary** relationship between SIGNIFIER-SIGNIFIED) ▶ Meaning is something conventional
- C. Jung, The Psychology of the Unconscious > racial memory

## WORLD WAR II

### Postmodernism

Crisis of Capitalism and **the idea of a finite unique self**

- **Questioning** the same **idea of Meaning as Something Unique/ the idea of a single definite Truth**
- **Crisis of the concept of a finite**
  - **Author**
  - **Origin**

- Self
- Character
- Original text
- Unique, true interpretation

### **Central ideas:**

- No author
- No truth
- No meaning ► meaning is always differed (J. Derridà)

Linguistics previous to F.de Saussure

Ferdinand de Saussure

J. Derridà