

GER 6535 German Classic and Romantic Literature

Tuesday 9-11 p 342 Dauer Hall

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The Classic and Romantic periods of German cultural history have recently been described as a time of wide-ranging cultural innovations that became the foundation of our understanding of German culture up to the present. The achievements of this period have been compared to the historical achievements of the Italian Renaissance, which not only created an Italian national culture but also contributed substantially to the general progress of human culture in a time of grave cultural turbulences.

This course is designed to critically study the cultural “inventions” that constitute the specifically German culture that was so successfully produced in both the Classic and Romantic Ages. First, we will review the political, socio-economic, and cultural conditions in mid-18th century as well as study some major German and non-German (e.g. English and French) approaches to solving the many problems of this period. Next, we will focus on how German intellectuals addressed the crisis of humanity in this period. To this end, we will read some theoretical, but mostly literary texts.

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and be prepared to contribute to the class discussions. One of the cultural innovations of the period to be studied is the so-called ‘Seminar’. In this type of university course, for the first time, students did not have to simply memorize the position of the authorities or the ‘orthodoxy’ of the time. Students were now required to contribute to the open research process in the new ‘Seminar’ format. This “Seminar” concept of ‘research and teaching’ will be an integral part of this course. In other words, students are expected to have an informed opinion in class discussions.

Students will make several presentations in class. During the course, each student will give several short, but informed introductions to the authors whose texts we are studying in class. It is expected that these introductions will provide an initial understanding of the text to be discussed.

Toward the end of the course, students will hand in a major research paper (15 page minimum) on a topic not discussed in class and give a brief report on their paper in the last class meeting. The topic of the research paper has to be approved by me no later than October 17th.

Grading:

Class participation: 30%

Presentations: 30%

Research Paper: 40%

Reading List:

From the third class meeting on, we start discussing the literary texts listed below. These texts have to be read for the session in which Students are required to read and present one of the following texts and authors:

Goethe "Die Leiden des jungen Werthers

Schiller "Die Räuber"

Movie: Goethe! (Young Goethe in Love)

Goethe "Faust 1"

Goethe "Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre"

Goethe und Schiller Ausgewählte Balladen

Schiller "Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen" (Ausschnitte)

Schiller "Wilhelm Tell"

Jean Paul "Leben des vergnügten Schulmeisterlein Maria Wutz in Auenthal"

Heinrich von Kleist "Das Erdbeben von Chili"

Friedrich Hölderlin "Hyperion"

Ausgewählte Fragmente der Romantik

Novalis Die Träume und Märchen in "Heinrich von Ofterdingen"

Ludwig Tieck "Der blonde Eckbert"

Clemens Brentano 'Ausgewählte Gedichte'

Joseph von Eichendorff "Das Marmorbild" und ausgewählte Gedichte

Ausgewählte Märchen der Gebrüder Grimm

Friedrich de la Motte-Fouque "Undine"

Ludwig Uhland Ausgewählte Gedichte

E.T.A Hoffmann "Der goldene Topf"

Time Table:

1st and 2nd sessions: general orientation: politics, culture, economy, society in the mid-18th century

3rd to 6th sessions: – Goethe and Schiller

7th and 8th sessions: Jean Paul, Kleist, Hölderlin

9th to , 13th sessions : Romantics

14th and 15th sessions: summary – presentation of research projects