

LT306 Literature and Revolution: Classic German Rogues

Seminar Leader: Jeffrey Champlin
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Class Time: Fri 14:00-17:15
Room: P24-0-Seminar Room 8
Office hours: Fri 17:15-18:15 or by appointment

Course Description

Many of the greatest German writers initially responded to the French Revolution with enthusiasm for its ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity. In many ways, this revolution claimed to positively appropriate the broader break of modernity and its attendant social, political, and economic traumas. As the years of the revolution went on however, their work confronted the problems of translating these broad ideas into specific practices. This course tracks this literary history up to the next European period of revolution in 1848 through works of such authors as Kant, Goethe, Schiller, Kleist, Hölderlin, Hegel, Heine, and Marx. Marked for exclusion but evading power, the figure of the rogue will challenge us to engage literary creation as both a reaction to, and model for, attempts to create a better world in the face of violence. A loosening of genre boundaries at this time parallels social upheaval, which encourages the examination of essays, short stories, poems, and dramas that engage questions of politics, philosophy, and literature. Within this field, topics to be covered include the place of the individual in society, the relationship between law and justice, the demands of the excluded other, and the progress of history.

Requirements

We will make the most of the liberal arts seminar format by developing ideas and analysis through a process of discussion and writing. Toward that end, each student will present on one author and write a midterm and final paper. Overall class participation is also essential, and will be evaluated based on consistently preparing the readings and class engagement.

Class presentations: Students will present on one author. Each presentation of about 20 minutes will examine key passages of your choice as guided by a close reading handout that I will provide. Students are encouraged to then develop their presentation further into one of the papers.

Midterm Paper: A commentary of approximately 2000 words is due on March 6th. I will provide a handout with guidance as to the format.

Final Writing Assignment: A final essay connecting two of the texts we have studied of approximately 3000 words will be due on May 1 for seniors and May 15 for all other students. Students are strongly encouraged to formulate their own questions and I encourage students

to discuss their paper ideas and drafts with me in class or in office hours. I am also glad to suggest a paper topic if you prefer.

Please format all written work as 12pt, Times New Roman, double spaced. Include your name and the assignment (midterm or final) in the file name.

Participation: Please prepare each reading with in text annotations. This will allow you to contribute productively to class discussions and raise questions that will help our common interpretive work.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than two absences (that is absences from two sessions of 90 minutes) in a semester will significantly affect the participation grade for the course. Students are advised to consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

As per the Student Handbook: *essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.*

Grade Breakdown

Class participation (quality and quantity): 25%

Presentation: 20%

Midterm essay (2000 words): 25%

Final essay (3000 words): 30%

Texts to be purchased in advance:

Goethe, *Faust I+II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014). 0691162298

Kant, Immanuel, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?"; "On the Proverb: That May be True in Theory but is of No Practical Use." *Kant Perpetual Peace and Other Essays* 0-915145-47-2

Kleist, Heinrich Von, *The Marquise of O- and Other Stories* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1980)

0-14-044359-2

Hölderlin, Friedrich. *Hyperion and Selected Poems*. 0-8264-0334-4

Schiller, Friedrich. *The Robbers and Wallenstein* Trans. F. Lamport. (New York: Penguin Classics, 1980) 0140443681.

Texts provided on the Classroom website:

Hanna Arendt, *On Revolution* (Selections)

Rebecca Comay, *Mourning Sickness: Hegel and the French Revolution* (Selections)

Hegel, "Introduction." *Philosophy of History*

Heine, "Germany, A Winter's Tale"

Marx, *Communist Manifesto*

Schedule

Week 1

January 31: Introduction

Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?"

Week 2

February 7: Schiller, *The Robbers*

Week 3

February 14: Kant "On the Proverb: That May be True in Theory but is of No Practical Use."; Arendt, *On Revolution*, Selections.

Week 4

February 21: Goethe, *Faust I*

Week 5

February 28: Goethe, *Faust I*

Week 6

March 6: Goethe, *Faust II*

MIDTERM PAPERS DUE

Week 7

March 13: Goethe, *Faust II*

Week 8

March 20: **NO CLASS**, Instructor at a conference, class to be made up in completion week.

Week 9

March 27: Kleist, *Michael Kohlhaas*

Week 10

April 3: Kleist, "The Earthquake in Chili"; Kleist, "St. Cecilia, or the Power of Music"

Spring break Monday, April 6 – Monday, April 13

Week 11

April 17: Hölderlin, Selected Poems; Heine, "Germany, A Winter's Tale"

Week 12

April 24: Hegel "Introduction." *Philosophy of History*

Week 13

May 1 : Holliday, NO CLASS

FINAL PAPERS DUE FOR SENIORS. Please submit by email so I can send in grades in time for graduation.

Week 14

May 8: Holliday, NO CLASS

Week 15

May 15: Completion Week: **Make up class will be held to replace class on March 20**

Rebecca Comay, Selections from *Mourning Sickness: Hegel and the French Revolution*; Marx, *Communist Manifesto*

FINAL PAPERS DUE FOR NON-SENIORS