

## **LT320 European Romanticism: The Spirit of an Age in Literature**

Spring 2025

Seminar Leader: Jeffrey Champlin  
Course Times: Tue & Thur 10:45-12:15  
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Office Hours: Thursday, 12:15-1:15 and by appointment

### **Course Description**

This course studies key authors of German and English Romanticism who wrestle with the legacy of the French Revolution through literary renewal. Best known for its flights of imagination, the Romantic movement also envisions new modes of knowing and living together. Authors such as Percy Bysshe Shelley and Hegel envision a bold expansion of Enlightenment promises. Yet the Terror and Napoleonic Wars also violently tested such aspirations. In this context, Wordsworth and the Grimm Brothers take a more concrete path, going to the people for new literary impulses. The formal innovation of writing of the time expresses this rich clash of the universal and particular in poetry, aphorisms, fairy tales, essays, and novels. We'll place particular emphasis on authors who lived in Berlin, including Hegel, Kleist, Hoffmann, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, and the nearby Schlegel brothers (in Jena). English authors include Wordsworth, Coleridge, Percy and Mary Shelley.

### **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 contribute two short presentations 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.

### **Academic Integrity**

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. 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.

### **Accommodations**

Bard College Berlin is committed to inclusion and providing equal access to all students; we uphold and maintain all aspects of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 3 of the German Disability Equality Act of April 27, 2002 (Federal Law Gazette I p.

1468). If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, Atticus Kleen, ([accommodations@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:accommodations@berlin.bard.edu)) to request an official accommodation.

Requests for accommodations should be made as early as possible to ensure adequate time for coordination and planning. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and may require advance notice to implement.

If you have already been approved for accommodations with the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, please arrange to meet with me outside of class so that we can develop an implementation plan.

Students may face extenuating circumstances related to various personal or external factors, which impact their academic performance. While these circumstances often do not fall within the legal framework of Disability Accommodations, Bard College Berlin is committed to supporting students experiencing such circumstances. A student needing a short extension or a replacement assignment because of an extenuating circumstance is encouraged to make arrangements directly with instructors if possible. If further support is needed, please visit the [Bard College Berlin Accessibility page](#). Questions about this process can be directed to James Harker ([j.harker@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:j.harker@berlin.bard.edu)) or Maria Anderson-Long ([m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu)).

### **Attendance**

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin may not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

### **Assessment**

Class presentations: Students will present on one text as per a signup sheet. The presentation of about 15 minutes will examine key passages of your choice as guided by a commentary handout that I will provide. Please be ready to engage in a discussion of your presentation based on suggestions or questions from other students. You are encouraged to expand your presentation into either your midterm or final paper. In this manner, your essays can expand on the insights and questions that arose from your class contribution and the discussion that follows your readings.

## Writing Assignments

Students will write two papers. The first will be focused on one author and the second will develop a longer comparative analysis of two texts we have studied in the class. The midterm paper will be 2,000 words, the final will be 3,000 words.

## Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where a professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it should be submitted by the new deadline agreed upon by both parties. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

## **Grade Breakdown**

Class participation (quality and quantity): 30%

Presentation: 15%

Midterm essay (2000 words): 25%

Final essay (3000 words): 30%

## **Please purchase:**

The course will have a reader that all students should purchase. The following texts should be purchased as well. Those marked with an (\*) are available at the library for students on financial aid and then on a first come, first served basis.

Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, *The sorrows of young Werther* (London: Penguin, 1989) 014044503X; 9780140445039

Shelley, Mary, *Frankenstein* (New York: Norton, 2012) [first or second edition is ok] 0393927938; 978-0393927931. **If you use another edition, please make sure it is a translation of the 1818 text.**

Wordsworth, William, and Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, *Lyrical Ballads* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 2002) 0618107320 [Other versions acceptable as well]

The following text will be provided in the course reader or provided in class:

Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

Freud, "The Uncanny"  
Godwin, Selections from *Political Justice*  
Grimm Brothers, Selected stories  
Günderrode, Karoline von, selections from the collection *Bitter Healing*  
Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry"  
Hoffmann, "The Sandman"  
Hölderlin, Selected Poems  
Kleist, "Earthquake in Chili", "On the Marionette Theater"  
Mahoney, "Heidelberg, Dresden, Berlin, Vienna"  
Shelley, Percy, "On the Defense of Poetry"; Selected poems  
Schlegel, "On Incomprehensibility"; Selected Fragments  
Unknown, "The Oldest System Programme of German Idealism"  
Wollstonecraft, selections from *Vindication of the Rights of Women*

### **Schedule**

January 28 Introduction: European Romanticism

January 30 "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen"

February 4 Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*

February 6 Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*

February 11 Grimm Brothers, Selected stories; Mahoney, "Heidelberg, Dresden, Berlin, Vienna"

February 13 Grimm Brothers, Selected stories

February 18 Kleist, "Earthquake in Chili"

February 20 Kleist, "On the Marionette Theater"

February 25 Unknown, "The Oldest System Programme of German Idealism"; Hölderlin, Selected Poems

February 27 Hölderlin, Selected Poems; Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry"

March 4 Hegel, "Who Thinks Abstractly"

March 6 Günderrode, Karoline von, selections from the collection *Bitter Healing*

March 11 Schlegel, "On Incomprehensibility"; Selected fragments

March 13 Schlegel, Selected fragments. **Midterm Paper due.**

March 18 Hoffmann, "The Sandman"

March 20 Freud, "The Uncanny"

March 25 Romanticism in Visual Art: Museum visit preparation

March 27 Museum Visit: Alte Nationalgalerie, Art of the 19th Century

April 1 Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*

April 3 Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads* "Preface" and selected poems.

April 8 from *Lyrical Ballads*: Coleridge, "Rime of the Ancient Mariner"

April 10 Coleridge, "Rime of the Ancient Mariner"

SPRING BREAK Mon, Apr. 14, 2025 - Tue, Apr. 22, 2025  
(Return to class on Tuesday after federal holiday)

April 22 Shelley, Percy, "On the Defense of Poetry"; Selected Poems

April 24 Shelley, Mary, *Frankenstein*

April 29 Shelley, Mary, *Frankenstein*

May 1 **Federal Holiday** (no classes)

May 6 Shelley, Mary, *Frankenstein*; Wollstonecraft, selections from *Vindication of the Rights of Women*. **Final Paper due for graduating seniors.**

May 8 Shelley, Mary, *Frankenstein*; Godwin, Selections from *Political Justice*

May 13 Completion Week. **Final paper due for students that are not graduating: May 16.**