

Ge1 Module Descriptions and Reading Lists

1. Medieval Literature (Literature A)

This module introduces students to the literature of the medieval and early modern periods through the works of three authors. *Iwein*, an Arthurian romance by Hartmann von Aue, is a tale of knightly adventure which nonetheless shines a critical light on the chivalric lifestyle and its institutions. The poetry of Catharina Regina von Greiffenberg and Andreas Gryphius illuminates life in the German-speaking territories during and in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War, and the very different experiences of a male and a female poet of the time.

Lectures will introduce students to the texts and the latest critical approaches; the aim is to understand the texts both on their own terms, as products of a particular historical culture, and also as classics with enduring appeal – works of literary art which use the same techniques as modern writers, and deal with the same range of 'mortal questions' thrown up by the human condition.

Texts

- Hartmann von Aue, *Iwein*. The original text, accompanied by a parallel translation into modern German, is included in the following paperback edition of several works by Hartmann: *Gregorius, Der arme Heinrich, Iwein: Text und Kommentar*, ed. and trans. Volker Mertens (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag paperback, 2008). There is no need to read more than *Iwein*.
- Catharina Regina von Greiffenberg, *Geistliche Sonnette, Lieder und Gedichte* (1662), ed. Michael Holzinger (Berlin 2015).
- Andreas Gryphius, *Gedichte* (1663), ed. Thomas Borgstedt (Stuttgart 2012).
- Special reference will be made to the poems listed in Appendix A.

Introductory reading

Hartmann

- Wolf, Jürgen, *Einführung in das Werk Hartmanns von Aue* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007)
- Bein, Thomas, 'Hartmann's Poetry', in *A New History of German Literature*, ed. David E. Wellbery (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 82-87, 102-06.

Gryphius and Greiffenberg

- Silke R. Falkner, 'Rhetorical Tropes and Realities—A Double Strategy Confronts a Double Standard: Catharina Regina von Greiffenberg Negotiates a Solution in the Seventeenth Century', *Women in German Yearbook*, 17 (2001), 31-56.
- Bridget Heal, 'Lutherans and the Suffering of Christ', in *A Magnificent Faith: Art and Identity in Lutheran Germany* (Oxford, 2017)
- Peter Hess, 'Poetry in Germany 1450-1700', *Early Modern German Literature 1350—1700*. (The Camden House History of German Literature, vol. 4.) Ed. Max Reinhart. (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2007), pp. 426-430.

2. Modern Literature I: the 18th and 19th Centuries (Literature B)

These two texts introduce students to two of the best-known German writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. *Urfaust* is the first version of Goethe's life's work, the drama *Faust*, and it is the greatest work produced by the literary movement known as *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress). It is a powerful tragedy of overreaching human ambition and desire. A highly effective drama on stage, it also exemplifies a wide range of poetic forms. Droste-Hülshoff was a major writer of the Biedermeier. She is also one of the best-known female authors writing in German before 1900, although she herself tended to see her gender as essentially separate from her identity as a poet. Her short story, *Die Judenbuche*, a work of poetic realism set in a provincial German community, is both an outstanding example of the *Novelle* genre, full of challenge and mystery, and a problematic depiction of prejudice, above all of antisemitism.

Texts

- J. W. von Goethe, *Urfaust* (Stuttgart: Reclam UB5273)
- Annette von Droste-Hülshoff: *Die Judenbuche* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001)

Introductory reading

Goethe

- Boyle, Nicholas, *Goethe. The Poet and the Age*, Vol. 1. *The Poetry of Desire (1749-1790)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), esp. pp. 218-229
- Boyle, Nicholas, *Goethe. Faust Part One* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- Williams, John R., *Goethe's 'Faust'* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1987)

Droste-Hülshoff

- Guthrie, John: *Annette von Droste-Hülshoff: A German Poet between Romanticism and Realism* (Oxford New York, Munich: Berg, 1989), esp. pp. 1-20 (A life in its Context) and pp. 77-93 (Prose Works).
- Webber, Andrew: 'Traumatic identities: race and gender in Annette von DrosteHülshoff's *Die Judenbuche* and Freud's *Der Mann Moses*', in *Harmony in Discord; German Women Writers in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, ed. Laura Martin (Berne, 2001), pp. 185-205
- Webber, Andrew: 'Detecting the Doppelgänger; Droste-Hülshoff', *The Doppelgänger: Double Visions in German Literature*, OUP 1996 pp. 242-25.

3. Modern Literature II: the 20th and 21st Centuries and Film (Literature C)

This module requires study of two internationally known products of culture in German, providing introductions to key aspects of that culture. Kafka's most famous story, *Die Verwandlung*, is an iconic work of modernism, at once essentially literary, and of interest from many other points of view, for instance psychoanalysis, ethics, theology and social theory. It continues to be of relevance today for its probing of what it means to be a human subject in modernity and for its resistance to unambiguous interpretation.

In her modern-day *Western*, Berlin School director Valeska Grisebach's protagonist and cowboy-figure is a manual labourer called Meinhard from former East Germany. In *Western*, the wild west is in fact the east: rural Bulgaria at the eastern frontiers of the European Union. Meinhard joins a group of German migrant workers who are building a hydropower plant, and the film explores what it means to be German for these men. Using slow pacing and employing a distinctive realism, Grisebach invites reflection on masculinity, labour, and the history and politics of twenty-first century Germany.

Texts

- Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung*, ed. Peter Hutchinson and Michael Minden (London: Routledge)
- *Western* (2017), dir. Valeska Grisebach

Introductory Reading

Kafka

- Beicken, Peter, *Franz Kafka: Die Verwandlung: Erläuterungen und Dokumente* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1983)
- Robertson, Ritchie, *Kafka: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2004)
- Webber, Andrew, 'Kafka: *Die Verwandlung*', in *Landmarks in German Short Prose*, ed. P. Hutchinson (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2003), pp. 175-190

Grisebach

- Abel, Marco, *The Counter-Cinema of the Berlin School* (Rochester: Camden House, 2013), 'Introduction' (pp. 1–30), 'Valeska Grisebach' (pp. 230–248)
- Bordwell, David, and Thompson, Kristin, *Film Art: An Introduction* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), ninth edition. ***Please read the following sections** (NB the page numbers will differ depending on the edition. Please read the equivalent section in the edition to which you have access): Chapter 3, 'Narrative as a Formal System', and 'Part Three' (including Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7).
- Camia, Giovanni Marchini, '[Once upon a time in modern-day eastern Europe](#)', *Sight and Sound* (online only)
- Kasman, Daniel, '[Their Western Moment: A Conversation with Valeska Grisebach](#)', *mubi* (online only)

4. History: Imperial Germany 1871-1918, Authoritarianism and Modernism

Few periods of German history have aroused such intense interest as the decades following the establishment of the first modern German nation state in 1871. Many have seen them as the prelude to the Third Reich 1933-1945. Others have emphasized that they saw the birth of some of the most important modernist movements of the twentieth century and of traditions that still shape German society today. This module will examine the rich and dissonant history of the *Kaiserreich*. It was an authoritarian state which was confronted by increasingly vociferous popular liberal and democratic movements. The emergence of extreme forms of nationalism was balanced by radical visions of a return to nature and 'Lebensreform' or of women's emancipation. The growth of militarist attitudes and anti-Semitism on the one hand was matched by the formulation of radical visions that enthusiastically embraced modernity, technology and the city on the other. The first lecture will focus on Bismarck's chancellorship; the second will deal with the reign of Wilhelm II. The third and fourth lectures will examine the numerous and often politically ambivalent forms of antimodernism and modernism respectively.

Introductory reading

- Ullrich, Volker *Deutsches Kaiserreich* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2006) Clark, Christopher, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600- 1945* (London: Allen Lane, 2006), ch.16.
- Retallack, James (ed.), *Imperial Germany 1871-1918* (Oxford: OUP, 2008)
- Berger, Stefan, *Inventing the Nation: Germany* (London: Arnold, 2004), ch.3
- Jefferies, Matthew, *Contesting the German Empire 1871-1918* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008)

5. Linguistics: Language and Lexicography

This module will look at the German language through its two greatest dictionaries, the *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (*DWB*, 1854–1960) started by the Brothers Grimm, and the *Vollständiges Orthographisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* started by Konrad Duden, the modern *Deutsche Rechtschreibung* (*DR*, 1st ed. 1880, 25th ed. 2010). The Grimms' work is a deliberately nationalistic project, designed to raise the profile of the German language as the common inheritance of the German people, to place the study of the language on a solid philological foundation, and to be read both by scholars and by family men in the home. It is the largest and most comprehensive German dictionary ever written. The contrast with the single-volume *DR* could hardly be greater. It is a word-list rather than a true dictionary, designed to bring the unity of a single written form to the language whose main glory, for the Grimms, lay in its regional and historical diversity. Duden's dictionary, now in its 25th edition, is far more likely to be found in a German home than the *DWB*: what it lacks in charm it makes up for in prescriptive power. The module will look at discursive material such as Jacob Grimm's introduction to the first volume of the *DWB*. It will consider the dictionaries themselves as examples of particular lexicographic techniques and ideologies, and will examine the balance between description and prescription which has shaped the development of the language.

Introductory Reading

- Grimm, Jacob und Wilhelm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch Bd 1: A–Biermolke* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854). J. G. 'Vorrede', cols I – LXVIII (March 1854)
- Haß-Zumkehr, Ulrike, *Deutsche Wörterbücher* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2001)
- Jones, William Jervis, '[Dictionaries and Their Role in the Formation of German \(1500-1900\)](#)', in *Landmarks in the history of the German language*, ed. by Geraldine Horan, Nils Langer, and Sheila Watts (Bern: Peter Lang, 2009)
- Sauer, Wolfgang W., and Helmut Gluck, '[Norms and Reforms: Fixing the Form of the Language](#)', in *The German language and the real world: sociolinguistic, cultural and pragmatic perspectives on contemporary German*, ed. by Patrick Stevenson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 69-96
- Young, Christopher, and Thomas Gloning, *A History of the German Language through Texts* (London/New York: Routledge, 2004)

N.B. Chapter 28 of Young and Gloning (2004) and chapter 6 of Haß-Zumkehr (2001) introduce the text of Jacob Grimm's *Vorrede zum deutschen Wörterbuch*, and should be read before the start of teaching on this module.

6. Thought: Marx and Nietzsche

Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche were the two great German revolutionaries of the nineteenth century and each proclaimed a breathtaking vision of the emancipation of human society that continues to fascinate and inspire even today. Marx claimed that he had discovered the truth about the world and exposed the social and political structures of his time as nothing more than a system created by the bourgeoisie to protect its own property and power. His discovery, he claimed, enabled him to show how that world was doomed and why it would soon collapse. Mankind would liberate itself, according to Marx, not just because the oppressed yearned for freedom but because capitalism would founder on its own internal contradictions. Nietzsche rejected Marx's ideas but pursued his own life-long crusade against the bourgeois world and its delusions. His key insight was that society, religion, morality (even scholarship!) were based on bogus assumptions. Selfish and cowardly, human beings had simply deluded themselves that there was a God, that there were such things as good or evil. Nietzsche sought to show how life might be lived in the realisation that all previously accepted truths were false, in a world (beyond mere good and evil) governed by new values. The two texts chosen for this module are among the most concise statements of the thinking of Marx and Nietzsche, two of the most important thinkers not just of modern Germany, but of the modern world.

Texts

- Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels, *Das kommunistische Manifest*, ed. Gareth Stedman Jones (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2012)
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* ('Vorrede', and *Hauptstücke* 2, 5 and 9). (Stuttgart: Reclam UB7114)

Introductory Reading

- Hobsbawm, Eric, 'Introduction', in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Communist Manifesto – A Modern Edition* (London: Verso: 2012), pp. 1-31, available online at: <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/1137-eric-hobsbawm-s-introduction-to-the-2012-edition-of-marx-amp-engels-the-communist-manifesto>
- McLellan, David, *The Thought of Karl Marx*, 2nd edn (London, 1980), pp. 3-113
- Stedman Jones, Gareth, 'Introduction', in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, ed. G. Stedman Jones (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2002), pp. 3-185
- Tanner, Michael, *Nietzsche: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), esp. chap. 7
- Magnus, Bernd and Kathleen Higgins, 'Nietzsche's works and their themes', in: Bernd Magnus and Kathleen Higgins (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), pp. 24-71
- Young, Julian, *Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography* (Cambridge: CUP, 2010), chapter 21 (pp. 407-31)