

Lessing and the Reinvention of German Literature

Fall 2013, Rutgers University
German 16-470-672:01 [index 31887]
Wed. 4:30-7:10pm
172 College Ave. seminar room

Prof. Nicholas Rennie
Office hours Wed. 1:45pm, Th. 9:00am, &
by appointment
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Description

This course aims to introduce a selection of Lessing's most important writings in the context of the developments that transform German literature and philosophy in the 18th century prior to *Sturm und Drang*. Topics to include: Classical and neo-Classical theories of literature and theater, and the invention of a new "German" culture; "Enlightenment" as a set of ideals and as work-in-progress; *Empfindsamkeit*; class society and literature's role in both representing it and theorizing its end (Diderot and the new *bürgerliches Trauerspiel*); shifts in the portrayal and instrumentalization of gender roles; new theories of education and religion; and the creation and development of the modern field of aesthetics. We will be reading shorter selections by Gottsched, Bodmer and Breitinger, and other precursors and contemporaries of Lessing's; and texts by Lessing to include *Der junge Gelehrte*, *Der Freigeist*, *Die Juden*, *Miß Sara Sampson*, *Laokoon*, *Minna von Barnhelm*, selections from the *Literaturbriefe* and *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, *Emilia Galotti*, *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*, and *Nathan der Weise*.

Class discussion, readings and all assignments in German.

Required Texts

Ordered through the Rutgers University Store – all published by Reclam:

1. *Die Juden*, ISBN 9783150076798
2. *Miß Sara Sampson*, ISBN 9783150000168
3. *Laokoon*, ISBN 9783150188651
4. *Minna von Barnhelm*, ISBN 9783150000106
5. *Emilia Galotti*, ISBN 9783150000458
6. *Nathan der Weise*, ISBN 9783150000038

Course Website

The website for this course is entitled *2013-09 Lessing & the Reinvention of German Lit 470:672* and appears at <https://sakai.rutgers.edu>. It is available to all students registered in the course.

Final Grade

Four class presentations (15-20 minutes each), each of which is due as a 3-6pp. paper (Times or Times New Roman, 1" margins, double-spaced) via Sakai/Assignments within a week of the class presentation itself 65%
In-class final exam 35%

Grade Distribution

A=90-100%; B+=85-89; B=80-84; C+=75-79; C=70-74; D=65-69; F=64 and below.

Attendance

All students must attend regularly and arrive prepared. If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate

the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Those who miss more than two class sessions without a compelling excuse should expect a one-step reduction in the course grade (i.e. an A becomes a B+, a B+ becomes a B). Every additional three absences may entail a further one-step grade-reduction. Three late arrivals count as one absence. Failure to bring copies of the assigned readings to three classes likewise counts as one absence. Note: It is the responsibility of students who have been absent (for any reason) to find out what they have missed and obtain materials that may have been handed out.

Disability Support Services

Students who may be requesting accommodations due to disabilities are encouraged to familiarize themselves with procedures and policies regarding disability support services at the following website: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>. It is recommended that students seeking accommodations begin filing paperwork as soon as possible as the documentation review process may take up to 30 business days. Students are encouraged to speak with teachers about these issues at the beginning of the term. All such conversations will be kept strictly confidential.

Academic Integrity

Violations of academic integrity are an extremely serious matter, and can lead to a student's failing the course and being referred to the University's Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action. When referring to ideas other than your own, always acknowledge your sources clearly and completely, whether you are quoting or paraphrasing. Note also that use of online translation services is not permitted as a tool for generating work that you submit for course credit. Please see the University's policies on academic integrity at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>, and discuss with your instructor any questions you may have about this and related issues.

Wochenplan
(Änderungen vorbehalten)

4. Sept.

Einführung

11. Sept.

Johann Christoph Gottsched, *Versuch einer kritischen Dichtkunst vor die Deutschen*, S. 67-117, 142-224 (Erster Theil, Hauptstücke I – II, IV – VI).¹

18. Sept.

Johann Jakob Breitinger, *Critische Dichtkunst* (3. Abschnitt)
Lessing, *Der junge Gelehrte*

25. Sept.

Der Freigeist
Die Juden

2. Okt.

Der Hausvater
Das Theater des Herrn Diderot (Auszüge)

9. Okt.

Miss Sara Sampson

16. Okt.

Laokoon

23. Okt.

Hamburgische Dramaturgie – (Auszüge)

30. Okt.

Minna von Barnhelm

6. Nov.

Emilia Galotti

13. Nov.

Philotas
Ernst und Falk. Gespräche für Freimaurer

20. Nov.

Nathan der Weise
Anti-Goeze

4. Dez.

Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts
Fabeln und Gedichte (Auswahl)

11. Dez.

Klausur

¹ Unter *Sakai/Resources* finden Sie: 1. Den Link zum eingescannten Text bei Google Books, und 2. eine PDF-Version der nötigen Auszüge aus dieser Ausgabe – mit Lesezeichen zu den einzelnen Kapiteln. Achtung: Lassen Sie sich für diese Lektüre etwas Zeit, falls Sie zum ersten Mal einen längeren Text in Fraktur lesen!