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Winter 2021

Germans-Jewish Culture and Modern Multiculturalism in Germany (Intersession 2021)

Robert D. Tobin

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Clark University
Germans-Jewish Culture and Modern Multiculturalism in Germany
German 286 / Jewish Studies 286 / Holocaust and Genocide Studies 286
M/T/Th/F 2-4
Intersession 2021

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Office hours: by appointment

This class studies the expression of cultural identity in central European literature. How have people come to think of themselves or others as “Germans,” “Jews,” “Turks,” “Foreigners,” “Immigrants”? While the Holocaust is obviously central to the German-Jewish relationship, it is not the only focus of this course—we will read literary reflections of the emancipation of the Jews, of German-Jewish assimilation and symbiosis, of the rise of anti-Semitism and Zionism, as well as attempts to remember the past. And while the long history of the relationship between Jews and non-Jews in Germany will be a major component of our course, we will also study the emergence of Germany today as a multicultural nation.

Some of the goals of this course include:

- Specifically, an increased knowledge of German-Jewish culture and modern multicultural Germany
- More generally, a more subtle understanding of the formation of identity and the representation of identity.
- Awareness of important literary texts that address German-Jewish culture and modern multiculturalism, as well as issues of identity formation and representation
- Methodologically, increased subtlety in analyzing literary texts
- Increased skill in understanding scholarly writing on literary texts
- Increased abilities to speak and write on sensitive topics.

Assignments:

- 3 assignments
- 4 short essays
- Questions
- Participation

15
20%
60%
15 10%
10%

Assignments:

On four days, students will post about topics such as Heine and Lieder, post-war poetry, Eurovision, and popular culture. These posts should be entertaining and informative, as we will use them for the basis of class discussion.

Short Essays:

Students will four short essays, due as noted in the syllabus. Students will present their own original ideas, demonstrating knowledge of the primary texts involved and mastery of the secondary literature if that is called for. Students will write in a style appropriate for an academic environment, with cogent reasoning!

Questions:

We will have a number of guest speakers in this class. Students will post informed and thought-provoking questions before each speaker arrives.

Participation:

Participation is vital for a seminar to work. Come to class having read the texts in question and prepared to talk! Given the complexities of on-line participation, contact me early if you believe another approach would be good for you.

Grade Structure for Papers:

A: An “A” paper will have a clear and original thesis. It will be well written, with a lively sophisticated style. Arguments will be comprehensive and buttressed by strong evidence. They will consider obvious objections. There will be virtually no errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling.

B: A “B” paper will have a clear thesis and be solidly written. The thesis may be less complex, less ambitious, and more easily proven than an A thesis. The prose should also not have many errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling, but the style might be simpler than an “A” paper.

C: In a “C” paper, many arguments will not follow from the evidence given, or will be asserted, rather than proven. There will be errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

D: In a “D” paper, many arguments will lack structure and not be to the point. Others will not follow from the evidence given or will be asserted, rather than proven. There will be numerous errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

F: An “F” paper will scarcely have a topic. Arguments will lack structure and not be to the point. There will be numerous errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Grade Structure for Participation:

A: advances the discussion; contributes complex insights; will be articulate and engaging; and enhances and encourages the participation of others. Focuses on the class, not just the professor.

B: expresses text-based, substantial ideas; stays with the topic and continues the discussion; actively volunteers; asks good questions; engages with professor, but not as often with other students; shows genuine effort; but might fluctuate between “A” and “C” behavior.

C: shows acquaintance with the text if called on; tends to offer personal opinions without textual references; does not advance discussion; actively listens, but does not participate; occasional private discussions; occasionally more focused on screen than on classroom discussion;

D: continued refusal to participate in discussion; frequently carrying on private conversations; exhibits signs of disengagement, such as sleeping, zoning out, or non-attendance; frequently more focused on screen than on classroom discussion; and reveals no evidence of having done the reading.

F: “D” behavior carried to the extreme.

Additional Notes:

Attendance: Attendance is vital for a seminar class. Generally, more than three unexcused absences may result in the lowering of your final grade by a whole letter. Our zoom meetings will be synchronous, and you should plan on attending them at the scheduled time. Talk to me if this is a problem. Given the COVID crisis, please let me know if you need accommodations because of illness or exposure to the illness.

Zoom Netiquette: When we are zooming, please have your video on and your audio muted. You may of course choose some kind of zoom background if you would rather not have people seeing where you are zooming from. Do dress appropriately for a classroom situation of course. Be sure to give your full name and, if you choose, your pronouns.

Recording: A portion of our classes will be recorded so that students who are ill or otherwise unable to attend will be able to catch up. They will be available in the Panopto folder for our class. They are only for use by people enrolled in the class, in order to study the topic of the class. Do not redistribute them

electronically. Recordings will be deleted at the end of the semester. If you are uncomfortable with this arrangement, please contact me, and we will discuss it further.

Late Papers: Late papers complicate the grading process. Therefore, I will take off a half grade for each day of lateness. I leave the calculation up to you whether the extra work you put into a paper will be worth the grade erosion caused by lateness.

Student Accessibility Services (SAS): Students in need of an accommodation due to a qualifying disability should self-identify by contacting Student Accessibility Services by telephone (508) 798-4368, or email accessibilityservices@clarku.edu. The office is located in ASEC 208-210. Thomas Sawicki directs SAS. Please see me to discuss how your accommodations will be integrated into this course.

Sexual Misconduct Policies / Mandatory Reporting: To keep you safe, I am obligated by the state of Massachusetts and the University to share information regarding sexual misconduct or crime that may have occurred at Clark. If you tell me, I MUST tell them. However, students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting the Center for Counseling and Personal Growth at (508) 793-7678 or our faculty confidential sources: Kathleen Palm Reed, James Cordova, or Andrew Stewart. If you would like to pursue a formal complaint through university procedures, contact Lynn Levey, Title IX Coordinator by email or at (508) 793-7194. If you would like to pursue a criminal complaint you can contact University Police at (508) 793-7575 or work with Lynn Levey to arrange for a meeting with Worcester Police.

Engaged Academic Time:

We estimate that you will be engaged in academic work for about 189 hours this semester. This is based on the idea that you will be spending on average 2 hours outside of class reading and preparing for each hour in class, although we are aware that people read at varying speeds and with varying levels of care. Nonetheless, our estimate of the engaged academic time in this course is as follows:

Engaged Academic Time:

24 class meetings x 2 hours	48 hours
2 hours prep for each hour of class (including questions/posts)	96 hours
4 short essays (10 hours per essay)	40 hours
Total	184 hours

Day by Day

Enlightenment, Emancipation, and Assimilation

- Jan. 4 Introductions
- Jan. 5 G.E. Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*, Acts I and II
Available online: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3820/3820-h/3820-h.htm>
(Moses Mendelssohn; Haskalah; Christian Wilhelm Dohm)
- Jan. 7 No class: Tobin "at" conference; required short asynchronous lectures.
- Jan. 8 Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*, Acts III, IV, V
(French Revolution, Napoleon, Jewish Citizenship; Hannah Arendt on the citizenship; Berlin Salons: Henriette Herz, Rahel Levin Varnhagen, Dorothea Veit)
- Jan. 11 **Two-page reflection** on recent productions of Lessing's *Nathan the Wise* due before class.
Read short essays on Jewish women's salons in Berlin and post question before class.
Lilliane Weissberg (University of Pennsylvania), "Benjamin Veitel Ephraim: The Life and Work of Jewish Merchant, Writer, and Spy in Late Eighteenth Century Berlin"
- Jan. 12 Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, *The Jew's Beech*
Available online: http://germanstories.vcu.edu/droste/juden_e.html
Schlegel, "Lucinde"
- Jan. 14 Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question*
Available online: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/jewish-question/>
Karl Marx; Human Rights; Emancipation; Assimilation
- Jan. 15 **Read short essays and post question before class:** Guest Lecture on music and salon culture: Ivan Raykoff (The New School)
Post before class on the musical setting of a poem by Heine (assigned by me)
(Mendelssohns)

German-Jewish Culture, Anti-Semitism, Zionism and National Socialism

- Jan. 18 Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*
Available online: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/isource/Zionism/herzl2.html>
Theodor Herzl; Nineteenth-Century Anti-Semitism; Zionism; Austria-Hungary;
Question due before class: Elizabeth Imber (Clark University) will speak on Herzl.
- Jan. 19 **Two-page reflection due** before class: Compare Droste-Hülshoff, Marx, and Herzl on the question of the "people"
Question due before class: Guest lecture: Andreas Krass (Humboldt University, Berlin), "Hirschfeld in Palestine"; Jewish and gay identities in the 19th century and beyond
- Jan. 21 **Question due before class:** Guest lecture: Marc David Baer (London School of Economics), "German, Jew, Gay, Muslim: Hugo Markus"; Franz Kafka, "Jackals and Arabs"
- Jan. 22 Franz Kafka, *Metamorphosis*
Franz Kafka; Prague, Minority Literature

not in the city

Jan. 25 **Question due before class:** Guest Lecture: Frances Tanzer (Clark University): The Habsburg Empire and the Jews;

Jan. 26 Veit Harlan, *Jud Süß*

Veit Harlan, Süß Oppenheimer; Lyon Feuchtwanger; National Socialism

Jan. 28 **Two-page reflection** due before class on either Kafka or Harlan due, with discussion of a piece of secondary literature

Marriage in the Shadows

Question due before class: visit by Hana Greene on Jewish women who passed as Aryans

Jan. 29 Paul Celan *Death Fugue*;

Posts on poems by Nelly Sachs; Elsa Lasker-Schüler

Postwar German Society

Feb. 1 Kutlug Ataman, *Lola and Bilidikid*
Turks in Germany; Unification

Feb. 2 Fatih Akin, *Head On*

Feb. 4 Emine Sevgi Özdamar, "On the Train"; Yoko Tawada, "Where Europe Begins"

Feb. 5 Excerpts from *Showing Our Colors*; excerpt from Olivia Wenzel, *1000 Coils of Fear*;

Feb. 8 *Audre Lorde: The Berlin Years*;

Question due before class: Guest speaker: Tiffany Florvil (University of New Mexico), on *Mobilizing Black Germany*

Feb. 9 Aytan Fox, *Walk on Water*: Israelis, Germans, Gays, Jews; my Eurovision talk

Before class: post on a Eurovision song that I assign to you.

Feb. 11 Posts on German Pop Culture

Before class: post on an aspect of German popular culture that you know about, or that I help you find. Groups encouraged!

Feb. 12 Final Observations and Discussions

Final paper due: 3 pages – reflect on either the films by Akin, Ataman, and Fox, or the short stories or novel excerpts by Tawada, Özdamar, and Wenzel, in terms of the broader issues of this course. Read and refer to at least one piece of secondary literature.

— Spms 11, N.I

— b.ks