

Course Title

Introduction to German Literature

Language and Identity

Course Number

GERM-UA 9152 D01

Instruction Mode: In-Person**Fall 2021****Syllabus last updated on: 08/28/2021****Lecturer Contact Information**

TBA

Your instructor will inform you about the learner hours (one-on-one meetings).

Course Details

Thursdays, 12:45pm to 2:00pm

All times are Central European Time (Daylight Saving Time ends Oct 31, 2021).

Location: Rooms will be posted in Albert before your first class.

In the interest of protecting the NYU Berlin community, we are closely following guidance around COVID-19 from the Robert Koch Institute (Germany's institute for disease control and prevention), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization, and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and adjusting our recommendations and policies accordingly. Your health and well-being is our top priority. Please consult the [NYU Berlin Resource Page](#) frequently for the latest information. You are required to adhere to the most recent policies.

If you are attending in person, you will be assigned a seat on the first day and are expected to use that seat for the entire semester due to NYU COVID-19 safety protocol. Please note that you are expected to attend every class meeting in-person; however, this may change during the drop/add period if in-person student registration increases significantly or at any point during the semester if local COVID-19 regulations require additional physical

distancing. In case of the latter, in-person students may be split into cohorts who will attend alternating sessions.

Prerequisites

Intermediate German II. Furthermore, it is recommended that students have also taken *Composition & Conversation* prior to taking this class.

Units earned

4

Course Description

Der Kurs führt ein in die Geschichte der deutschen Literatur vom frühen 19. Jahrhundert bis in die Gegenwart. Erste literaturwissenschaftliche Fachbegriffe werden erläutert und Herangehensweisen an literarische Texte besprochen. Anhand ausgewählter, repräsentativer Werke wird ein Überblick über Epochen, Gattungen und wichtige Textsorten vermittelt. Zugleich setzt der Kurs, jenseits einer Auffassung von Literatur als einer homogenen oder monolithischen historischen Erzählung, einen thematischen Schwerpunkt auf deutschsprachige Literatur als ein sich wandelndes, kritisches Reflexionsmedium von Sprache und Identität – bis in unsere Gegenwart. Die Autorin Shida Bazyar wird während des Semesters zu Gast sein, aus Texten lesen und Fragen zu diskutieren. Der Unterricht findet in deutscher Sprache statt.

This course provides an introduction to the history of German literature from the early 19th century up until the present. Basic terminology of literary studies will be explained and approaches to literary texts discussed. By reading representative texts, students will receive an overview of various epochs, genres, and important text types. At the same time, the course goes beyond a view of literature as a homogenous, monolithic historical narrative by placing a thematic focus on literature as a changing, critical and ever relevant medium for reflecting on language and identities. In this spirit, we will discuss contemporary texts with a visiting contemporary author. The class will be taught entirely in German.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

- Explain the changing historical and aesthetic negotiations of language and identity in German literary culture from the 19th to the 21st century
- Analyze and interpret literary texts as well as their cinematographic adaptations focussing on content and form
- differentiate between aesthetic strategies and their respective effects
- examine a topic through guided research and present the results to a group of peers
- critique and compare literary texts and scholarship
- develop further skills in the German Language (listening comprehension, reading, writing, speaking)

Course Approach to Teaching & Learning (CATL)

The seminar aims to provide a lively and engaging space for critical inquiry. Discussions will be based on close readings of texts and films, detailed analysis, as well as the respectful

exchange of ideas and perspectives. As some of the texts are intricate in both their use of the German language and their aesthetic principles, we will reserve ample time to clarify understanding before engaging in more in-depth analysis. I am available to you during office hours (by appointment) to discuss your research interests and writing practice.

Assessment Components

You are expected to do the readings, participate in discussions, and complete several assignments. Your performance will be evaluated on the basis of five components:

Class participation: Students are expected to have read the material, reviewed notes from the previous class, and be willing to contribute to class debates.

Presentation: Students give a short in-class presentation (10-15 minutes) on the text discussed in class.

Short paper and final research paper: Students choose a text/topic to write about, addressing the aspects they are particularly interested in.

1. Class participation (including well prepared reading): 25%
2. Class presentation (10-15 minutes): 15%
3. One short paper (500-700 words): 25%
4. One final research paper (1500-2000 words): 35%

You are expected to attend class in person. Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

Required Text(s)

Electronic Resources (via Brightspace / NYU Library)

Please follow this link for the [NYU Berlin Library Catalogue](#) or the link on NYU Berlin's website (Academics/Facilities & Services).

Additional Required Equipment None

Session 1 – 2 Sep 2021

Einführung und Diskussion: Sprache, Identität, Poesie

Lyrik I: Hilde Domin, Nur eine Rose als Stütze. Gedichte (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1968); hierzu lesen wir Domin's Essay, „Wozu Lyrik heute“ (München: Piper, 1975, S.11-32) und diskutieren die Fragen, die der Essay bis heute aufwirft.

Learning Outcomes: Practice the analysis of poems in German; discuss and understand the special features of poetry that make it a (if not *the*) crucial genre for reflection on language and identity.

Session 2 – 9 Sep 2021

Lyrik II: Heinrich Heine, Buch der Lieder, Die Heimkehr (Gedichte, 1823-24)

Heinrich Heines Zyklus „Die Heimkehr“ ist an der Schwelle von Romantik und Realismus geschrieben und zählt zu den berühmtesten Dichtungen deutscher Sprache. Adorno hat die politische Bedeutung von Heines scheinbar romantischen Versen hervorgehoben. Lesen Sie die Gedichte hier:

<http://www.zeno.org/Literatur/M/Heine,+Heinrich/Gedichte/Buch+der+Lieder/Die+Heimkehr>

Lesen Sie dazu Theodor W. Adornos Essay über „Die Wunde Heine“ (in ders., *Noten zur Literatur I*, Frankfurt a.M. Suhrkamp, 1956, S. 146-154).

Learning Outcomes: Understand Heine's poetry as representing a threshold between romanticism and realism, as well as as a reflection on the German language, culture, and identity; apply a critical, political text to Heine's work and reflect on his poetry as a medium to negotiate questions of German-Jewish identity and belonging.

Session 3 – 16 Sep 2021

Neuer deutscher Film: Ein extremes Beispiel der Deprivation von Sprache und Identität zeigt Werner Herzog in seinem Film „Jeder für sich und Gott gegen alle“ (1974) über die tragische Geschichte von Kaspar Hauser, der 1828 plötzlich in Nürnberg auftauchte und kaum sprechen oder laufen konnte. Schauen Sie Herzogs Film auf Kanopy:

<https://nyu.kanopy.com/video/enigma-kaspar-hauser>

Learning Outcomes: Understand the *Neuer deutscher Film* as a medium of German postwar culture and the negotiation of identity for a younger generation of filmmakers. Analyze a cinematic work as an adaptation of historical writings around Hauser's tragic biography. Discuss how the historical subject matter is used by Herzog to address contemporary questions of language and identity.

Session 4 – 23 Sep 2021

Von den Szenen des Spracherwerbs und des Schreibens in Herzogs Film ist es nur ein kleiner Schritt zu Heinrich von Kleists Brief „Über die allmähliche Verfertigung der Gedanken beim Reden“ (1805-06) und die Kraft des Erzählens. Diese setzt da an, wie Kleist erklärt, wo man mit Meditation nicht weiterkommt. Lesen Sie den Brief hier (im Online-Archiv der Max Planck Gesellschaft):

https://pure.mpg.de/rest/items/item_2352284_4/component/file_2352283/content

Learning Outcomes: Reflect with Kleist on the power of storytelling (and writing) as a crucial way to develop, practice, and shape thoughts. Discuss the letter as a medium and a literary genre in the context of language and identity.

Session 5 – 30 Sep 2021

Annette von Droste-Hülshoff schrieb im Schatten der Französischen Revolution eine Novelle über Doppelgänger, Umweltzerstörung, soziale Vorurteile und Antisemitismus in der deutschen Provinz als „geheime Seelendiebe“. „Die Judenbuche. Ein Sittengemälde aus dem gebirgichten Westfalen“ (1842) ist die einzige längere Erzählung der Komponistin und Autorin.

Learning Outcomes: Learn about the novella as a literary genre. Combine literary analysis with a political discussion about the perspectives of minorities, the environment, language, identity, and female writing in 19th century Germany.

Session 6 – 7 Oct 2021

Während von Droste-Hülshoff nur eine einzige, kurze Erzählung schrieb, prägt Franz Kafka im 20. Jh. den Begriff der „Kleinen Prosa“. Die kleine Form bildet eine Antwort auf die von Kafka aufgeworfene dreifache „Unmöglichkeit“ zu schreiben. Kafkas Überlegungen wurden durch Gilles Deleuze und Félix Guattari im späteren 20. Jh. berühmt. Folgen Sie Kafkas Überlegungen in seinen Tagebüchern und in parabolischen Erzählungen wie „Vor dem Gesetz“ und „Beim Bau der Chinesischen Mauer“. Schauen Sie Orson Welles kinematografischer Version der Türhüter-Parabel zu Beginn seiner Adaption von „The Trial“ von 1962: <https://youtu.be/jQDi7SEmfs4>

Lesen Sie dazu Deleuze, Guattari, „Franz Kafka. Für eine kleine Literatur“ (Paris/Frankfurt a.M. 1976, S.24-39).

Learning Outcomes: Understand Kafkas term “small prose” based on his own writings and Deleuze and Guattari’s theoretical take. Reflect on the small and the marginal as the universal through the lense of Kafka’s enigmatic prose.

Session 7 – 14 Oct 2021

Kafka Adaptionen. Neben Orson Welles (1962) verfilmte der österreichische Regisseur Michael Haneke einen weiteren von Kafka’s drei großen, unvollendeten Romanen, „Das Schloß“ (1997): <https://nyu.kanopy.com/video/castle>

Learning Outcomes: Analyze and discuss a cinematographic adaptation of one of Kafka’s works. Reflect on how Kafka’s poetics are transported and how different media can give insights into an author’s work.

Session 8 – 21 Oct 2021

Lesen Sie Bertolt Brechts parabelhafte „Geschichten vom Herrn Keuner“ (1926-1956) und die Foto-Text-Montage „Kriegsfibel“ (1955). Lesen Sie hierzu Hannah Arendt über Bertolt Brecht (München: Piper, 1971, S.63-107; Auszüge). Schauen Sie Arendts Reflexionen über Brecht (1969): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3uNW7s5T8U>

Learning Outcomes: Understand the formal decisions Brecht made in order to contemplate the war and the political questions of his time. Analyze and discuss how Brecht uses literary language to react to historical events. Compare Brecht’s position to Hilde Domin’s take on “politische Dichtung”.

Session 9 – 28 Oct 2021

Lektüre und Diskussion von , „Nachts ist es leise in Teheran“ (2017) und „Drei Kameradinnen“ (2021).

****3 or 4 Nov:** LESUNG und Diskussion mit der Schriftstellerin Shida Bazayar. Die Lesung wird online stattfinden.**

Session 10 – 4 Nov 2021

Von Brechts Kriegsfibel geht es in die Nachkriegszeit und das Ende des geteilten Deutschland. Christa Wolf überdenkt in zwei Essays die einschneidenden Ereignisse im Kontext von Sprache und Identität -- der Rolle der Schriftstellerin in dieser Zeit. Lesen Sie Christa Wolf: „Sprache der Wende“ (1989) und „Was bleibt“ (1990). Lesen Sie einen Überblick über den sogenannten Literaturstreit hier:

<https://literaturkritik.de/christa-wolf-literaturstreit-vereinten-deutschland-eine-dokumentation-aus-jahr-1991-als-sonderausgabe-literaturkritikde.25505.html>

Learning Outcomes: Understand the positions of the German Literaturstreit and Wolf's particular role in it. Use Wolf as a contemporary example to discuss the role of an intellectual in an authoritarian regime alongside the intricate questions of language, identity and politics.

Session 11 – 11 Nov 2021

In dieser Sitzung soll die Stimme Wolfs als kanonische Autorin der DDR durch zwei weitere ergänzt werden, die den Mauerfall anders erlebt haben und in anderen Kontexten reflektieren – May Ayim in ihrem Essay „Das Jahr 1990 – Heimat und Einheit aus afro-deutscher Perspektive“ und Emine Sevgi Özdamar in „Ah! Hier hat es auch geschneit!“ (In: Die Nacht, in der die Mauer fiel. Schriftsteller erzählen vom 9. November 1989, hrsg.v. Renatus Deckert, Frankfurt a.M. 2009).

Learning Outcomes: Compare and discuss Ayim's and Özdamar's quite different takes on the events of 1990, as well as their pronounced reflections on language and identity.

Session 12 – 18 Nov 2021

Mit Judith Schalansky lernen wir in dieser Sitzung eine Autorin kennen, die, hier stellvertretend für eine Generation, die noch in der DDR geboren wurde, die Konsequenzen des Verschwindens der DDR für ihre Sprache und Identität erkundet. In ihrem neuen Buch reflektiert Schalansky über Verlust, An- und Abwesenheiten sowie den Unterschied zwischen Bewahren und Zerstören. Lesen Sie „Palast der Republik“ in: Schalansky, Verzeichnis einiger Verluste (2019, S.209-224).

Learning Outcomes: Discuss a young, contemporary writer's reflection on language and loss as well as her particular take on literature as a 'register'. Reflect on literature as a medium for remembrance.

****Thursday, November 25: No Classes - NYU New York Holiday****

Session 13 – 2 Dec 2021

Auch in Katja Petrowskajas Geschichten, die zwischen Kiew und Berlin, Mauthausen und Warschau entstanden sind, geht es um Erinnerungen, Familienerinnerungen, die in Sprache zu bewahren versucht werden, während diese ständig reflektiert und hinterfragt wird. Wie schwierig dieses mosaikartige Unterfangen ist, deutet bereits der Titel an. Lesen Sie von Petrowskaja, „Vielleicht Esther. Geschichten“, Suhrkamp Verlag Berlin 2014, S.7—87.

Learning Outcomes: Discuss a contemporary writer's attempt at reconstructing a family history in a language that isn't her mother tongue. Continue to reflect on literature as a medium for remembrance.

Session 14 – 9 Dec 2021

In Sasa Stanisics Roman mit dem schlicht-provozierenden Titel „Herkunft“ (München 2019, Auszüge) geht es um eine zersplitterte Familiengeschichte. Das zweite Kapitel nennt der in ehemaligen Jugoslawien geborene Autor „An die Ausländerbehörde“. Das im Text Fragen der Sprache und Identität verhandelt werden, macht dieses witzige und zugleich sehr ernste Buch, das gerade dabei ist, kanonisch zu werden, zu einem sehr guten Ausgangspunkt für eine Schlussdiskussion.

Learning Outcomes: Discuss and compare a contemporary writer's attempt at reconstructing his family history in a language that isn't his mother tongue. Reflect on literature as a medium for remembrance as well as political intervention in public discourse. Prepare for a concluding discussion.

Mo, Dec 20 Abgabe Final Paper

Recommendations for Teaching and Learning in Blended Learning Environment

To optimize the experience in a blended learning environment, please consider the following:

- Be mindful of your microphone and video display during synchronous class meetings. As research has shown, quiet and visually neutral backgrounds are conducive to learning.
- Please do not eat during class and minimize any other distracting noises (e.g. rustling of papers and leaving the classroom before the break, unless absolutely necessary).
- If joining remotely, consider adding your preferred name and pronouns to your Zoom name.
- If deemed necessary by the study away site (i.e., a COVID-19 related necessity), synchronous class sessions may be recorded and archived for other students to view. This will be announced at the beginning of class time.

Suggested Learning Opportunities that Relate to our Course

TBA

Your Lecturer

Nikolai Preuschhoff studied German Literature, Philosophy, and Art History in Freiburg, Paris, Berlin, and Ann Arbor, Michigan. Nikolai has been teaching for NYU Berlin since 2016. In 2020, he was Distinguished Max Kade Professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. He taught at Middlebury College in Vermont, and at University College Cork in Ireland. Nikolai received a Ph.D. from Freie University Berlin and published his thesis entitled *Mit Walter Benjamin. Melancholie, Geschichte und Erzählen bei W. G. Sebald* in 2015 in Heidelberg. He is also a contributing co-editor of the volume *Adaptation Considered as a Collaborative Art: Process and Practice*, which was published in 2020 with Palgrave MacMillan.

Academic Policies

Grade Conversion

Your lecturer may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

A = 94-100 or 4.0
A- = 90-93 or 3.7
B+ = 87-89 or 3.3
B = 84-86 or 3.0

B- = 80-83 or 2.7
C+ = 77-79 or 2.3
C = 74-76 or 2.0
C- = 70-73 or 1.7
D+ = 67-69 or 1.3
D = 65-66 or 1.0
F = below 65 or 0

Attendance Policy

Studying at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers, or online through NYU Brightspaces if the course is remote synchronous/blended, is expected promptly when class begins. Attendance will be checked at each class meeting. If you have scheduled a remote course immediately preceding/following an in-person class, you may want to write to berlin.academics@nyu.edu to see if you can take your remote class at the Academic Center.

As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor and/or the Academics team (berlin.academics@nyu.edu) by e-mail immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, Moses Center accommodations, religious observance or emergencies. Your professor or site staff may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from an NYU Staff member as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances that you wish to be treated confidentially must be presented to NYU Berlin's director or Wellness Counselor. Doctor's notes must be submitted in person or by e-mail to the Academics team, who will inform your professors.

Unexcused absences may be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade for every week's worth of classes missed, and may negatively affect your class participation grade. Four unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequently joining the class late.

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to site staff; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed.

Final exams

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the Academics team. Final exams may not

be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

Late Submission of Work

- (1) Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (including weekends and public holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of NYU Berlin's administration), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.
- (2) Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (including weekends and public holidays) following the submission date receives an F.
- (3) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days late (including weekends and public holidays) without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director, Dr. Gabriella Etmektsoglou.
- (4) Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.
- (5) Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

As the University's policy on "[Academic Integrity for Students at NYU](#)" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

NYU takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form, and may check your assignments by using TurnItIn or another software designed to detect offences against academic integrity.

The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism. It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you **MUST** inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

[NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines](#)

[NYU Library Guides](#)

Inclusivity Policies and Priorities

NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer AND NYU Berlin's Academics Office in writing via e-mail one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#)

Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)

Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, Brightspace, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors, in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the [Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website](#).

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns, and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the [Personalizing Zoom Display Names website](#).

Moses Accommodations Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU Berlin.

Bias Response

The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community.

Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University's existing Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.

To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the [Web Form \(link\)](#)
- Email: bias.response@nyu.edu
- US Phone Number: +1 212-998-2277
- Local Number in Berlin: +49 (0) 30 2902 91277

Please consider the environment before printing this syllabus. If printing is necessary, please select only the essential page range.