

DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
MODULE GE109

*Aspects of German Culture in the Age of
Enlightenment*



Emilia Galotti.

Ein Trauerspiel
in
fünf Aufzügen.
Von
Gotthold Ephraim Lessing.



Berlin,
bey Christian Friedrich Wof, 1772.



GE109 Aspects of German Culture in the Age of Enlightenment

Module aims

The aims of this module are:

- (1) to provide an introduction to the intellectual and literary currents that shaped German culture in the second half of the eighteenth century as it emerged as a national culture of European significance;
- (2) to provide an introduction to the ways in which individual works of literature can be read and interpreted in relation to the larger social, political and cultural context, via the study of selected representative texts from the period 1770-1786;
- (3) to provide an introduction to the skills needed for a critical interpretation of works from the main literary genres (poetry, narrative prose, drama).

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, you should:

- have gained knowledge and critical understanding of a key period in the culture and history of Germany and insight into the range and variety of its cultural practices;
- be able to apply this knowledge in the independent critical analysis of a range of set texts from the period 1770-1786.

In addition, the module will provide training in the following skills:

- the ability to abstract and synthesize key information from written and spoken sources in German and English;
- the ability to organize, present, and defend ideas within the framework of a structured and reasoned argument;
- the ability to formulate your opinions (for example, in essays) with reference to established interpretations;
- the ability to analyse critically a range of materials in German and English (primary texts, secondary sources, contextualizing historical material);
- the ability to apply critical methodologies to the analysis of literary texts;
- the ability to conduct independent research using library and bibliographic resources and ICT skills.

Teaching

The module is taught by a combination of weekly lectures and tutorials.

- **Lectures** take place on **Fridays 10.00-11.00am in room H3.44**. These provide general background information on the period, introductions to the set texts and their authors and to literary critical methodology.
- **Tutorials** are one hour per week. In these, the focus is on the close reading of set texts. Times and rooms are posted in the Department, and detailed programmes will be provided by individual tutors. **Note that tutorials begin in week 2 of Term 1.**

Set texts

All students need to buy the following books and should do preparatory reading before the lectures and tutorials:

Goethe, *Selected Poetry* (Penguin Classics)*
Goethe, *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* (Reclam)
Lessing, *Emilia Galotti* (Reclam)
Schiller, *Kabale und Liebe* (Reclam)

Tutors may require additional reading on a week-to-week basis. You should also expect to do independent work, either individually or as part of a group, in preparation for your tutorial, as instructed by your tutor.

* Note that Goethe's *Selected Poetry* is a new edition, issued by Penguin Classics in 2005. It replaces the older edition of Goethe's *Selected Verse*, a few copies of which remain on the shelves in the bookshop. *Selected Verse* contains a more representative selection of poems and includes prose translations which may be more helpful to you than the verse translations in the new *Selected Poetry*. The introductions to the two editions are different. It does not matter which of these two editions you purchase for use in seminar, in so far as the German texts to which we will refer in lectures and tutorials are for the most part in both. However, the module will be taught on the assumption that all students are using *Selected Poetry* – i.e. where poems are referred to which are not in *Selected Poetry*, you will be provided with copies on handouts.

Assessment

The module is assessed by two pieces of formal assessed work and an examination:

- a textual commentary of 1,500 words, to be submitted in Week 1 of Term 2 (worth 20% of the overall end-of-year mark for this module);
- a 3,000 word essay, to be submitted in Week 1 of Term 3 (worth 30% of the overall mark);
- a 3-hour written examination, to be sat in Term 3 (worth 50% of the overall mark for the module).

The titles for the assessed work are posted on the noticeboard in the course of the term prior to the required submission date.

Lecture programme

Week Lecture

Term 1

1. Germany in the late 18th century: Introduction to social and cultural issues
2. Poetry, 1: 18th century anacreontic lyric
3. Goethe and the *Sturm und Drang* movement of the early 1770s
4. Poetry, 2: Goethe's *Große Hymnen*: 'Ganymed' and 'Prometheus' (*Selected Poetry*, pp.6-12)
5. Poetry, 3: Folk poetry: 'Heidenröslein' (provided on handout)
6. Reading week: no lecture
7. *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, 1: A European bestseller
8. *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, 2: Form in the epistolary novel
9. *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, 3: Goethe's critique of contemporary society
10. *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, 4: Modern views on love and death

Term 2

11. German drama in the 18th century: introduction
12. Drama and society: the stage as a political forum
13. New forms of theatre: Lessing, Aristotle and the quest for a new realism
14. Lessing, *Emilia Galotti*: themes and structures, 1
15. Lessing, *Emilia Galotti*: themes and structures, 2; introduction to Schiller, *Kabale und Liebe*
16. Reading week: no lecture
17. Schiller, *Kabale und Liebe*: themes and structures, 1
18. Schiller, *Kabale und Liebe*: themes and structures, 2
19. Questions of gender in the 'bürgerliches Trauerspiel'
20. *Emilia Galotti*, *Kabale und Liebe* and the 'bürgerliches Trauerspiel': points of convergence and difference

Term 3

21. Writing poetry commentaries: formal and thematic structure and how to write about them; revision of Goethe's early poetry
22. Goethe's early Weimar poetry, 1: 'Auf dem See' (*Selected Poetry*, p.26)
23. Goethe's early Weimar poetry, 2: 'An den Mond (*Erste Fassung*)' (*Selected Poetry*, p.36)
24. Goethe's early Weimar poetry, 3: 'Das Göttliche' (*Selected Poetry*, pp.52-56)

Tutorial Programme

Term 1

Week Tutorial Content

2. Klopstock, 'Das Rosenband' and Goethe, 'Mit einem gemalten Band' (tutorial handout): Goethe and the anacreontic tradition
3. 'Willkommen und Abschied' (*Selected Poetry*, pp.4-6): Goethe's new kind of love lyric
4. 'Prometheus' (*Selected Poetry*, pp.10-12): The *Sturm und Drang* - assertiveness and self-reliance
5. 'Erlkönig' (*Selected Poetry*, pp. 42-44): Working with the 'Volkslied' tradition
6. Reading week: no tutorials
7. *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*. Analysis of the opening letters (4. Mai-26. Mai 1771): style, characterisation, themes
8. *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*. Werther and nature / changing moods: comparison of the letters of 10. Mai, 21. Junius, 18. August 1771, and 12. Dezember 1772
9. *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*. The *Gesandtschaftsepisode*: the ambiguity of Werther's social position; does the tragedy of Werther have a social causation?
10. *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*. The suicide debate (letter of 12. August 1771): does the novel offer an apologia for suicide?

Term 2

Week Tutorial Content

11. Lessing *Emilia Galotti*, 1: "Bittschriften, nichts als Bittschriften": the representation of the 'Hof'
 - (a) The Prinz and his responsibilities (Act I, Scenes 1 & 8)
 - (b) The conflicts of desire (Act I, Scenes 2-3 & 5)
12. Lessing *Emilia Galotti*, 2: "Gott! Gott! wenn dein Vater das wüßte!": the representation of the 'Familie'
 - (a) Marital tensions: Odoardo & Claudia: (Act II, Scenes 2 & 4-5)
 - (b) Pockets of guilt: Claudia and Emilia (Act II, Scene 6)
13. Lessing *Emilia Galotti*, 3: "Wollen Sie mir freie Hand lassen, Prinz": the role of Marinelli
 - (a) The mechanisms of power (Act I, Scene 6)
 - (b) What is a servant? (Act III, Scene 1, Act IV Scene 1)
14. Lessing *Emilia Galotti*, 4: "Wer über gewisse Dinge den Verstand nicht verlieret, der hat keinen zu verlieren": Die Gräfin Orsina – an outsider at court?
 - (a) Orsina's critique of her world (Act IV, Scene 3 & Act IV, Scene 5)
 - (b) Orsina the catalyst (Act IV, Scene 6)
15. Lessing *Emilia Galotti*, 5: "Eine Rose gebrochen, ehe der Sturm sie entblättert": Why does Emilia die?
 - (a) Virtue in peril: Odoardo & Emilia (Act V, Scenes 6-7)
 - (b) Apportioning guilt (Act V, Scene 8)
16. Reading week: no tutorial
17. Schiller *Kabale und Liebe*, 1: "Ah! Ich vergaß, daß es noch außer ihm Menschen gibt": love - a private world?
 - (a) 'Liebe' as seen from the outside (Act I, Scenes 1-2)
 - (b) 'Liebe' as seen from the inside (Act I, Scenes 3-4)
18. Schiller *Kabale und Liebe*, 2: "Sage mir, Ferdinand: *Wem* tat ich dies alles?": intrigue – the public sphere?
 - (a) Fathers and sons (Act I, Sc 7)
 - (a) Lady Milford – an outsider at court? (Act II, Scenes 1-3)
19. Schiller *Kabale und Liebe*, 3: "Zwang *erbittert* die Schwärmer immer, aber *bekehrt* sie nie": how does the plot against Ferdinand und Luise work? (social, psychological, or other causation?)
 - (a) The manipulation of Ferdinand (Act III, Scene 1)

- (b) The exploitation of virtue (Act III, Scenes 5-6)
20. Schiller *Kabale und Liebe*, 4: “Ist lieben denn Frevel, mein Vater?”: tragedy or the triumph of bourgeois virtue?
- (a) The ‘love triangle’: Miller, Luise and Ferdinand (Act V, Scene 1-2)
 - (b) Luise’s demise? (Act V, Scene 7)
 - (c) Ferdinand’s demise? (Act V, Scene 8)

Term 3

Week Tutorial Content

21-23 Revision tutorials

Seán Allan / James Hodgkinson / Susan Beardmore
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