DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

GERM 341

Fall 2005

Women in German
Culture and Literature

Erdmuthe Dorothea von Zinzendorf (1700-1756)

Dr. Josef K. Glowa

TTH: 12:50-2:00 TTH
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Office Hours: TWTHF 11:30-12:30 or by appointment
I. Course Description

This course offers an overview of the great contributions to German culture made by women since the Middle Ages. Students will read works from different centuries, discuss them with regard to their historical context, and identify some basic problems female authors encountered in different historical periods. By analyzing selected texts and other media, they will gain new insights and a wider understanding of literary and artistic contributions made by women in German speaking cultures. A variety of genres will be studied: poetry, prose, drama, novella, short stories, letters, and diaries. Though the course does not claim to cover a comprehensive history of female authorship in German-speaking lands, students will have the opportunity to grapple fundamental questions regarding women’s literature. Is there a particular female esthetics and gender culturally constructed? How does feminist literary criticism differ from traditional literary criticism? What kind of impact do particular socio-historical conditions have on female authors?

II. Course Format

Lectures, readings and discussions of various texts will be supplemented by select music pieces as well as visual material drawn from art history, film, and popular culture. Students will develop and sharpen their critical and interpretive skills through guided research, discussions, and in-class presentations. The wide variety of materials will provide an additional opportunity for students to fine-tune their analytical thinking and to acquire the necessary tools for a thorough and balanced discussion of this course’s topics as well as other topics. The students' style and fluency in writing in the German language will improve through teacher feedback in selected written assignments.

Course will meet twice a week, 70 minutes each. Course material is presented using a mixture of lectures, group discussions, student presentations, media, and World Wide resources. The focal point of class meetings will be the group discussion of readings, or other media. Selected German movies relevant to the course's central theme will also be shown and discussed.

III. Grading

- One research paper in German (10 pages) plus bibliography. 25%
- Two lectures & leading the follow-up discussions 15%
- Five reaction papers in German (each approx. 250 words) 20%
- Participation 25%
- Midterm 15%

Papers must be written in German. All papers must be double-spaced and use Times Font or similar one, size 12. Writing assignments should include a critical assessment and evaluation of original historical sources, a critical analysis of literary and cinematic works related to the course topic, and a critical commentary on secondary sources. All papers should be written according to the MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly.
Participation is of utmost necessity to make this course a success. Please come well prepared and ready to participate in the discussions. Attendance will be noted in each class. Each unexcused absence (beyond the second) will be punished at the end of the semester by lowering the participation grade (e.g. three unexcused absences would lower a B to C. If you must be absent, notify me ahead of time. Obtain the assignment from me or from a classmate, so that you can hand it in on time. Some form of documentation will be required for excused absences such as illness, family emergencies, and academic obligations, or any college-sponsored extra-curricular event such as any varsity sports team. It is your responsibility to inform me in advance of any scheduled events. Regardless of your reason for missing class, you will want to keep up with your work.

- Check your e-mail daily!

**IV. Required Texts:** book (B); website (W); Digitale Bibliothek (D); Film (F)

Sophie La Roche. *Geschichte des Fraeuleins von Sternheim.* (B)
Bettina v. Arnim. *Die Guenderode* (B)
Ebner-Eschenbach (D)
Lou Andreas-Salomé. *Lebensrueckblick* (B)
Anna Seghers. *Transit* (B)

*We will view films and read selected works by these authors:*
Hildegard von Bingen (W)
Mechthild v. Magdeburg (W)
Louise Karsch (D)
Rahel Vernhagen (D)
Clara Schuhmann ( selected compositions)
Ingeborg Bachmann (selections)
Christa Wolf (selections)
Leni Riefenstahl (selections)
Caroline Link. *Jenseits von Afrika* (F)
Doris Dörrie. *Maenner* (F)

NOTE: Other shorter texts and films or film excerpts might be added.