Comparative Perspectives on the Romantic Revolution

Seminar Leader: Dr. Ulrike Wagner
Times: Monday 13:30 – 15:00
Friday 9:00 – 10:30
Email: u.wagner@berlin.bard.edu

Course Description
With its emergence in Britain and Germany in the 1790s, Romanticism altered our thinking in virtually all domains of human activity and ushered in modernity. The movement sparked a profound shift in the fields of art and literature, in our view of nature, politics, and personal identity. In this course we will read poems, novels, collections, translations, and essays by German, British, French, and American authors and examine how the revolutionary rupture of the age altered generic conventions and introduced new practices of writing and forms of expression across cultures. The goal is to work out how the key concern of the age – the relationship of the individual to a greater whole such as the nation, nature, the divine or artistic truth – manifests itself in the rise of new modes of expression and generic innovation. This approach to introducing Romanticism will also shed light on the cultural-historical origins of what lies at the heart of a modern liberal arts education.

Required Texts
- Course Reader
- Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace” (copies for all are available at Bard College Berlin Library)

Attendance
It is absolutely essential that you come to class prepared and ready to participate in discussion. You will be allowed no more than three unexcused absences during the semester. (An absence counts as excused only if you can provide a doctor’s note or a note from the Dean of Bard College Berlin). You may not use laptop computers or any other electronic devices able to receive wireless signals. Internet use in class will count as an unexcused absence!
Presentations
You will each prepare a “conversational presentation” on reading materials for a session of your choosing. Your task will be to briefly introduce the text(s) and formulate a set of questions you regard as crucial and productive for guiding our conversation about these texts in class. In preparation for your presentation, try and formulate possible answers to your questions so as to animate and inspire the discussion in class.

Written Assignments
Throughout the semester, you will have to compose a number of short assignments in preparation for our discussions in class as well as two longer written assignments (ca. 5-7 pages each) developed out of the course materials. At least once, you will bring a first draft of your paper to class. After we have read through and discussed your draft together, you will have to revise it and hand in a final version.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers from the Student Handbook: Essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Grading
- Class Participation 30%
- Presentations 30%
- Written Assignments 40%

Course Schedule
Mo September 2
Introduction

Renegotiating Affinities between Ancient and Modern Cultures

Fr September 6
Johann Joachim Winckelmann, “Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture”

Optional:
Michael Fried: “Antiquity Now: Reading Winckelmann on Imitation”

Mo September 9
Friedrich von Schiller, “Naive and Sentimental Poetry”
Fr September 13  
Optional: Frederick Beiser: “Friedrich Schlegel: The Mysterious Romantic”

Mo September 16  
Johann Gottfried Herder, “Shakespeare”

Fr September 20  
Madame de Staël, from De l’Allemagne [Germany]  
Optional: James Marsh, “Ancient and Modern Poetry”

Mo September 23  
Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Shakespeare, or the Poet”

The Cult of Genius

Fr September 27  
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther  
Optional: Edward Young, Conjectures on Original Compositions

Mo September 30  
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther  
Optional: Edward Young, Conjectures on Original Compositions

Fr October 4  

Fall Break

Mo October 14  
William Wordsworth, “Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey”  

1st Written Assignment due for those discussing their 1st draft in class

Fr October 18  
Madame de Staël, Corinne, or Italy

1st Written Assignment due!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mo October 21</td>
<td>Madame de Staël, <em>Corinne, or Italy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr October 25</td>
<td>Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The Poet”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aesthetics and Poetics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo October 28</td>
<td>Paintings by Caspar David Friedrich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph L. Koerner, excerpts from <em>Caspar David Friedrich and the Subject of Landscape</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr November 1</td>
<td>Karl Philipp Moritz, excerpt from “On the Artistic Imitation of the Beautiful”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Eye and Ear”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo November 4</td>
<td>Friedrich Schlegel, from “Athenaeum Fragments;” “On Incomprehensibility”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr November 8</td>
<td>Friedrich Schiller, from “Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo November 11</td>
<td>Percy Bysshe Shelley, “A Defense of Poetry”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Dejection: An Ode”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nature, Spirit, and the Fantastic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr November 15</td>
<td>Ralph Waldo Emerson, <em>Nature</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo November 18</td>
<td>Novalis, “The Novices of Sais”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Optional: Thomas Carlyle, “Novalis”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr November 22</td>
<td>Ludwig Tieck, “Eckbert the Fair”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo November 25</td>
<td>E.T.A. Hoffmann, “The Sandman”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Politics, Sociability, and Nationalism</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr November 9</td>
<td>Johann Gottfried Herder, from <em>Yet another Philosophy of the History of Humankind</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Optional:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- Optional readings are indicated.
- *Corinne, or Italy* is not a separate work; it is part of Madame de Staël’s broader body of work.
Sankar Muthu, “Pluralism, Humanity, and Empire in Herder’s Political Thought”

Monday December 2
Friedrich Daniel Schleiermacher, Monologues II and III

2nd Written Assignment due for those discussing their 1st draft in class
Optional: Schleiermacher, “Toward a Theory of Sociable Conduct”

Fr December 6
Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace”

2nd Written Assignment due!
Friedrich Schlegel, “Essay on the Concept of Republicanism occasioned by the Kantian Tract ‘Perpetual Peace’”

Mo December 9
Johann Gottlieb Fichte, “What is a people in the higher meaning of the word, and what is love of fatherland?”

Educational Reforms in North America: the Art of Liberal Learning

Fr December 13
Robert Bridges Patton, “A Lecture on Classical and National Education”

Caroline Winterer, from The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life, 1780-1910