

TRAN 5180 3.0 (F 2010-2011)

Translating Bildung II: The German-Language Humanities Tradition from Schleiermacher to Benjamin

W 18:00-20:00 York Hall B208 (Glendon Campus)

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Office Hours: W 20:00-21:00 or by appointment

“One hears foreign words and yet understands what they are intended to mean/
Man hört fremde Worte, und weiß doch was sie bedeuten sollen.”
Novalis, *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*

This course examines key writers in the German tradition of the history of ideas with an innovative Humanities-oriented pedagogy based on the comparative study of original texts and their English translations. Students will familiarize themselves with the socio-historical context in which key concepts such as *Bildung*, *Kapital*, and *Seelenkunde* took on specifically modern and national meanings as the 19th century “progressed.” We will also follow the vicissitudes of their translation into English. Students will be encouraged to draw on their experience of translating in other languages and to compare that process with the reading and interpreting of texts.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will have a solid understanding of key concepts in the tradition of humanistic thought and enough familiarity with how they are expressed (and pronounced) in German to be able to read very short passages in the original with the strategic use of a dictionary. Students will be able to compare original texts with their translations into English, and to use original language in quotations and textual analysis correctly. They will understand the transformative aspects that the translation of key ideas has had, and will have a sounder understanding of the German-language tradition in the Humanities.

This course is open to students in all disciplines who are interested in the modern German tradition of the history of ideas. Language of instruction: English.

All German-language and English-language texts will be made available on the course Moodle for students to print out for themselves (<https://moodle2010.glendon.yorku.ca/>). This will facilitate their side-by-side reading.

Recommended Texts:

- Antoine Berman, *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany* or *L'épreuve de l'étranger*
- A German-English dictionary, such as M. Clark, *Pocket Oxford-Duden German Dictionary*. Oxford University Press (2003), ISBN: 0198607059; *HarperCollins German Dictionary: German-English/English-German*, ISBN-10: 0062737503; or Random House Webster's *German-English English-German Dictionary*, ISBN-10: 0375721940.
- A German grammar, such as Guy Stern and E. F. Bleiler, *Essential German Grammar*, Dover Publications, ISBN-10: 0486204227 (April Wilson's *German Quickly: A Grammar for Reading German*. Peter Lang; Revised edition (2004), ISBN: 0820467596 – also very good but much more expensive)
- Strutz, Henry. *501 German Verbs*. Barron's Educational Series; 3 edition (Jan 1 1998), ISBN: 0764102842

Evaluation:

- Write-ups of the context of each reading, i.e. the “when/ where/ why” of its being written, to be submitted at the beginning of the class it is to be discussed (pass/fail, 10%)
- Essay on “The Task of the Translator” (due Oct. 20, 20%, 8 page conference paper)
- Final Essay (due at the final oral, 40%, 15-20 page research paper)
- Final oral examination (in the examination period, 20%)
- Contributions to discussion, Moodle postings, etc. (10%)

Schedule

- Sept 15: Introduction
Bertold **Brecht**, “Nachdenkend über die Hölle”/ “On Thinking About Hell”
- Sept 22: Walter **Benjamin**, “Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers”/ “The Task of the Translator”
- Sept 29: Sigmund **Freud**, selections from *Traumdeutung/ The Interpretation of Dreams*
- Oct 6: Arthur **Schnitzler**, *Der Reigen/ La Ronde* – screening
- Oct 9 - 15 Fall Term Reading/ Co-Curricular Week No Classes, No Exams, University Open
- Oct 20: Arthur **Schnitzler**, *Der Reigen/ La Ronde*
Essay one due
- Oct 27: Franz **Kafka**, *Die Verwandlung/ The Metamorphosis*
- Nov 3: Friedrich **Nietzsche**, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse/ Beyond Good and Evil*
- Nov 10: Karl **Marx** and Friedrich **Engels**, *Das Manifest der kommunistischen Partei/ The Communist Manifesto*
- Nov 17: G.W.F. **Hegel**, Preface to the *Phänomenologie des Geistes/ Phenomenology of Spirit*
- Nov 24: Friedrich **Schleiermacher**, “Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens”/ “On Different Methods of Translating”
- Dec 1: fällt aus
- Dec 8: Review, Susan Sontag, “The World as India: The St. Jerome Lecture on Literary Translation”
- Dec 12-23 Final Essay due in the Fall Term Examination Period,
Final Oral Exam to be scheduled in the Fall Term Examination Period