

Humanities Seminars Program
Representing the Other: Jews in German Texts from
1500 to 2000

Fall 2022
Tuesdays 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.^[L]_[SEP]
October 11 – December 13

Instructor:

Prof. Emeritus Thomas Kovach
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Seminar Content:

This seminar will examine the ways in which Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness have been represented in German works from 1500 to the present. We will view the different ways in which Jews are portrayed, ranging from the imperfectly assimilated community member to the inscrutable alien, from the moral exemplar to the menace to the community. The readings will be placed in the context of Jewish settlement in and assimilation to the German-speaking world, as well as various forms of Gentile resistance to this settlement and assimilation, ranging from the traditional religiously based anti-Judaism, to the economically based resentment of the Jew as usurer or exploiter, to the nationally based ostracism of the Jew as non-German in the early nineteenth century, to the racially motivated antisemitism of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Texts will range from those that try to combat anti-Jewish prejudice to the blatantly antisemitic texts, with some very ambiguous ones in between.

Readings:

Historical background:

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/germany-virtual-jewish-history-tour>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_Germany

For purchase:

Andersch, *Efraim's Book* (New Dimensions)

DVD of *Go for Zucker* (also available through Netflix, Kanopy, and Prime Video)

The other course readings will be posted by the end of August on a special Box@UA site for this course. After they are posted, the link to this site will be shared with any student registered for this class.

Class schedule:

Oct. 11: Introduction

Jewish settlement in the German-speaking world.

Read in websites listed above about history until around 1600.

Read short texts:

Hans Folz, "Jewish Usury"

Unknown Author, "An Incredible Event"

Hermann Bote, Tale 35 from *Till Eulenspiegel*

Oct. 18: The Enlightenment and the beginnings of emancipation

Continue reading in history websites

Read excerpts from Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *The Jews*

Lessing's play *Nathan the Wise*, available to read or download online at:

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Lessing_s_Nathan_the_Wise/-y0TAAAAQAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0

Oct. 25: The Reaction to the French Revolution and Napoleon, and the rise of German Nationalism

Grimm Brothers, "The Jew in the Hawthorn Hedge"

K. B. A. Sessa, "The Old and the Young Jew"

Begin reading Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, "The Jew's Beech"

Nov. 1: The Ambiguity in Representing Jews in fiction

Finish Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, "The Jew's Beech"

Adalbert Stifter, *Abdias*

Nov. 8: Mid-century perspectives

Read in history websites

Franz Dingelstedt, "The Frankfurt Ghetto"

Gustav Freytag, "Veitel Itzig" (excerpt from the novel *Debit and Credit*)

Excerpts from Wilhelm Raabe, *The Hunger Pastor*

Nov. 15: The Rise of Antisemitism and responses to it

Richard Wagner, "Judaism in Music"

View excerpts from *Die Meistersinger*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFaZ0nDFJ_o

Ricarda Huch, "The Jew's Grave"

Nov. 22: Thomas Mann

"The Blood of the Walsungs"

Excerpts from *Doctor Faustus*

Nov. 29: The Nazi Era

Read in history websites

Adolf Hitler, excerpts from *Mein Kampf*

Zöberlein, "The Jewish Question"

Veit Harlan film *Jud Süss*:

<https://archive.org/details/jud-su-ss-english-subbed-1940>

Dec. 6: Post-Holocaust perspectives

Franz Fühmann, "The Jews' Car"

Alfred Andersch, *Efraim's Book* Chapters 1-3

Dec. 13: The final chapter

Efraim's Book Chapters 4-7

Dani Levy film *Go for Zucker*, accessible through Netflix or Amazon Prime Video