HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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GERMAN LITERATURE – 19th Century

Contents

19th century German Literature

The conquests of Napoleon Bonaparte dealt a severe blow to the hopes of the German patriots and those who were beginning to make Germany aware of herself as a nation. French domination lasted from 1803-1813. As usually is the case, military attacks did not extinguish nationalist zeal, but fanned the flames higher; and uniting against the common enemy helped to bring the loosely confederated states closer together. Some of the dramas and lyrics of the great poets—especially *Minna von Barnhelm* by Lessing, Scniller's *Wilhelm Tell*, and Goethe's *Faust (Part* I; published 1808)—gave the German speaking states an illustrious common heritage and emphasized the idea of a common fatherland.

The German armies that helped defeat Napoleon in 1813 had been promised various reforms, including more political liberty and a constitutional government. Their expectations were disappointed. A policy of reaction, inaugurated by Metternich in Austria, was adopted by most of the states; and participation in the government and freedom of the press and of speech were denied to the people. The period of reaction and absolutism continued for several decades, but popular discontent grew so strong that it became open rebellion in 1848. Then some steps toward constitutional government were taken, and some of the absolutist policies were abolished. I 1871 the German people were given quite modern social legislation, under Chancellor Otto Bismarck.

In the meantime, tremendous progress toward national unity was made. In 1815 Austria allied itself with some of the other states in the German confederation; in l834 the formation of the Zollverein began real unification; and in l866 the North German Confederation was formed. Finally Germany defeated France in the Franco-Prussian War (1870), and William I was declared Emperor of the German Empire in l871.

Heinrich von Kleist

The Life of Kleist. Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811) was a German poet, dramatist, and novella writer who contributed richly to the formation of the new Romantic imagination. He was born in Frankfurt am Oder, showed very little interest in schooling, and in 1792, at the age of seventeen, he entered the Prussian army. He took part in the Rhein campaign (1796) and in 1799, at the age of twenty two, he retired from the Army. He went for a while to Viadrina University, to study law and philosophy, then took a minor functionary position with the Prussian Finance Ministry. From that position he requested and received a leave of absence, during which he began what we would have to describe as a fairly brief life full of wanderings. (As a young man he told his sister that 'life must be lived according to plan,' and yet Kleist's life seems, to the outsider anyhow, to be a vivid counter example to this maxim.) Kleist paid a visit to Paris, then went to Switzerland, where he stayed for a while. A trip to Weimar brought him acquaintance with Goethe, Schiller, and Wieland, and then, when he had returned to his regular post, he was sent on extended assignment to Koenighsberg. By this time his life, but not his writing, was nearly at an end. (His writing, we see below, was continuous throughout his career and wandering life.) The end of the life continues to haunt us. Captivated by the pessimism and cultural despair of his lover, Henriette Vogel, he joins her in a suicide pact, and carries through.

The Work of Kleist. The dramatist and novella writer, Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811), shares a deep psychological insight with his contemporary and fellow dramatist Franz Grillparzer, but unlike Grillparzer, who was interested in bourgeois psychological tragedy, Kleist develops his themes with an eye to their objective correlatives, in particular the workings of the law. *The Broken Jug* (1808) is a comedy with a serious twist. A local judge—who is clubfooted and resembles Sophocles' Oedipus-- has been harassing a pretty young girl. As he leaves her bedroom one evening he knocks off and breaks a treasured water jug belonging to the girl's mother. The tale involves the skein of events by which the judge finds himself in the position of trying the case of the 'broken water jug.' 'The comic/humiliating consequences, of this turn of events, turn the law on its head, and 'justify virtue' and the integrity of the young girl's fidelity to her fiancé. The novella *Michael Kohlhaas* (1811), written toward the end of Kleist's life, takes a subtle look at the integrity of the law. Michael is a farmer who has been seriously mistreated by a local landowner. He turns to the law for redress, but does not receive it. Michael determines to take revenge into his own hands, and with the growing violence of his anger turns to means increasingly violent. The story is yours to interpret. Who is finally in the wrong? The indifference of the law to Michael's case has inspired him to take action against the law. In the end, but subtly, the law wins the case.

Kleist as Thinker. Heinrich von Kleist wrote a number of remarkable essays, in which he penetrated deeply into the issues of human consciousness, reflecting, as did all his major contemporaries, a concern with fundamental philosophical issues. Aside from his fascinating essay on the puppet theater, in which he bemoans the ills brought to humans by their self-consciousness, and according loss of grace, his most remarkable contribution, still in the same vein, is his *'On the gradual development of thought in the process of speaking*,' in which he presents a thoroughly modern analysis of the disadvantages of self-awareness in the thought and speech process.

Reading

Primary source reading

The Major Works of Heinrich von Kleist, ed./trans. Robert Helbling, 1975.

Secondary source reading

Brown Meldrum, Hilda, Heinrich von Kleist. *The Ambiguity of Art and the Necessity of Form*, 1998.

Further reading

Lamport, F. J., *German Classical Drama: Theatre, Humanity, Nation,* 1990.

Original language reading

Ohff, Heinz, *Heinrich von Kleist: ein preussisches Scicksal*, 2004.

Suggested paper topics

Read and review Kleist's essay on the puppet theater. Consider what he is trying to report, concerning the problem of self-consciousness. Does he see value in self-consciousness, which is often considered a hallmark of the human condition? Does he want us to become like puppets?

In The Broken Jug, Kleist introduces a mixture of humor, irony, and tragedy. Do you see this mixture, which also appears in the work and thought of Jean Paul, E.T.A. Hoffman, and Friedrich Schlegel, as characteristic of the imaginative enterprise of Romantic literature?

Excerpt https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/54427.Heinrich_von_Kleist

"The kiss and the bite are such close cousins that in the heat of love they are too readily confounded."

"We see that in the organic world, to the same degree that reflection gets darker and weaker, grace grows ever more radiant and dominant. But just as two lines intersect on one side of a point, and after passing through infinity, suddenly come together again on the other side; or the image in a concave mirror suddenly reappears before us after drawing away into the infinite distance, so too, does grace return once perception, as it were, has traversed the infinite--such that it simultaneously appears the purest in human bodily structures that are either devoid of consciousness or which possess an infinite consciousness, such as in the jointed manikin or the god."

"Misconceptions are unavoidable now that we've eaten of the Tree of Knowledge. But Paradise is locked and bolted, and the cherubim stands behind us. We have to go on and make the journey round the world to see if it is perhaps open somewhere at the back."

"In M---, an important town in northern Italy, the widowed Marquise of O---, a lady of unblemished reputation and the mother of several well-brought-up children, inserted the following announcement in the newspapers: that she had, without knowledge of the cause, come to find herself in a certain situation; that she would like the father of the child she was expecting to disclose his identity to her; that she was resolved, out of consideration to her family, to marry him."

"Does that mean", I said in some bewilderment, "that we must eat again of the tree of knowledge in order to return to the state of innocence?"
"Of course", he said, "but that's the final chapter in the history of the world."

Grillparzer

The life of Grillparzer. Franz Grillparzer (1791-1872), was an Austrian playwright, born in Vienna. He is particularly famed for his on the whole very popular tragedies, and for having given the funeral oration for the composer Ludwig Beethoven. His father was a serious pedant and a lawyer of some standing in Vienna, and his mother came from a distinguished musical family in the city. Franz entered the University of Vienna as a law student in l807, then passed some years in the usual transitional occupation, tutoring for private families, then went on to assume a Civil Servant post. For the remainder of his work life he remained a middle grade civil servant, concluding his work tenure with the post of Director of Archives at the Hofkammer, the court council. Grillparzer loved to travel, never married—some found him 'cold and distant-- and led a quiet life until celebrity forced him into the open in his later years. While effectively employed, throughout his life, Grillparzer was known to suffer from periods of depression.

The Historical Position of the Work of Grillparzer. Grillparzer like Schiller, Lessing, and Goethe, turned to the stage for his most serious work. (He published some other work, of interest: an autobiography, completed in l853, and recounting his life through l836; many fragments of political and social commentary, noteworthy for their insightful remarks on society and politics; some remarkable prose work, such as *The Poor Fiddler* (1847). But there is a difference between Grillparzer and these other classicist dramatists, who preceded him by at least two generations, and who wrote in fervently different times and from cultural perspectives that by Grillparzer's time were be to beginning to seem outdated, as well as inescapably powerful. There is a psychological modernity, in many of Grillparzer's plays—say in *Sappho* (1818) or *The Waves of Love and of the Ocean* (1831)—that contributes a 'realistic' tone to what is in fact a 'Romantic' production. (The closest parallel to Grillparzer's work would be that of Heinrich von Kleist.)

The character of Grillparzer's work. Grillparzer's sense of tragedy is grounded in the individual person's tragic sense and its tragic consequences; a state of affairs frequently driven by the conflict between duty and personal desire. (This is the Romantic dilemma, laid across an inheritance of brilliant classical achievements, in Goethe and Schiller, but aspiring to represent the new zones of passion and personal drive ushered in by the nineteenth century.) The short, classically formed play, *Sappho* (1818), illustrates Grillparzer's power. Sappho, who is already an ideal of poetic genius, on Lesbos, returns to the island with a younger man, with whom she has fallen in love, longing at last to 'live life to the fullest,' to be an ordinary woman around the house. That is the drive of her personal longing. But she finds her goal unrealizable. She is valued and reified as the poetess on a pedestal, the ultimate in her craft, and to her horror she discovers that Phaon, her lover, has fallen for one of Sappho's maids, happier to love a simple woman than an image. Sappho throws herself off a cliff and drowns, an example of the woman whose role conflicts tragically with her desires.

Romantic tragedy. In *The Waves of Love and of the Ocean* (1831) Grillparzere again picks up a classical Greek theme and gives it his own twist, the duty desire conflict. Hero, temple priestess separated by the Bosporus Strait from her impetuous lover, Leander, plans to flash him a signal, which will guide him across the water to her. However Hero's superior, the Head Priestess of the temple, gets wind of the plan and realizes that Hero is in the process of losing her 'composure,' her *Sammlung*, and extinguishes the lamp that is to guide Leander. Hero dies of a broken heart.

Reading

Primary source reading

Franz Grillparzer*, The poor Musician*, trans. Remy, ed. Andrew Moore.

Secondary source reading

Bernd, Clifford, ed., D*er arme Spielmann: New Directions in Criticism,* 1988.

Further reading

Nemoianu, Virgil, *The Taming of Romanticism: European Literature and the age of Biedermeier*, 1984.

Original language reading

Lorenz, Dagmar, *Franz Grillparzer: Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, 1986.

Suggested paper topics

Grillparzer's '*Der arme Spielmann,*' 'The Poor Fiddler,' is as fatalistic and psychologically inexorable as are his plays. Review that text closely, to see what kind of discord is set up between the narrator of the story, and the counter narration carried on, within the story, by the Fiddler himself. What kind of special depth is achieved by this technique? Does the technique seem startling 'modern' to you?

What kinds of tragedy does Grillparzer write into Hero and Leander and Sappho? Would you call this psychological tragedy, generated in the minds of the tragic losers? Or is the fate the driver of these bitter outcomes? Pay especially close attention to the mindset of Hero herself, as she vacillates in her mind between desire and duty. Does she have it in her power to negate her desire?

Excerpt *en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Franz_Grillparzer*

• "Human life, old and young, takes place between hope and remembrance. The young man sees all the gates to his desires open, and the old man remembers—his hopes."
• "They are miserly, the princes of Austria, you need not grieve about it; they may not donate anything, but they allow themselves to be fleeced, the good lords."

• "What raises great poetry above all else—it is the entire person and also the entire world."

Hebbel

Hebbel's Life. Christian Friedrich Hebbel (1813-1863) was born at Ditmarsch, in Holstein. He was brought up in poverty—the son of a bricklayer, yet despite hindrances proved unusually studious, and made his way to the University of Hamburg. From that University, in the typical fashion of German University students, who tend to follow Professors from one institution to another, he moved on to the University of Munich, where he studied philosophy, literature, and history. In 1839 he left Munich to return to Hamburg—he walked the distance, to be again with the woman who loved him—and in that year saw the publication of his first drama, Judith, which like most of his subsequent plays—is set either in Biblical times or in the German Age of Knights. For the next two years he traveled in Italy and France, on a stipend from King Christian of Denmark, then made his way to Vienna, where he was to find a new life—a glamorous and wealthy change for him—and a future in Austrian comfort and high society. Only one regret continued to eat at this complicated man, that he had left the faithful-to-the-end woman whom at one point he had walked from Munich to Hamburg to be with.

Hebbel's drama. Hebbel picked up the theme of bourgeois drama which had been growing in Germany from the time of Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* and Schillers *Kabale and Liebe.* (It took an eighteenth century of middle class development, before this literary genre would be possible, a genre which we might say would culminate in the great work of Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906). Cultural/social developments plunging back into early modern Europe were the prerequisites of the kind of searing social dramas Hebbel wrote—such developments as the self-conscious family unit, the availability of urban work in the professions, and the domestic conflicts, even tragedies, brought on by the conflict of the old class system with the newer forms of individualist democracy.)

Maria Magdalena. *Maria Magdalena* (1844) is the only play of Hebbel's to be set in the present, and arguably the play where his power and sense of social complexity are most forceful. That may be because it is the play in which he most ripely conceives the larger meaning of his work. In the Preface to the play he argues that drama is the highest art, because it reflects the dialectical growth of mankind

through ascending stages of culture, a notion he understands in terms of Hegel's philosophy of dialectical history. (He references Greek drama and Shakespeare as earlier examples of the way new levels of human consciousness are virtually worked through to in great drama.) In the present play Hebbel plunges us into a moment of crisis in the family of Meister Anton, an illiterate carpenter, who though fallen in class clings hard to such old fashioned class values as 'honor,' 'family honor.' The clinging to old values is fatal. In the first place Anton's wife, who hears that her son is a thief—the report is later proven false-- kills herself for shame. Then Anton's daughter, believing she has been forgotten by a certain secretary she loves, ends up pregnant with a child of a man she scorns, an opportunistic clerk, yet marries him, for only so, she thinks, can she maintain her father's honor. (There is the outdated category of honor again.) As it turns out, her impregnator proves unsatisfied with the dowry she offers him, and abandons her, whereupon she does in fact drown herself, to ensure her father's honor. At the end of the play we see the world through Anton's eyes, a man dazed and confused by the new world around him, in which values he relied on are being transformed.

Reading

Primary source reading

Gubelman, A., *Studies in the Lyric Poems of Friedrich Hebbel: the sensuous in his lyric poetry*, 2013.

Secondary source reading

Schwarz, E., ed. *Nineteenth Century German Plays,* 1990.

Further reading

Garland, Mary, *Hebbel's Prose Tragedies,* 1973.

Original language reading

Hohendahl, Peter Uwe*, Literarische kultur im Zeitalter des Liberalismus 1830-1870*, 1985.

Suggested paper topics

Hebbel believed that drama is the highest art, because it embodies new and upward developing stages of culture—as had been the case in Ancient Greece and now in the work of Shakespeare. Do you find this a plausible account of the importance and greatness of drama? Can you add examples, of cases in which drama seems to play the historical role Hebbel attributes to it?

The middle class family drama became prominent and popular in l8th century Germany. (Lessing and Schiller were creative in this direction.) What reason would you give for the development of this form? What is necessary to raise this form above the level of popular amusement concerning middle class families? Where does the tragic element enter in this kind of drama—for it does enter, regularly—to give depth and meaning to the genre?

Excerpt http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13030/13030-8.txt

MOTHER. When one is very sick, as I was, and does not know whether one is going to get well again or not, a great many things revolve in one's head. Death is more terrible than you think--oh, it is awful! It casts a shadow over the world; one after the other it blows out all the lights that shine with such cheerful brightness all around us, the kindly eyes of husband and children cease to sparkle, and it grows dark everywhere. But deep in the heart it strikes a light, which burns brightly and reveals a great deal one does not care to see. I am not conscious of ever having done a wrong; I have walked in God's ways, I have done my best about the home, I have brought you and your brother up to fear God, and I have kept together the fruits of your father's hard work. I have always managed to lay aside an extra penny for the poor, and if now and then I have turned somebody away, because I felt out of sorts or because too many

came, it wasn't a very great misfortune for him, because I was sure to call him back and give him twice as much. Oh, what does it all amount to? People dread the last hour when it threatens to come, writhe like a worm over it, and implore God to let them live, just as a servant implores his master to let him do something over again that he has done poorly, so that he may not come short in his wages on pay-day. CLARA. Don't talk in that way, dear mother! It weakens you. MOTHER. No, child, it does me good! Am I not well and strong again now? Did not the Lord call me merely to let me know that my festal robe was not yet pure and spotless? And did he not permit me to come back from the very edge of the grave, and grant me time to prepare myself for the heavenly wedding? He was not as kind as that to those five Virgins in the Gospel, about whom I had you read to me last night. And that is the reason why today, when I am going to the Holy Communion, I put this dress on. I wore it the day I made the best and most pious resolutions of my life; I want it to remind me of those which I have not yet carried out.

Jean Paul (Friedrich Richter)

The life of Jean Paul. Jean Paul (1763-1825) is an original voice in the chorus of German voices that make up the transition from Weimar Classicism to the Romantic tone. He was born in the area of Franconia, in Wunsiedel. His father was an organist, then was hired on as village pastor, but soon after that died, leaving Jean Paul and the rest of the family in serious poverty. By strong learning efforts Jean Paul got into and passed on from the gymnasium in nearby Hof, then moved on to the University of Leipzig. While in University his true interests declared themselves, and he shifted his studies from Theology to Literature. From the outside one would have expected this decision, from the exceptionally labile imagination of the young man. (In 1790, when he was twenty seven, he had had a moving and life-changing vision of his own death.) In any case the first literary publications of Jean Paul, which followed in 1793 (*Die unsichtbare Loge)* and 1795 (*Hesperus*), introduced some of the literary traits which were to dominate the development of his lifetime of writing: prominent use of the Doppelgaenger and fake suicides, directive materials for what was to go on to be developed (but always surprising) fictions full of genuine religious sentiment, artifice and trickery, and an edgy humor, which unnerved those who were looking for the 'classical' postures of Goethe and Schiller—who did not like Jean Paul—and which were a complex way of bringing formal and individualistic language worlds together.

The Work of Jean Paul. Jean Paul breaks sharply from the classicism we see insistent in German literature of the last quarter of the 18th century. We can see this break in the remarkable story, '*Die unsichtbare Loge,'* '*The invisible Lodge,*' 1791, the first work of Jean Paul to attract significant attention. The text is essentially a Bildungsroman, a tale of the education of youth, such as was in vogue in contemporary works like Goethe's Wilhelm Meister tales, or in certain works of Wieland or Karl Philip Moritz. But the difference is marked, with Jean Paul. Gustav, Jean Paul's personage elected to be raised to the level of a hoher Mensch, a high exemplar of mankind, lives and is educated, for the first eight years of his life, in a catacomb. (The Pietist individual raising him is called 'the genius,' who assures Gustave that in emerging into the upper world he will enter both the realm of death and the realm of God, who will guarantee rebirth. The tale oozes with overtones of the ancient Greek idealist/mystic tradition, especially that of Plotinus.) The actual education of Gustave begins with a blinding experience of the brilliance of the present world, but after that sets in the complexity of educational stages. For a while the tutor of Gustave is Jean Paul, who takes advantage of his role as embedded persona to divagate on many topics of interest to him—government and politics, marriage, pedagogy, even the structure of the narrative which he himself is weaving—until the burden of the narrative structure becomes too much for Jean Paul the narrator and he must be replaced by his sister, while at the same time the primary narrative is enriched by a second narrative about Gustave, introduced by a court poet who has been brought into the tale. Enough? Is the point clear enough? Jean Paul introduces, from the start, a kind of ironic, self-reflective, philosophically speculative, indeed religious tale which has no parallel in the work of his end of century contemporaries.

Reading

Primary source reading

Behler, Ernst, *German Romantic Literary Theory*, 1993.

Secondary source reading

Fleming, Paul, *The Pleasures of Abandonment: Jean Paul and the Life of Humor*, 2006.

Further reading

Stopp, Elisabeth, *German Romantics in context: Selected essays 1971-86,* 1992.

Original language reading

Wiethoelter, Waltraud, *Witzige Illuminationen: Studien zur Aesthetik Jean Pauls*, 1979.

Suggested paper topics

Read Jean Paul's *Titan,* or one of his other numerous prose fictions available online, and consider what is meant by the humor of Jean Paul. Is it what we might prefer to call irony today? Are there conspicuous elements of satire in his humor? The Romantic movement in Germany is often associated with the development of paradox and dialectical thinking—two different but related issues. Is Jean Paul's humor related to those issues?

Jean Paul's '*Unsichtbare Loge,*' and many of his other works, deals with 'education,' the growth and maturing of a young person into the social world. We have seen that Goethe, in his works on Wilhelm Meister, is centrally interested in this kind of Bildungsroman. What connection do you see between the Romantic movement and this kind of tale of personal growth? Is there a connection of the Bildungsroman with the notable 'rediscovery of the child' in Romantic thought?

Excerpt (from Titan) http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35664/35664-h/35664-h.htm

On a fine spring evening, the young Spanish Count Cesara came, with his companions, Schoppe and Dian, to Sesto, in order the next morning to cross over to the Borromæan island, Isola Bella, in Lago Maggiore. The proudly blooming youth glowed with the excitement of travelling, and with thoughts of the coming morrow, when he should see the isle, that gayly decorated throne of Spring, and on it a man who had been promised him for twenty years. This twofold glow exalted my picturesque hero to the form of an angry god of the Muses. His beauty made a more triumphal entry into Italian eyes than into the narrow Northern ones from the midst of which he had come; in Milan many had wished he were of marble, and stood with elder gods of stone, either in the Farnese Palace or in the Clementine Museum, or in the Villa of Albani; nay, had not the Bishop of Novara, with his sword at his side, a few hours before, asked Schoppe (riding behind) who he was? And had not the latter, with a droll squaring of the wrinkle-circle round his lips, made this copious answer (by way of enlightening his spiritual lordship): "It's my Telemachus, and I am the Mentor. I am the milling-machine and the die which coins him,—the wolf's tooth and flattening mill which polishes him down,—the man, in short, that regulates him"?

The glowing form of the youthful Cesara was still more ennobled by the earnestness of an eye always buried in the future, and of a firmly shut, manly mouth, and by the daring decision of young, fresh faculties; he seemed as yet to be a burning-glass in the moonlight, or a dark precious stone of too much color, which the world, as in the case of other jewels, can brighten and improve only by cutting hollow.

As he drew nearer and nearer, the island attracted him, as one world does another, more and more intensely. His internal restlessness rose as the outward tranquillity deepened. Beside all this, Dian, a Greek by birth and an artist, who had often circumnavigated and sketched Isola Bella and Isola Madre, brought these obelisks of Nature still nearer to his soul in glowing pictures; and Schoppe often spoke of the great man whom the youth was to see to-morrow for the first time. As the people were carrying by, down below in the street, an old man fast asleep, into whose strongly marked face the setting sun cast fire and life, and who was, in short, a corpse borne uncovered, after the Italian custom, suddenly, in a wild and hurried tone, he asked his friends, "Does my father look thus?"

But what impels him with such intense emotions towards the island is this: He had, on Isola Bella, with his sister, who afterward went to Spain, and by the side of his mother, who had since passed to the shadowy land, sweetly toyed and dreamed away the first three years of his life, lying in the bosom of the high flowers of Nature; the island had been, to the morning slumber of life, to his childhood's hours, a Raphael's painted sleeping-chamber. But he had retained nothing of it all in his head and heart, save in the one a deep, sadly sweet emotion at the name, and in the other the squirrel, which, as the family scutcheon of the Borromæans, stands on the upper terrace of the island.

E.T.A.Hoffman

The achievement of E.T.A. Hoffman. Ernest Theodor William Hoffman (1776-1822) was one of the most influential and multi sided Romantic artists. He was a writer of fantasy and horror stories—of great sophistication and charm; delights to children—a music critic, a distinguished jurist, and a composer. It was through his influence on the classical music of his period that he most firmly fixed his reputation: the ballet *Coppelia* is based on two stories by Hoffman, Tchaikovksy's *Nutcracker Ballet is* based on Hoffman's story, 'The Nutcracker and the Mouse King,' and Robert Schumann's Kreisleriana is based on a character in a Hoffman story; Jacques Offenbach's suite, *The Tales of Hoffman*, is centered around a reshaped hero, who is basically E.T.A. Hoffman. To speak of these influences is to indicate the kind of popular but fine legacy Hoffman left behind.

The Life of E.T.A. Hoffman. The author, born in Koenigsberg in 1776 was child to two barristers, and though they divorced, and he spent his formative years with his mother and her family, including his sisters, he remained imprinted by the earlier exposure to the culture of the law, to which he would turn as the most stable grounding of his career life. Educated at the Burgschule in Koenigsberg, Hoffman established a firm foundation for his multifaceted life. (Already in gymnasium he proved his high level of versatility, in piano playing, drawing, drafting, and sketch writing. His gift for caricature/cartooning was marked from the outset.) From that point he moved through a series of artistic related jobs, and romantic attractions—the most intense to Dora Hart, a married woman ten years his age—and yet despite the instability of his personal life managed to sustain an ever active creative process. That process was jumpstarted, in the midst of financial difficulties, by a visit to the Dresden Art Gallery in 1798, where his experience of the paintings of Correggio and Raphael was hugely inspiring. By 1804 Hoffman acquired a post as artistic director in Warsaw, where he found himself for a while in highly congenial artistic company, which was welcome, for throughout the surrounding years he and his family had been buffeted by the storms of Napoleonic War, its conflicts with Prussia, and the gradual dismantling of the Holy Roman Empire. By 1814 Hoffman was once again back at the practice of law, his security. He died at the age of forty six, after a life of brilliant but fragmentary achievement.

Kater Murr. *The Life and Opinions of Murr the Cat* (1820-1822) is one of Hoffman's most careful and deeply expressive stories, and a few words on it may be the easiest portal into Hoffman's imaginative trend. Murr is a cat, who has written his autobiography, to enlighten children. He is naïve and full of himself. However the editor of the autobiography, 'E.T.A. Hoffman,' has made the story complex by (mistakenly) using the proof sheets of another volume, a biography of the Romantic composer Kreisler, as scrap paper, and in the process of printing—during which the cat has clawed into tatters much of the book on the composer-- the autobiography of the cat and the biography of the composer have been randomly mixed up together. The result is a counterpoint and confusion of tales, from which emerges a blend of the seamlessly readable cat story with the shredded and tortured tale of the composer. The self-reflective observation, on the turmoil of the Romantic sensibility, could not have been more cunningly put before us.

Reading

Primary source reading

Wittkop-Menardeau, Gabrielle, *E.T.A.Hoffman,* l991.

Secondary source reading

Ruprecht, L., *Dances of the Self in Heinrich von Kleist, E.T.A. Hoffman and Heinrich Heine*, 2006.

Further reading

Peters, U.H., *Studies in German Romantic Psychology: Justinus Kerner as Psychiatric Practitioner, E.T.A. Hoffman as a Pscyhiatric The*orist, 1990.

Original language reading

Feldges, Brigitte; Stadler, Ulrich, *E.T.A. Hoffman, Epoche-Werk-Wirkung,* 1986.

Suggested paper topics

Does *Kater Murr* seem to you an extraordinarily 'modern' literary construction? Are you familiar with any such structural complexities and play, in literature prior to l800? What kind of critical and philosophical mindset seems to be implied, by being able to see the world and fiction in that way?

Hoffman is well known for his mystery stories, ghost stories, and tales of the occult. (Edgar Allen Poe is one of those writers most indebted to him.) Do you see this literary genre as an organic element in the Romantic sensibility? We know that the Romantics were concerned with 'spiritual issues,' but do you understand the genesis, in Romanticism, of fascination with the supernatural?

Excerpt http://www.readbookonline.net/readOnLine/46447/
THE JESUITS' CHURCH IN G——.
BY E. T. A. HOFFMANN.
Packed up in a wretched post-chaise, which the moths had left from instinct—as the rats left Prospero's vessel—I at last, after a break-neck journey, stopped half dislocated, at the inn in the G—— market-place. All the possible misfortune that might have befallen me had lighted on my carriage, which lay, shattered, with the postmaster at the last stage. Four skinny, jaded horses, after a lapse of many hours, dragged up the crazy vehicle, with the help of several peasants and my own servant; knowing folks came up, shook their heads, and thought that a thorough repair, which might occupy two, or even three days would be necessary. The place seemed to me agreeable, the country pretty, and yet I felt not a little horror-struck at the delay with which I was threatened. If, gentle reader, you were ever compelled to stop three days in a little town, where you did not know a soul, but were forced to remain a stranger to every body, and if some deep pain did not destroy the inclination for social converse, you will be able to appreciate my annoyance. In words alone does the spirit of life manifest itself in all around us; but the inhabitants of your small towns are like a secluded orchestra, which has worked into its own way of playing and singing by hard practice, so that the tone of the foreigner is discordant to their ears, and at once puts them to silence. I was walking up and down my room, in a thorough ill-humour, when it at once struck me that a friend at home, who had once passed two years at G——, had often spoken of a learned, clever man, with whom he had been intimate. His name, I recollected, was Aloysius Walter, professor at the Jesuits' college. I now resolved to set out, and turn my friend's acquaintance to my own advantage. They told me at the college that Professor Walter was lecturing, but would soon have finished, and as they gave me the choice of calling again or waiting in the outer rooms, I chose the latter. The cloisters, colleges, and churches of the Jesuits are everywhere built in that Italian style which, based upon the antique form and manner, prefers splendour and elegance to holy solemnity and religious dignity. In this case the lofty, light, airy halls were adorned with rich architecture and the images of saints, which were here placed against the walls, between Ionic pillars, were singularly contrasted by the carving over the doorways, which invariably represented a dance of genii, or fruit and the dainties of the kitchen. The professor entered—I reminded him of my friend, and claimed his hospitality for the period of my forced sojourn in the place. I found him just as my friend had described him; clear in his discourse, acquainted with the world, in short, quite in the style of the higher class priest, who has been scientifically educated, and peeping over his breviary into life, has often sought to know what is going on there. When I

found his room furnished with modern elegance, I returned to my former reflections in the halls, and uttered them to the professor aloud.
"You are right," said he, "we have banished from our edifices that gloomy solemnity, that strange majesty of the crushing tyrant, who oppresses our bosoms in Gothic architecture, and causes a certain unpleasant sensation, and we have very properly endowed our works with the lively cheerfulness of the ancients."
"But," said I, "does not that sacred dignity, that lofty majesty of Gothic architecture which seems, as it were, striving after Heaven, proceed from the true spirit of Christianity, which, supersensual itself, is directly opposed to that sensual spirit of the antique world which remains in the circle of the earthly?"

Novalis

The Life of Novalis. Friedrich von Hardenburg, who later christened himself Novalis (1772-1801), was born on the manor estate at Overwiederstedt, Saxony, in the Harz mountains. (His childhood was spent on that estate, and his fantasy life of oneness with nature was played out on trips into the mountains.) His father administered the inherited estates, which were part of the patrimony of this distinguished family, and managed the salt mine, which was the source of revenue for the region. Novalis' father was a strictly Pietistic Moravian; Novalis was the second of eleven children. He was sent to a local Lutheran school for his primary education From 1790-1794 Novalis studied Law at Jena, Wittenberg, and Leipzig Universities. During this time he heard and was influenced by Friedrich Schiller's lectures, and while at University he made brief acquaintances with Goethe, Herder, and Jean Paul. It was at this time that he became engaged to Sophie von Kuehn—who was thirteen years old—and, a quite different issue, became passionately interested in Fichte's Wissenschaftslehre. (That this extremely brilliant young man was at the same time writing goes without saying.) In light of this rapid development of his thought and work, we should note that from childhood on Novalis was keenly interested in the natural and physical sciences. He was a trained geologist, and had he not died at the age of 29 he would have completed his vast Romantic Encyclopedia of the sciences.

The work of Novalis. The prioritizing of the poetic imagination, by Schlegel and many of his contemporaries—including counterparts like Wordsworth and Lamartine elsewhere in Europe—became the leitmotif of Novalis' work. In his *Hymns to the Night,* 1799, Novalis lets his imagination create from the fixed point of the death of his first fiancée, a death which lured him to follow the beloved. As he contemplates this loss, he sees salvation in poetry, whose magic power can transform all that passes into a metaphor of the spirit. Like Orpheus, dealing with the night, he descends into the center of himself, to the point where he can create a salvation—parallel to Christ's saving—from the deification of love. Building from this perception Novalis conceives the universe as a fusion of nature and spirit in the aura of which he can be truly one with his beloved. In two other characteristic works he continues to work the rich Romantic themes of the Catholic Middle Ages. In *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (1800) he unfolds, self-reflexively, an account of a mediaeval court poet's education in his trade. Heinrich's youthful dream has been of a passage from self-transcendence, through redemption in nature, and the discovery of love, an ecstatic passage through which his experience leads him, bathed in powerful historical mystery. In the speech Christianity or Europe Novalis develops imaginatively his vision of the new Europe to come with Romanticism, a Europe which is romantically Catholic, and in that regard highly conservative, but respectful of the individual, and fit to lead the new post Revolutionary monarchical culture of the new Germany.

The conservative Novalis. The early German Romantics, privileging poetry as the visionary weapon for envisaging the new world, turned with frequency to the Middle Ages, and at least the atmosphere of the religious life that flourished at that time. For Novalis in particular the French Revolution was a brutal but necessary stage on humanity's long trek to self-awareness. Mankind's history was a powerful and ongoing education.

Reading

Primary source reading

Novalis: *Notes for a Romantic Encyclopedia*, ed. David Wood, 2007.

Secondary source reading

Novalis*, Henry von Ofterdingen,* trans. Hilty, 1992.

Further reading

Classic and Romantic German Aesthetics, ed. Bernstein, 2003.

Original language reading

Kutzke, Hermann, *Romantik und Konservatismus. Das 'politische' Werk Friedrich von Hardenbergs (Novalis) im Horizont seiner Wirkunsgeschichte, 1983.*

Suggested paper topics

Read through what remains of Novalis' Encyclopedia. What connections do you see between his thinking in the 'sciences,' and his poetic visionary thinking? Review Goethe's conception of the sciences in his time, a few generations earlier, and compare the value of the contributions of the two men toward 'understanding.' How does Novalis's worship of the mediaeval square with his scientific knowledge?

Does Novalis's conservatism spring from a reaction to the French Revolution, which was itself built onto Enlightenment ideas of progress and human perfectibility? Or is it an integral part of the Romantic fascination with the past in general, and specifically with the 'Romance' traditions, often poetic and mysterious, which underlie much German thinking of the early l9th century?

Excerpts

*en.wikiquote.org/wiki/**Novalis***
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I was still blind, but twinkling stars did dance throughout my being's limitless expanse...
True anarchy is the generative element of religion. Out of the annihilation of all existing institutions she raises her glorious head, as the new foundress of the world.
To romanticize the world is to make us aware of the magic, mystery and wonder of the world…

- There are ideal series of events which run parallel with the real ones. They rarely coincide. Men and circumstances generally modify the ideal train of events, so that it seems imperfect, and its consequences are equally imperfect. Thus with the Reformation; instead of Protestantism came Lutheranism.
- Throughout my being's limitless expanse,
Nothing had yet drawn close, only at distant stages
I found myself, a mere suggestion sensed in past and future ages.
  - True anarchy is the generative element of religion. Out of the annihilation of all existing institutions she raises her glorious head, as the new foundress of the world..
- Blood will stream over Europe until the nations become aware of the frightful madness which drives them in circles. And then, struck by celestial music and made gentle, they approach their former altars all together, hear about the works of peace, and hold a great celebration of peace with fervent tears before the smoking altars.
- Poetry heals the wounds inflicted by reason.
- The world must be romanticized. In this way the originary meaning may be found again.

Friedrich Hoelderlin

Life of Friedrich Hoelderlin. Friedrich Hoelderlin (1778-1843) was born in Lauffen am Neckar, in the kingdom of Wuerttemberg. His father, who worked as a church assistant, died when the child was two years old, leaving Hoelderlin to be brought up by his mother, who not long after remarried, to the Mayor of Nuertingen, to which town she moved herself and the family. Friedrich went to school in Neubraun, then went off to the University of Tuebingen, where he decided to study theology. (Two of his classmates were Hegel and Schelling, two of the most remarkable German philosophers of the early Romantic/late classical transition. It is reliably supposed that Hoelderlin exercised life long influence on his two classmates, having inspired Hegel with a fascination for the ancient Greek philosopher Heracleitus, whose theory of a universe of intersecting and self-transforming forces was a foundation for Hegel's dialectical thinking.) During and after leaving University, Hoelderlin realized that he was losing his faith in Christianity—thus in the study of theology—and thus drifted to that last resort activity of the intellectual, a job as a tutor. He was at the same time devoting as much time as possible to writing—which had been his private preoccupation since childhood—and between 83-84, in addition to making a fruitful acquaintance with Schiller and Goethe, he began the writing of what was to be one of his major poetic works, Hyperion. (His great love, Gontard, a married woman ten years older than he, entered his life at this point, and would serve as a potent and mythical axis, under the name Diotima, for Hoelderlin's vision of the fusion of Ancient Greek depth with his own quest.) In l798-1800 Hoelderlin worked on his mythopoetic vision, *Empedokles*, in which, as in *Hyperion,* he returned to archaic and deeply pre rational cult sides of the ancient Hellenic experience. In 1805, however, the condition of his 'hypochondria'—he had had his first episodes in 1800—recurred, more threateningly, and he was obliged to enter a clinic in Tuebingen, from which, after intermittent stays, he was released into the care of a local carpenter friend—a highly educated and well read one—in whose house he remained for the more than three remaining decades of his life.

Friedrich Hoelderlin's Work. Though in his last decades, Holderlin composed a wide variety of wonderful smaller poems, epigrams, odes, he had turned in his earlier work to the long narrative, Bildungsroman type poems, *Hyperion* and *Empedokles*, in which he sought, from the depths of his person, to reconcile the Classicism deeply interiorized by German culture during the Weimar period, in fact throughout the Enlightenment, with the sense of new Romantic possibility .

Hyperion. This poetic Bildungsroman illustrates well why the readers of Hoelderlin have ranged from bewildered to deeply involved. It is set in modern Greece, around l770, about the time when the nation was on the verge of finding its own independence—freedom from the Turks. Hyperion quests across the land, in search of the idealized Greece of dream, but instead meets only barbarians and primitives. Totally disillusioned he becomes a mountain hermit, and falls into a deep depression from which only the mistress of beauty, Diotima—she who taught Socrates what beauty means-- is able to rescue him. As lovers they unite, until her death, which leaves Hyperion longing and wandering, until, in a moment of powerful pantheistic empathy, he feels his way back to her, they are united, and her essential Hellenic beauty belongs again to the modern soul.

Reading

Primary source reading

Hoelderlin, Friedrich, *Poems and Fragments,* trans. M. Hamburger, 2004.

Secondary source reading

Heinrich, Dieter, *The Course of Remembrance and other essays on Hoelderlin*, l997.

Further reading

Constantine, David*, Hoelderlin,* l990.

Original language reading

Heidegger, M., *Eralueterungen zu Hoelderlin's Dichtung,* 1944.

Suggested paper topics

How does Hoelderlin's quest for the spirit of ancient Greece compare to the longing of older classicist/Hellenists, like Goethe and Winckelmann? Can you see what it might mean to say that Hoelderlin is a 'Romantic'? Look into a poet like Lord Byron, perhaps his Childe Harold? Does his address to ancient Greece at all remind you of Hoelderlin's approach?

Read in Hoelderlin's late shorter poems, like 'Bread and Wine' and 'Patmos' and consider the way this poet experiences Christianity. What kind of symbol of the future does Jesus become for him? Does Hoelderlin work toward a fusion of Christianity with ancient Hellenism?

Excerpt *www.poemhunter.com/friedrich-holderlin/*

Ages of Life
Euphrates' cities and
Palmyra's streets and you
Forests of columns in the level desert
What are you now?
Your crowns, because
You crossed the boundary
Of breath,
Were taken off
In Heaven's smoke and flame;
But I sit under clouds (each one
Of which has peace) among
The ordered oaks, upon
The deer's heath, and strange
And dead the ghosts of the blessed ones
Appear to me.

Heine

Life of Heinrich Heine. Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) was a German poet, critic, satirist, and influential public critic. He was born in Duesseldorf, of a Jewish family, and although he would later convert to Christianity—largely for political reasons due to the anti-Jewish laws in Prussia, and to the lasting displeasure of Jewish readers of Heine—his Jewish fidelities remained a stalwart part of his life. (And an underlying spur to the critical, outsider view he regularly adopted, toward society and government.) His father was a textile merchant and his mother the daughter of a physician. The life that was to sweep up this young man was different from the University Professorship lives common to the major figures of Enlightenment and Early Romantic literature; although Heine was to be sent to the classic universities. He studied briefly at Jena, and later at Goettingen, for Law, in l821. But his sensitivities were always more attuned to current cultural/political events than to scholarship. (Writing of course concerned him from early on, and as a young man he had had a turn (not very successful) at theater.)

Heine's concern with politics. Heine was from early in life consumed by the political life of his time, as were most of his creative contemporaries. The Napoleonic Revolution, and how it would play out in Germany, was on everyone's mind. This was noticeably so in Duesseldorf, which lay close to the border of Napoleonic France, and which, at Napoleon's defeat in 1815, was returned to Germany. (Heine had an intense attachment to French culture, with which he had been familiar from Nhildhood; and was to pass the last twenty five years of his life in Paris, where he was better known, and more popular than in Germany.) He was ardently attracted to some aspects of the Napoleonic invasion—the introduction of the Code Napoleon as the new law code, and the institution of trial by jury—and was to remain, throughout

his life, a friend to the anti-monarchist forces in Germany, who were fighting the persistence there of the culture of small and highly conservative monarchies. To be a participant in Junges Deutschland, the New Germany movement which swept up Heine and many of his contemporaries impatient with fossilized political forms, meant to follow events in France, where the Revolution of l848 seemed a culmination of dissatisfaction with the Ancien Regime, which Napoleon had ultimately restored in a new form. In France, where Heine spent his last twenty five years, he was widely admired, had influential friends—like Gerard de Nerval and Hector Berlioz—and wrote criticism and poetry voluminously.

Heine's work. Heine was a brilliant satirist and a lyric poet with a wide range of skills. From 1820 he was a publishing fury, creative with lyrics of such diversity that one can only illustrate his genius by a single sample. 'Die schlesischen Weber' 'The Silesian Weavers,' is of typical power and subtlety. The voices speaking in this poem are almost entirely the common voice of the weavers themselves. It comes out that the cloth the weavers are weaving is the shroud of the German nation: into that shroud they are weaving a threefold curse, a curse on the god who has betrayed them, a curse on the king who has let them starve and be shot, a curse on their fake and corrupt fatherland. The brilliance of Heine's poetry is in the slow revelation by the weavers of the details of what they are weaving, a revelation which proceeds at exactly the speed of the prosody. Nietzsche said that only he and Heine knew how to write German. He was right.

Reading

Primary source reading

Heine: *Selected verse: Dual Language Edition*, trans. Peter Branscombe, 1987.

Secondary source reading

Sammons, Jeffrey, *Heinrich Heine: A Modern Biography,* 1979. (The classic study in English.)

Further reading

Youens, Susan, Heinrich Heine and the Lied, 2011.

Original language reading

Hinck, Walter, *Von Heine zu Brecht: Lyrik im Geschichtsprozess, 1978.*

Suggested paper topics

To what especially do you attribute Heine's inclination to and gift for irony? Does it derive from his outsider status? From his dual French-German cultural background? From his lifelong oppositional stance in politics?

How does Heine deal with being Jewish? Does it bring a flavor of its own to his lyrics? Does he suffer racial inequities? Examine the question of Anti-Semitism in German literature. Has it deep historical roots there, or is German Anti-Semitism a by product of recent events in Germany?

Excerpt *www.**poem**hunter.com/**hein**rich-**heine**/*

E'en As A lovely Flower
E'en as a lovely flower,
So fair, so pure thou art;
I gaze on thee, and sadness
Comes stealing o'er my heart.

My hands I fain had folded

Upon thy soft brown hair,
Praying that God may keep thee
So lovely, pure and
.
A Palm-tree
A single fir-tree, lonely,
on a northern mountain height,
sleeps in a white blanket,
draped in snow and ice.

His dreams are of a palm-tree,
who, far in eastern lands,
weeps, all alone and silent,
among the burning sands.

Johann Gottlieb Fichte

The Life of Johann Gottlieb Fichte. Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1772-1829) was born in upper Lusatia as the son of a ribbon weaver. He was from a peasant family long settled in the district, and for the first years of his life he was educated by his father. However the young man showed exceptional tenacity, and was noticed: a baron, from the neighborhood, was struck by the youngster's extraordinary preaching ability, and offered to pay for his school tuition. The young man was put under the charge of one Pastor Knebel in Meissen, who saw to it that Johann was sent to the local gymnasium and given the most thorough possible classical education.

Fichte's education. In l774 Johann matriculated at the distinguished Schulpforta school—at which both of the Schlegel brothers and Nietzsche would be students. In l780 he enrolled as a Theoogy student at the University of Jena, which was by this time the central educational nucleus of Germany, if not Europe. All did not go smoothly, however, as Ficthe had serious problems with tuition, and had to drop his University studies in order to serve as a tutor. An intense but unhappy love affair only made matters more difficult. As with so many of the brilliant and highly educated German thinkers of this time, Fichte's best hope for satisfying employment was on the university level. In December of l793 he was made Professor of Philosophy at Jena, from which position, unfortunately, he was to be dismissed on a charge of atheism. (We might today deeply question that decision, as what in fact Fichte believed, and pronounced, was that God can be known through the will and goodness, not through a personal love—which set him at serious odds with the many Pietist forces that were dominant in the administration of the University.) In l808 Fichte found himself distressed and discouraged by the devastation wrought by Napoleon's armies in Prussia, and delivered was to become his most widely attended to work, his *Reden an der deutschen Nation, Speeches to the German Nation,* on the urgent need for Germans to come together as a national whole, and—rather as Herder had sought—to discover their rich and nourishing cultural past with its unity in a single great language.

Fichte's work. Fichte was particularly known for his speeches to the German nation, but it was less well understood from where he was coming, in his national summons expressed in those *Reden.* The determining challenge to Fichte, in the development of his own thought, was the growing development of his thought-master and teacher, Immanuel Kant—whose *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) established a critical benchmark for the speculative thought of his own time, turn of century Germany, and for world thought on the philosophical level. In interacting with Kant's idealism—in prioritizing the dynamic of the ego, as the creator of a self-sufficient world; in arguing that consciousness is not grounded in anything; that there is no noumenal realm over against the phenomenal; in exploring domains of self awareness and self consciousness; in developing rich concepts of intersubjectivity—Fichte devoted some of his own philosophical attention to the question of the conditions and limits of thought. (It is increasingly apparent that Fichte, in his immanentist idealism, helped bridged the transition to Hegel's idealistic system of the absolute unfolding of Geist.) It is noteworthy that in Fichte's case, as in those of other German philosophers and religious thinkers, the presence of literature and philosophy within one another is inextricably close.

Reading

Primary source reading

Beck, Gunnar, *Fichte and Kant on Freedom, Rights, and Law*, 2008.

Secondary source reading

Martin, Wayne, *Idealism and Objectivity: Understanding Fichte's Jena Project*, 1997.

Further reading

Zoller, Gunther, *Fichte's Transcendental Philosophy: the Original Duplicity of Intelligence and Will,* 1998.

Original language reading

Rohs, Peter, *Johann Gottlieb Fichte,* 1991.

Suggested paper topics

In his *Speeches to the German Nation* Fichte issued an impassioned plea for national self-consciousness and unity. Read those speeches, noting what sentiments they target in Fichte's fellow Germans. Assess the effect of those speeches, and when, if ever, the issue of German nationality found a solution.

In his philosophy Fichte—following the inspiration and challenge of Kant—is centrally concerned with the nature of the self and the other it relates to. This is a central problem for philosophy, and assumes special importance for the Romantics, because they are intent on the rich self affirmations of the self-liberating individual. Can you construe this self-other issue as a central concern for the understanding of literature? Does this issue bring out a point where the concerns of literature and philosophy are identical?

Excerpt: http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Johann_Gottlieb_Fichte

- The correct relationship between the higher and lower classes, the appropriate mutual interaction between the two is, as such, the true underlying support on which the improvement of the human species rests. The higher classes constitute the mind of the single large whole of humanity; the lower classes constitute its limbs; the former are the thinking and designing [Entwerfende] part, the latter the executive part.
- The new education must consist essentially in this, that it completely destroys freedom of will in the soil which it undertakes to cultivate, and produces on the contrary strict necessity in the decisions of the will, the opposite being impossible. Such a will can henceforth be relied on with confidence and certainty.
  - o
- If you want to influence him at all, you must do more than merely talk to him ; you must fashion him, and fashion him in such a way that he simply cannot will otherwise than you wish him to will.
  - o
- Upon the progress of knowledge the whole progress of the human race is immediately dependent: he who retards that, hinders this also. And he who hinders this, —what character does he assume towards his age and posterity? Louder than with a thousand voices, by his actions he proclaims into the deafened ear of the world present and to come —"As long as I live at least, the men around me shall not become wiser or better; — for in their progress I too, notwithstanding all my efforts to the contrary, should be dragged forward in some direction; and this I detest I will not become more enlightened, — I will not become nobler. Darkness and perversion are my elements, and I will summon all my powers together that I may not be dislodged from them."

Schleiermacher

The development of Schleiermacher. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) was a German philosopher, theologian, Biblical scholar, and perhaps above all textual hermeneute, who was also a major player among German literary philosophical luminaries, like the Schlegels and Novalis, who gathered around the University of Jena at the turn of the century, and who did so with a particular focus on the journal Athenaeum (1798-1800), which was its movement's beacon publication. That is, Schleiermacher was deeply involved with this group of literary and artistic people who were trying to track a new path for German thought on the far side of Weimar classicism—the rich inheritance of Goethe and Schlller, who were living near Jena, in Weimar. Schleiermacher, in other words, not only wrote on culture and philosophy for Athenaeum, but belonged deeply to the movement of change and reconstruction that was taking over German culture as it entered it 'Romantic' phase. Who was this complex theologian and cultural critic with such a binding to the art world, and with a destiny to build toward a new religious sensibility to meet the demands of a Protestant culture still debating the issues that concerned Luther.

Life of Friedrich Schleiermacher. Friedrich Schleiermacher was born in Breslau, in Southern Silesia. He was the son of a chaplain in the Prussian Army. He was initially sent to a religious strict Moravian school, but he soon realized that his belief in Christianity was not of that sort, was under question. (Letters to his father, from these years, show the son tiptoeing around the belief issue, which was most important to his father, then blurting out in a letter that he no longer believed in the Trinity.) After this flap was resolved, it was agreed that Schleiermacher should go to the University of Halle, which was 'rationalist' and on the whole congenial to Schleiermacher, who profited from this time to study Greek and fall in love with Plato and Aristotle.

Schleiermacher's Writing. After University, Schleiermacher, who was actively writing all this time, took the usual posts as a tutor, and involved himself in what was to be a seven year relationship with the wife of a Berlin clergyman. He also deepened his relationship with Friedrich Schlegel, and brought to fruition the two works that represented the thinking of his first thirty years: his *Reden ueber die Religion (Speeches on Religion)* and his *Monologen* (*Monologues).* To these works he added, in 1803, his *Outlines of a History of Morality*, all of which led to his being offered a Chair of Theology at Berlin in 1810.

Schleiermacher's thought. Like that of Fichte, another bigger than life figure in the transition of Germany from Enlightenment and classicism, into the complex early l9th century cultural mode we call Romanticism, Schleiermacher's thought was that of a significant and complex philosopher, as well as a Theologian concerned with bringing harmony between traditional Christianity—his reference point was Lutheranism and Pietism—and the various new naturalisms of the l9th century; not to mention the dramatic developments in textual criticism, hermeneutics, which Schleiermacher was considerably responsible for promoting. In those realms he evoked wide attention for the care with which he read Biblical texts in terms of a well planned method for scrutinizing the intentions of the writer. Schleiermacher's skeptical credence became an important ingredient of the Higher Criticism of the Bible, which was to prove one of the epoch making trends of the l9th century.

Theology. Like Fichte, Schleiermacher wished to base his modernist theology, with its room for evergrowing perspectives, on a compelling account of the human psyche. He elaborated a detailed psychology of self and other, in which God was introduced as the factor of supreme otherness; an otherness which nonetheless we can access in the depths of our self-awareness, where we live as the knowledge of our dependence.

Reading

Primary source reading

Lamm, Julia, *The Living God. Schleiermacher's theological Appropriation of Spinoza*, l996.

Secondary source reading

Gerrish, Brian, *Prince of the Church: Schleiermacher and the Beginnings of Modern Theology*, 1984.

Further Reading

Barth, Karl, T*he Theology of Schleiermacher,* l982.

Original language reading

Nowak, Kurt, *Schleiermacher: Leben, Werk, und Wirkung*, 2001.

Suggested paper topics

Schleiermacher was a renowned Biblical scholar and text critic, who evolved many techniques for the analysis of Biblical texts. In one sense he was a major thrust of the so called higher criticism of the Bible, which led to fresh and unsuperstitious readings of scripture; while in another sense he reawoke interest in the Bible as sacred literature.

Examine some of the detailed features of Schleiermacher's method of Biblical criticism.

Examine Schleiermacher's contributions to the Athenaeum journal. How did Schleiermacher address the intellectual problems of the day, that Sattelzeit (saddle-time) between the end of Weimar classicism and the full blown unfolding of the Romantic movement?

Excerpt http://www.egs.edu/library/friedrich-schleiermacher/quotes/

To be a religions man and to pray are really one and the same thing. To join in the thought of God with every thought of any importance that occurs to us ; in all our admiration of external nature, to regard it as the work of His wisdom ; to take counsel with God about all our plans, that we may be able to carry them out in His name ; and even in our most mirthful hours to remember His all-seeing eye ; this is the prayer without ceasing to which we are called, and which is really the essence of true religion.

Therefore let us learn to die in seeing Christ die ! It is no small thing that I expect from you in calling on you to do this ; for it is with the death of the Saviour as it was with His life ; let him who seeks only happiness and joy shun likeness to Him ; let him alone seek it who covets what is great and perfect at any price.

If, then, His Spirit is actually among us, if Christ becomes increasingly glorious to us through our study of His words, our inward parts more and more enlightened by the eternal, divine light, which He brought from heaven, our hearts more and more purified ; we shall then, when the next time of commemorating our Lord comes round, return with new joy and gratitude to the beautiful circle of our Christian festivals, and anew, with yet purer spirit and in a way more worthy of Him, participate in adoring remembrance of His birth, His sufferings and His glorification.

However much admiration and honour was given to our Saviour by many of His contemporaries during His life on earth ; however powerfully a yet greater number were struck, at least for the moment, by His exalted character ; still just His greatest words and His noblest deeds often remained dark even to the noblest and best around Him, and seemed to the rest a piece of insolent pretension.

We will begin this series of meditations with the relationship which is the foundation of all others, namely, the holy bond of marriage, which we must regard as the first appointment of God after His almighty Word had called man into existence. Out of this sacred union are developed all other human relations ; on it rests the Christian family, and of such Christian families Christian communities consist. Moreover, on this union depends the propagation of the human race, and the transmitting of the power of the divine Word from one generation to another. Therefore let us today consider this foundation of the whole Christian Church in the light of God's Word.

But our grateful joy before God must also be free from slothfulness. It seems really superfluous to say this ; for slothfulness and joy can never harmonize. Joy arouses the spirit, so that it is nothing but strength and life and activity ; and this is pre-eminently true of joy before God, for it is ever exciting, ever bringing into action whatever may be specially in our hearts at the same time.

Hegel

Hegel's Life. Georg Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) was born in Stuttgart, in the kingdom of Wuerttemberg, where his father was secretary to the local revenue office. At three he attended the local public school, and proved astonishingly precocious. Two years later when he entered the local Latin School he already knew the first declension, with some help from his mother. By the time he had enrolled in the Stuttgart Gymnasium Illustre he was a voracious reader—not only of Classics but of German authors like Klopstock and Lessing. At the age of eighteen he entered the renowned Tuebinger Stift, the theological faculty at Tuebingen University, where he was lucky to form friendships with fellow students like the poet Friedrich Hoelderlin, and the critic and philosopher Friedrich Schelling, both of whom had significant influence on the development of Hegel. (One of the closest bonds among the three was their shared enthusiasm for the French Revolution, which was in full swing, and which was stirring the spirit of freedom in Germany; and which would in the proximate future foreordain the issue of freedom to central position in the thought of the three friends.) After graduation—he was writing drafts of philosophical essays all the time—Hegel spent several years as a private tutor. In 1801 he went to Jena, where he collaborated with Schelling, while by l806 we see him completing one of his great books, *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (*Die Phaenomenologie des Geistes)*, in which he unfolds the best known principles of the philosophy we now, thanks to him, call absolute idealism. (While completing this work he had occasion to see Napoleon, on horseback, entering Prussia victoriously, and had to admire this victorious figure of history, who would seem to embody key elements of Hegel's historical belief that what happens is right.) In 1818 Hegel was appointed to a Professorship of Philosophy in Berlin, and saw his intellectual reputation spread throughout Europe.

Hegel's and German thought. Theologians and philosophers—from Eckhart to Boehme, Fichte to Schopenhauer—have played fruitful roles in shaping the creative imaginations of German literature. (In fact no other literature than German so turns around the unity of the philosophical with the imaginative.) Throughout his work, in logic, aesthetics, and especially in metaphysics Hegel unfolds a thought scheme in which the Absolute Spirit, Geist, realizes itself, in revolutionary development, into the many stages first of cosmic unfolding then of historical unfolding, from the earliest human presences known to our planet to Hegel's own present, in which he saw—remember his response to the French Revolution—the furthest yet development of the will of what is.

Hegel: Aesthetics and Logic. As the Absolute Spiirit reveals itself it inevitably assumes an evolving sequence of phenomenal expressions. (While pure spirit, that is, it can only realize itself by taking on concrete forms.) Pure thought (philosophy), forms of society or government, conceptions that become the laws, norms of behavior (moral values): all these realms of expression enable us to know Geist in its unfolding. Quite as meaningful to us, in our effort to see the advance of Spirit behind us, is the unfolding of Idea as sensuous form, that is as art. We are to assume, if we follow Hegel's argument of the 'advance of spirit,' that its expression in concrete form, in the arts, will show itself to be unceasingly 'purer,' and 'more Geist like.' It is a matter of fine distinction, to consider Hegel's efforts to establish this point, and a pleasure to the aesthetic in all of us, to see to what extraordinary insights Hegel takes us, as he conducts us into the development of literature, the plastic arts, and architecture up to his own time. It is only for the sake of minimal completeness, that we must add, that Hegel's dialectical system of logic, by which he characterizes the self-generation of Spirit, is an indispensible correlate of the evolutionary process he tracks in *The Phenomenology of Spirit.*

Reading

Primary source reading

A Hegel Reader, ed. Houlgate, 1998.

Secondary source reading

Houlgate, Stephen, *An Introduction to Hegel. Freedom, Truth, and History*, 2005.

Further reading

Solomon, Robert, *In the Spirit of Hegel,* 1983.

Original language reading

Schaefer, Reiner, *Die dialektik und ihre besonderen Formen in Hegel's Logik,* 2001.

Suggested paper topics

Hegel believes that the arts are expressions of
Geist, spirit; incarnations. (This is a one sentence survey of a lifetime of positioning the argument.) Does this general kind of approach, to what the arts and especially literature, are, seem promising to you? Is it an approach which leads to fresh insights into texts of literature?

When Hegel saw the victorious Napoleon riding through Prussia, he was amazed, and despite his feelings about the matter he admired the conqueror. What was it he admired? Was it the spirit of history incarnate, as we are told? If so, what does that incarnation of spirit in history mean to Hegel, and why is it so powerful? Have you had that feeling, in watching an international figure who seems to be riding the wave of history?

Excerpt *https://www.goodreads.com/.../quotes/6188.Georg_Wilhelm_Friedrich*

Governments have never learned anything from history, or acted on principles deducted from it When liberty is mentioned, we must always be careful to observe whether it is not really the assertion of private interests which is thereby designated.

Mark this well, you proud men of action! you are, after all, nothing but unconscious instruments of the men of thought.

Education is the art of making man ethical.
We do not need to be shoemakers to know if our shoes fit, and just as little have we any need to be professionals to acquire knowledge of matters of universal interest.

An idea is always a generalization, and generalization is a property of thinking. To generalize means to think

Truth in philosophy means that concept and external reality correspond.

The history of the world is none other than the progress of the consciousness of freedom.

Friedrich Schlegel

Profile of Friedrich Schlegel. Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829) was a German poet, literary critic, and philosopher who was one of the principal creators of the concept of the Romantic, and inspirational in developing the new aesthetics of the Romantic Movement, especially as it was being formulated in the cultural seedbed of Jena. (Among the writers most directly influenced by him were Coleridge and Adam Miskiewicz.) He made his debut as a critic and essayist, but devoted the most concentrated part of his work life to his specialty, Indo European linguistics and comparative literature. He should be distinguished from his equally distinguished brother, August Wilhelm Schlegel, with whom Friedrich collaborated on the Athenaeum journal in Jena, and who also contributed to the initial impulses of Romanticism.

The Life of Friedrich Schlegel. Friedrich Schlegel was born in Hanover, son of the Lutheran pastor of the Hanover Marktkirche. Still a young man he went for the study of law at the universities of both Goettingen and Leipzig, but soon tired of that study, and turned toward an exclusive concern with literary matters, especially in the context of the Athenaeum journal, on which he worked at the turn of the century with Tieck, Fichte, and Novalis. In his work for that journal, especially in the Athenaeumsfragmente and in his novel Lucinde*, he worked through the basic principle of th*e idea of Romanticism, in forms which—say in his definition of the Romantic, or of the fragment or the ironic—would be major legacies for early l9th century thinkers, across Europe, as they attempted to characterize the new cultural/literary world they found themselves in. The years subsequent to The Athenaeum work, the last twenty years of his life, were devoed to a vast array of literary studies, the most fruitful of which were in Indo European culture and linguistics.

The works. As a youth Schlegel was thought a wild card revolutionary and atheist, but in 1818, when he converted to Roman Catholicism, he moved into a late phase, as a representative of the arch conservative Metternich, in which his political and social views were unrecognizably different from those of his youth, and in which, for example, he found no more disgusting example of political structure than Anglo-American parliamentarianism, with its openness to the voice of the people. What transpired between these two
intellectual postures of Friedrich Schlegel? Perhaps the key lies in the notion of the Romantic, which as Schlegel first forged it served as a conceptual bridge toward fresh new perceptions of what a literary text (especially Poetry) is, while later in his thinking life Schlegel found that this Romantic notion, which for him fundamentally connoted moods and tones of the Middle Ages (the Romantic embedded in the roots of the inheritance from Rome), became the enveloping mantle for an archaizing thinker whose fascinations were all in the past.

Schlegel as Scholar. With Friedrich Schlegel we truly find the blend of serious and seminal scholar with lyric poet with literary critical intelligence capable of intuiting the richest formulations of the entire birthing Romantic movement. The masterpiece of his rich scholarly poetic achievement is *On the Language and Wisdom of India* (1818). In that work he draws on his own intensive study of Indo European linguistics, which began in 1803, and his acceptance of the position, then coming into first prominence, that there were remarkable similarities among Sanskrit, Latin, Greek and Persian. From this observation, which was claiming scholarly attention, Schlegel developed his own version of an Aryanist theory, that the 'noble people,' the Aryans, made their ways west from India, where they deposited their distinctive and exceptionally valuable culture.

Reading

Primary source reading

Forster, M.N*., German Philosophy of Language from Schlegel to Hegel and Beyon*d, 2011.

Secondary source reading

Beiser, F., *German Idealism: The Struggle against Subjectivism 1781-1801*, 2002.

Further reading

Chaouli, M. *The Laboratory of Poetry; Chemistry and Poetics in the work of Friedrich Schle*gel, 2002.

Original language reading
Zovko, Jure, Verstehen und Nichtverstehen bei Friedrich Schlegel. Zur Entstehung und Bedeutung seiner hermeneutischen Kritik, *1990.*

***Suggested p*aper topics**

What is the relation of Friedrich Schlegel the scholar to Schlegel the ideologist of the Romantic poetic? Does the Schlegel for whom Aryan poetics are defining for western culture, support his notions of irony, the fragmentary, and visionary on his discoveries as a scholar?

What are the principal ways that Friedrich Schlegel begins to distance himself—say in the Athenaumsfragmente—from the thinking of the Weimar classicists like Goethe and Scniller? What role does the notion of the fragment play in that distancing? How about the notion of irony? Why are these such influential wedge concepts into the new Romantic world?

Excerpt http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Karl_Wilhelm_Friedrich_Schlegel

The romantic poetry is a progressive universal poetry.

Irony is a form of paradox. Paradox is what is good and great at the same time.

Wit is the appearance, the external flash of imagination. Thus its divinity, and the witty character of mysticism.

Honour is the mysticism of legality.

It is equally fatal for the spirit to have a system and to have none. One must thus decide to join the two.

It is equally fatal for the spirit to have a system and to have none. It will simply have to decide to combine the two.

Nietzsche

Significance of the life of Friedrich Nietzsche. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) was a German philosopher, classical philologist, poet, and social critic who exercised great influence on such philosophical movements as Existentialism and Postmodernism, and more widely on educated readers worldwide who have attempted to make sense of such developments as the God is Dead movement or the paths to self-orientation in a world of radical individualism. As with many of the greatest German writers—Eckhart, Boehme, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Fichte—in Nietzsche too the borderline between rigorous philosophy and imaginative, even mythical thinking is porous, and constantly transgressed.

The Life of Friedrich Nietzsche. Friedrich Nietzsche was born in Ruecken-bei-Letzen in Prussia. His father was a Lutheran pastor, and the young Nietzsche was at first sent to the local boys' school. Then from 1858-64 he matriculated at the renowned Schulpforta gymnasium, where he got a conventional thorough grounding in chiefly classical languages—doing poorly only in Hebrew, and creating a minor scandal from time to time with his comrades and the bottle. At Schulpforta Nietzsche wrote poems, composed some interesting music, and discovered a favorite poet, Hoelderlin; in addition, and of eminent importance, he wrote one of his first serious essays, on his loss of Christian faith. (In a sharp letter to his sister, his other self in thinking through value issues, Nietzsche wrote that one can either have faith and be happy, or inquiry, suffer, and be honest.) From Schulpforta Nietzsche went to the University of Bonn, in 1864, to major in Classical Philology. During these years he slipped into the first stages of serious health issues, severe dysentery, migraines, what were to become debilitating mental issues, probably including schizophrenia; as well as into a serious accident on horseback, in which the muscles of his chest were badly ripped. He was however able to accept, in 1848, the unprecedented offer of a Chair in Classical Philology at the University of Basel—he was only 24—and was to remain a resident of Switzerland for the rest of his life—although his periods of travel for recuperation were unremitting. After a few years Nietzsche had to retire from this taxing teaching post, and devoted himself increasingly to his writings, and to his own recuperation. The period of intense creativity was about to commence; it would see *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), *Human, All Too Human* (1878), *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1882) and a spate of other passionate, driven, contentious texts written before madness took the requisite reason from his poetry.

The Thought of Friedrich Nietzsche. Scattered through the writings of Nietzsche are many themes that can be considered key works of the intellectual climate of the twentieth century and beyond. The outburst of feeling and vision that accompanied Romanticism had borne fruit in a l9th century for which a return to conservative values was widespread—in monarchies, in repressive or obscurantist policies such as those of Metternich and (in part) Bismarck), The implications of scientific investigation were making themselves unavoidable, and the challenges to orthodox religious were compelling believers to reformulate their positions. Into this turbulent mix Nietzsche arrived with a collection of perspectives which, expressed with poetic ardor and uncompromising rudeness, drove wedges into what positions still remained. Notions like the polarity of the Apollonian and Dionysias in drama—the basis of *The Birth of Tragedy*; like *The Will to Power*, a key exhortation to enslaved modern man—largely a victim of Christianity's servile propaganda—to affirm the life he finds himself in; The Death of God, the shibboleth with which Nietzsche compresses his sense that the world has outgrown its dependence on false father figures; and the notion, pervasive throughout Nietzsche's work, that the truth is undiscoverable, that all cognition is perspectival and dependent: such notions, developed with great power in Nietzsche's brief and often aphoristic works, inevitably exercised the strongest effect both on artists and intellectuals.

Reading

Primary source reading

Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits, trans. Hollingdale, 1986.

Secondary source reading

Gemes, Ken; May, Simon, *Nietzsche on Freedom and Authority*, 2009.

Further reading

Nietzsche: Philosophy and the Arts, ed. Kemal, Salim; Gaskell, Ivan; Conway, Daniel, 1998.

Original language reading

Breitschmid, Markus, *Nietzsche's Denkraum*, 2006.

Suggested paper topics

How does Nietzsche deal with the origins and development of ancient Greek tragedy—which he claimed to understand better after his first meetings with Richard Wagner? How is Nietzsche's perspective onto classical culture different from that of the Weimar classicists like Goethe and Schiller? What would Nietzsche says of Winckelmann's idea, that Greek art reaches to a noble simplicity and dignified gravity?

Once again with Nietzsche we come to the boundaries between literature and philosophy. Do Nietzsche' texts, like Thus Spake Zarathustra, seem to lie on the side of imaginative literature? Or are they philosophical texts, with a discursive argument, but powered by imagination?

Excerpt *en.wiki**quote**.org/wiki/Friedrich_**Nietzsche***

"Without music, life would be a mistake."
"It is not a lack of love, but a lack of friendship that makes unhappy marriages."
"That which does not kill us makes us stronger."
"I'm not upset that you lied to me, I'm upset that from now on I can't believe you."
"It is hard enough to remember my opinions, without also remembering my reasons for them!"
"And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music."
"There is always some madness in love. But there is also always some reason in madness."

Richard Wagner

The achievement of Richard Wagner. Richard Wagner (1813-1883) was a great composer, poet (of the librettos of his own operas), scenographer and dramaturge, publicist, political voice, and autobiographer. It is no wonder that his creative brilliance made of opera (the Gesamtkunstwerk, the Total Art Work) the consummate statement of l9th century Romanticism, with its overtones (in Germany) of apocalypse and violence. German literature is multiply intertwined with the work of Wagner: the themes of his greatest work, like *Parzifal* and the *Ring of the Niebelungen*, are drawn from the earliest classics of German literature; Wagner himself proved to the a consummate wordsmith, in creating the librettos for his operas; and the literary climate of early 20th century German literature is unthinkable without Wagner's looming shadow over it.

The Life of Richard Wagner. Richard Wagner was born in Leipzig. His father was a police department clerk, while his mother was the daughter of a baker. His father died shortly after Richard's birth, and his mother, remarrying one of the Father's friends, moved the family to Dresden, near to which the young Wagner went to a pastor's school at Possendorf. At the age of nine, while still in elementary school, Wagner registered his extreme delight at hearing Karl Maria von Weber's *Die Freischuet*z; at the same stage he wrote his first play. (Wagner was quick to pick up on driving new forces in the German art world: in l825 he heard Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, and was taken with a fit of demonic excitement.) In l831 Wagner entered the University of Leipzig, and at the age of 20 he composed his first opera, *The Fairies.* In l836 Wagner fell in love—for the first of many recorded times—and married. (The next year the lady left him for another man, only to reappear, reconciled then fighting, many times in Wagner's later life, all the while he was accumulating new romantic encumbrances. Romantic confusion and constant debt were the two constants of Wagner's personal life.) The following years, as Wagner composed unremittingly, were to find him making his way by luck and prayer through the labyrinth of higher culture elements on whom he was dependent for his livelihood, and, even in his later years, when he had settled

in Bayreuth, and established a performance for his operatic achievement, for the funding of an appropriate Grand Hall for the staging of his works.

The Work of Richard Wagner. You will be able to trace, in any of Wagner's major operas, the combination of skills which marks his originality: his bringing together of all the elements of the opera—from costume and gesture to the highest singing roles—to a firm unity; tonal experimentation and chromaticism that bespeaks the advent of the 'modern music' lying not far ahead into the next century. Wagner recapitulates (in his invariably fresh and socially alert manner) many of the greatest early Germanic narrative themes: *Lohengrin* and *Parzifal* (Wolfram's *Parzifal*); *Tannhauser* (the *Meistersingers*); *The Ring of the Niebelungen); Tristan und Isolde* (Gottfried von Strassburg, l2th century). Wagner's perspective, throughout his reworking of this narrative material, is romantic-tragic in mode; in world view he is both celebratory of the origins of German literature, and scornful of the fallen state of commercial middle class Germany, at its worst exemplified by the Jews, whom Wagner regularly excoriates. Wagner's powerful written lyrics, and sublime (at best) music, which he was to help enshrine in a national festival at Bayreuth (1872), mark one of the high points of German cultural self-awareness. It must be mentioned that Adolf Hitler promoted his own cult of Wagnerian music, which he considered the highest testimony to German national supremacy. But it has been frequently observed, that Wagner was, instead of a nationalist, a creator employing the treasures of German culture to focus an unrelenting critique of German society.

Reading

Primary source reading

Wagner, Richard, *My Life*, trans. Gray, 1992.

Secondary source reading

Selected Letters of Richard Wagner, ed. Spencer and Millington, 1987.

Further reading

Spett, Frederic, *Bayreuth: A History of the Wagner Festival*, 1994.

Original language reading

Callico, J, 'Fuer eine neue deutsche Nationaloper,' in Applegate, *Music and German National Identity*, 2002.

Suggested paper topics

What connection do you see between Wagner's conception of the Gesamtkunstwerk and the work of creative imagination in literature? While it is true that Wagner composed the lyrics for his own operas, and that he was a genius at creating lyrics for the operatic production, does this kind of work constitute literary creation?

What kinds of transformation of early German literature do you see in Wagner's operas? How has Wagner's The Ring of the Niebelungen modified the Niebelungenlied? How has Wagner's Parzifal refashioned the epic of Wolfram von Eschenbach? Answer with the view to the kinds of radical transformation the Gesamtkunstwerk makes when it assembles literary material into a new whole.

Excerpt** en.wiki**quote**.org/wiki/Talk:**Richard_Wagner

- I believe in God, Mozart, and Beethoven.
- The error in the art-genre of Opera consists herein: a Means of expression (Music) has been made the end, while the End of expression (the Drama) has been made a means.

- The oldest, truest, most beautiful organ of music, the origin to which alone our music owes its being, is the human voice.
- A political man is disgusting, but a political wife, horrible.
- From its first faint glimmerings, History shews Man's constant progress as a beast of prey. As such he conquers every land, subdues the fruit-fed races, founds mighty realms by subjugating other subjugators, forms states and sets up civilisations, to enjoy his prey at rest.
- Attack and defence, want and war, victory and defeat, lordship and thraldom, all sealed with the seal of blood: this from henceforth is the History of Man.