

Western University
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

German 3341F (cross-listed with CLC 3340F and Medieval Studies 2022F)

MEDIEVAL LITERATURE AND CULTURE

Course Outline

Fall 2019

Instructor: Melitta Adamson

Lecture: M 12:30-2:30pm

Tutorial: W 12:30-1:20pm (CLC, Med.Stud)

Tutorial: W 1:30-2:30pm (GER)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND COURSE AIMS:

In the course the term 'literature' will be used in a broad sense, and will include all types of textual production. The emphasis will be on the literature and living conditions in medieval Europe, in particular Germany, France, and the British Isles. The course will focus on the period around 1200 AD when courtly society gave rise to a courtly literature in France and Germany that was more concerned with the love between man and woman than the love of God; and on the period around 1350, when the urban bourgeoisie began to play a major role in the cultural and literary life of such towns as Würzburg and Nuremberg. Although Latin was the language of the church and the universities, the vernacular was important in the Christianisation of Europe, in courtly literature (love poetry, verse epics), and in late-medieval popular literature. Representative examples of the vernacular texts will be read in modern English translation, and will include love songs by Walther von der Vogelweide, one heroic epic (*Nibelungenlied*), and two courtly epics (*Der Arme Heinrich*; *Tristan*), as well as excerpts from a variety of legal, medical, culinary, and historical texts in modern English translation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of the course, students are expected to have acquired a good overview of daily life in medieval Europe, and of different types of literary production in medieval Latin and the vernacular; the tools to study, synthesize, and critically analyze the medieval cultural, scientific, and literary achievements in a European context; an enhanced ability to present clear, persuasive, and original arguments about them in oral and written course work

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (tentative):

1 term paper (1,500 words, in German).....	30%
1 oral presentation (in German).....	15%
Class Participation.....	10%
1 Midterm Exam.....	15%
1 Final Exam.....	30%

TEXTS:

Gies, Joseph and Francis. *Life in Medieval Castle*. Harper and Row, latest edition.

Hartmann von Aue, *Der Arme Heinrich*, Reclam, latest edition.

Nibelungenlied. Penguin, latest edition.

Gottfried von Strassburg. *Tristan*. Penguin, latest edition.

The Medieval Messenger. Usborne Publishing, latest edition.

Selected poetry in photocopies.

OPTIONAL TEXT:

Amt, Emily. *Women's Lives in Medieval Europe*. Routledge, 2010.