

Abenteuer von den Hildungen.

N S I S T . Inalten maren.

School of Languages and Cultures
Department of German

GER 341: *Myth and Literature:
A Survey of German Literature
from the Middle Ages to
Storm & Stress*



Instructor: Ibrahim Marazka, Ph.D.

These stories, tales and myths captured the imagination of generations upon generations of writers and readers, composers and listeners, performers and audiences. It is the world of Medieval German Literature with its vindictive queens and tyrannical kings, distressed ladies and noble knights, handsome heroines and adventurous heroes, monstrous dragons and horrifying ghosts, cursed lepers and evil witches.

We want to study the literature of bygone societies, which created myths enduring until today. We want to learn about the culture, values and virtues of these societies expressed through their literature. But we also want to explore the process of artistic and literary production in these times: What did it mean to be an artist, poet, writer or master-singer? What was their social status? How did reading culture look like? How did the introduction of paper to Europe change writing, reading and circulation of manuscripts? How did the invention of the printing press change the practices of writing, reading and publishing? Finally, we want to try to reveal the secret behind their enduring charm and influence.

The course will position at its center the concepts of 'myth', 'myth creation' and 'myth transmission'. We want to investigate the cultural history of the German-speaking world through these dynamic ever-changing myths. They inform us not only about the realities of a bygone era, but also about society's enduring aspirations, values, anxieties... in short, its collective will and self-representation.

Course taught in German. Prerequisite: GER241.