ATS3095 German Proficient 1
Library Research & Essay Writing Workshop

Semester 1, Wed 9th May 2018
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Workshop Overview

- What do you want to work on?
- Getting started
- Develop and refine your essay question
- Research
- Develop and refine your argumentation
- Writing introductions and conclusions
- Essay structure
- Citing and referencing
What do you want to work on?
Online self-assessment

1. Visit http://mars.mu on your phone, tablet or laptop
2. Log in using your Authcate details
3. Touch the + symbol
4. Enter this code for your unit: [insert code here]
5. Answer questions when they pop up
Your assignment

**Due date:** 16 May (Week 11)

**Details of task:** Interpretation, Research Essay on a chosen or set topic/text

**Word limit:** 1,000 (English)

**Value:** 50% of culture component
Criteria for marking

High Distinction (80-89%)

A well-written answer demonstrating an excellent understanding of the text and the critical and interpretive issues and debates raised by the question, together with clear evidence of critical analysis and reflection on the texts, some grasp of methodology, a demonstrated capacity for independent thought, and strong and well organised argument supported by evidence from the text. Presentation is of a very good standard (e.g. argumentative coherence, spelling, referencing, and grammar).

Pass (50-59%)

A solid answer which shows a satisfactory grasp of the main issues, some faults in expression, minor errors and omissions of essential material. Overall, the essay is focused on description with scant evidence of critical analysis or reflection. Critical sources are cited with little attempt at independent judgement. Guidelines for presentation (e.g. argumentative coherence, spelling, referencing, and grammar) have been met at a basic level.
Develop and refine your essay topic and question
The process of developing an essay question

1. What interests you?
2. Preliminary research
3. Refine topic/question
4. Further research
5. Refine topic/question

ATS3095 German Proficient 1 – Library Research and Essay Writing Workshop
Developing your essay question

➢ Choose a text and topic that is **interesting** to you.

➢ Make sure your topic is **manageable** in size.

➢ Your essay topic should preferably be phrased as a clearly defined **question**, rather than a statement.
Finding a topic

Choose one of the works you’ve studied in class.

*Remember you can’t do all 3 assignments on same text.*
Finding a topic

Think about what you want to explore in relation to that work.

- Consider class discussions - themes, issues, debates that came up in relation to the text
- Can also reflect on presentation topics - might give you ideas as a starting point
Finding a topic

What techniques can you use to begin developing a topic?

- Mindmaps
- Bullet points
- Record yourself
- Free-writing
- Other ideas??
Finding a topic

Research the secondary literature

– what are the key issues, debates, concerns?

NB You’re looking out for a topic that will help you engage with:

• critical and interpretive issues and debates
• critical analysis & reflection on the texts
• methodology

So your topic has to come out of some preliminary research – you need to know what these are!
Ask yourself: What sort of question do I want to answer?

- Do you want to do a comparison?
- Do you prefer a close reading of the text?
- Are you interested in the genre of writing?
- Do you want to answer a yes/no question?
- Do you want a contentious statement that you can explore?
- Do you like responding to a quote?
Refine your Essay Topic

Make sure your topic is manageable in size.

- 1000 word limit
- Narrow the focus of your topic so that you can say something meaningful in 1000 words
- How has our sample topic been narrowed?

Text: Der Tod in Venedig

Essay Question: Der Tod in Venedig includes a lot of imagery and reference to Greek mythology. What were the Greek understandings of the concept of love and how are these alluded to in the novella?
Refine your Essay Topic

Your essay topic should preferably be phrased as a clearly defined question, rather than a statement.

- Descriptive vs Analytical Questions
- Direction words:
  - What, where, who, when vs. How and Why
Refine your Essay Topic

Components of essay questions:

- **Direction words** – tell you what to do
- **Subject/content words** – defines the topic or subject of the essay; help you focus your research
- **Limiting words** – makes a broad topic workable. Indicates aspects of the subject/topic you should narrowly concentrate on.

Eg. **Computers have significant impact on education in the 20th century. Discuss the changes they have made.**

- **Direction word** - Discuss
- **Limiting** – changes, significant impact, 20th c.
- **Content** – education, computers
Research
Your turn!
To do now:

1. **Brainstorm** – what do you already know? Write it all down on butchers paper! (10 min)

2. **Research** – what do the secondary sources say? Add ideas to your brainstorm.
   - Identify important themes, issues

3. **Write an essay question.** Once done, put it up on the whiteboard.
   - Consider: analytical vs descriptive; scope (too narrow or broad?); write as a question to answer.

4. Class discussion/evaluation of questions.

*Once you have a question, go back to researching it to figure out how you’ll answer it.*
Essay structure: Structure and argumentation
Essay structure

For a 1,000 word essay, you should aim for (approximately) the following:

- **Introductory paragraph**: 10% (100 words)
- **Body**: 80% (800 words)
- **Concluding paragraph**: 10% (100 words)

Note: There is no set number of paragraphs per essay!
Argumentation

Criteria: “strong and well organised argument supported by evidence from the text.”

An argument:
- States a position
- Gives reasons backed with evidence as support
- Considers the opposing arguments
- Answers your question!
Questions to ask yourself

What is the question actually asking you?

What are the key reasons for your position?

What evidence do you have to support your argument?

Does any specific scholarship help you articular your point? Why or why not?

What theoretical ideas inform your argument? Explain.

What are the objections to your argument?
Essay structure – planning out your argument
First draft – often descriptive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Death in Venice includes a lot of imagery and reference to Greek mythology. What were the Greek understandings of the concept of love and how are these alluded to in the novella?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Thomas Mann’s Death in Venice begins with motifs of the classical world: as Gustav von Aschenbach, the protagonist, wanders through the streets of Munich, he chances upon a graveyard containing Byzantine architecture with snippets of Greek writing. As he ponders the text pertaining to the afterlife, a lone red-headed traveller stares at him, sparking an interest in travel in the lonely writer. Thus begins Aschenbach’s journey to Venice, the place of his ultimate demise, and the city in which he will struggle with his “conscious will and uncontrolled passion, [battling] between rational morality and passionate art”. (SparksNotes Editors, chapter 1) Using Plato, Nietzsche and Freud, Mann presents the Greek understanding of the concept of love through the figures and places of Death in Venice. This essay examines these mythological references and argues that they represent a deeper social and philosophical understanding of love within the Weimar Republic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point 1</td>
<td>Greek understandings of love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point 2</td>
<td>Greek references to love in Death in Venice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point 3</td>
<td>Love in the Weimar Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>In describing homo-erotic lust in terms of Greek mythology, Thomas Mann utilises classical references in the context of a modern short story. Mann’s descriptions of Tadzio, an attractive, but pre-pubescent young boy, as a classical Greek god casts the relationship between the boy and his admirer, Aschenbach, in epic, mythical terms. This literary device is Aschenbach’s “means of extenuating, of ennobling, even, an obsession that would otherwise seem sordid and perverse. Myth becomes rationalisation.” (Beauchamp, 387) In this essay, I examined a sample of Death in Venice’s references to love in Greek mythological terms, and consider their use as a modern way of exploring romantic lust in an otherwise illicit context. In line with other progressive German movements at the turn of the century, homosexuality was addressed by Mann through the façade of a mythical tale couched in classical ideals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Death in Venice, love and desire are often portrayed in reference to Greek mythology and classical approaches to beauty and truth. How does Thomas Mann use classical Greek ideals to describe Aschenbach’s obsession with Tadzio in the short story, and was this approach radical for early twentieth century German literature?

**Introduction**
In Death in Venice, Gustav von Aschenbach finds himself surrounded by death: from the link of Venice to the Underworld, to the cholera outbreak. Thomas Mann sets up tale steeped in metaphor which emphasises the unyielding march of fate and the ultimate payment for one’s sins and transgressions. Coupled with this theme of death, comes the theme of repression: Thomas Mann uses the method of “myth plus psychology” to investigate Knabenliebe (pederasty) within early twentieth-century German culture. Drawing on classical Greek ideals to describe Aschenbach’s obsession with Tadzio, Mann adopts an approach that was both radical yet acceptable for early twentieth-century German literature. Using the classical theory of Platonic love and the modern theory regarding “Homophobia and Sexual Difference” of Jonathan Dollimore, this essay examines Death in Venice within the framework of mythology around the River Styx and Plato’s Phaedrus. It concludes by examining the links between Aphroditean Heavenly Love as perceived by Mann and Weimar Republic views on Knabenliebe.

**Point 1**
**Experiencing Eros (Tadzio) and Thanatos (Death) through the Underworld (Venice)**
- Literary metaphor: Aschenbach means, loosely “ash stream”, which in Greek mythology, is the River Styx.
- Geographic metaphor: Venice known for homosexual tourists – gondoliers and sailors engaged in male prostitution, and was often used as a literary local for cultural transgression.
- Travelling metaphor: Voyage to the underworld = first gondola ride in which Aschenbach is told “you will pay”, which is reminiscent of Odysseus: parody is that Greek heroes were strong, Aschenbach is weak
- Myth metaphor: Desire (Tadzio) and Death end the narrative: the story comes full circle, with references to death (Byzantine monuments and Greek text, concluding with Medusa-esque death of Aschenbach after meeting Tadzio’s gaze)

**Point 2**
**Platonic male friendship ideals: Aschenbach/Tadzio as Socrates/Phaedrus and example of old/young love (move out of myth to philosophy and real world understanding of Knabenliebe).**
- Aschenbach turns to Plato to repress his Dionysian desires, allowing Mann to emphasise the conflict between the Dionysian and Apollonian concepts. With the bacchanalian dream, however, these two approaches combine to fulfill Aschenbach’s repressed desires.
- Reading Plato while grappling with homoerotic desire = reinforce Dionysian and Apollonian polarity: discuss the Socrates/Phaedrus-Aschenbach/Tadzio dichotomy

**Point 3**
**Heavenly love: Aphrodite and pederasty in 20th century Germany**
- End with a link to the real world and how it relates back to Weimar Republican society. Examine how Dollimore can be used to explain Mann’s views on Homophobia and his own repressed sexuality, which is allowed to come to fruition through the figure of Aschenbach.

**Conclusion**
Mann’s Death in Venice is a journey of decay and demise: using the mythical images of the Underworld and the notion of Platonic love, Mann draws on and links the cultural perceptions of sin and desire to the city of Venice. He weaves a tale which demonstrates the long-practiced old/young love of the Greeks with Aschenbach and Tadzio, and warns of the dangers of succumbing to one’s internal Dionysian voice. This essay has explored Mann and Aschenbach’s journey through the use of mythical metaphor, The Phaedrus, and Aphroditlean love. Pederasty, as viewed through Dollimore’s theoretical framework on homosexuality, ties the use of myth and real-world desire together to form an outlet for Mann and his audience to experience their deepest, and darkest, desires.

Death in Venice represents the artistic understanding of Knabenliebe, and the freedom authors were permitted to express a forbidden yet known love between man and youth. Using classical and accepted tropes, Mann mixes myth and psychology to create a foreshadowing representation of the intellectual freedom of Weimar Germany and the intellectual preoccupations of German intellectuals. The freedom of expression and the mask of myth allow Mann to both indulge his desires and remain within the accepted heterosexual expectations of the day, a freedom that would be rebuked and expunged during the Third Reich.
Introduction

The problem you are addressing

*broad question or issue with some context*

Your main contention

*your answer to the problem*

How are you going to do it

*case study*
Essay writing

Examples
Conclusion

Essay writing

Restate
Rearticulate
Ruminate
Essay writing

Examples
Common issues in essay writing

- Paragraphs that are too long/short.
- ‘Upside down’ paragraphs: the topic sentence is at the end.
- No evidence to support points; no specific examples.
- Avoiding the topic.
- No logical sequence.
Editing and proofreading
Citing and referencing
Citing and referencing: MLA 8th

Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Guide

The MLA system uses in-text citations rather than footnotes or endnotes. The citations in-text are very brief, usually just the author's family name and a relevant page number. These citations correspond to the full references in the list of works cited at the end of the document.

Instructions and examples in this MLA guide are based on more detailed information in:
Also refer to the MLA Style Center.

In-text citations - general points

- If the author's name is mentioned in the sentence, only cite the page number.
- If the author's name is not mentioned in the sentence, cite both the name and the page number.
- Font and capitalisation must match that in the reference list.
- Long quotations (more than four lines) should be indented.
- If you are citing more than one reference at the same point in a document, separate the references with a semicolon e.g. (Smith 150; Jackson 41).
- If the work has no author, use the title.
- If you are citing two works by the same author, put a comma after the author's name and add title words e.g. (Smyth, "Memories of Motherhood" 77) to distinguish between them in the in-text citation. Do this when citing each of the sources throughout the piece of writing.
- If two authors have the same surname, use their first initial e.g. (G. Brown 26).

http://guides.lib.monash.edu/citing-referencing/mla8
Editing and proofreading your work

Editing involves **improving the 'big picture'** of your assignment: whether it addresses the task requirements fully, how the paragraphs are structured and flow and so on.

Proofreading **focuses on specific details** like spelling, sentence structure, referencing etc.
Need more help?
Visit Research and Learning Online

Essay and Assignment Writing:
http://www.monash.edu/rlo/research-writing-assignments

Editing and Proofreading:
https://www.monash.edu/rlo/research-writing-assignments/writing/editing-and-proofreading/editing-and-proofreading
Need more help?

Research & Learning Point @ Matheson Library
10-15 minute consultation with a learning skills adviser and/or librarian, open to all students

Weeks 3-11
Monday to Thursday 12pm-6pm
Friday 12pm-4pm

Week 12 & Swot Vac
Monday to Friday 12pm-4pm
German Studies
Library Drop-in sessions
Matheson Library T1

(ask at the Information Point if you don't know how to find the room).

Drop by if you have any questions or issues with your assignment for German Studies. We can help with research, finding and expressing your argument, essay structure, writing introduction and conclusion, citing and referencing, and anything else in regards to your assignment - with the exception of proofreading ;)

**Week 11** Wednesday, 16 May: 11.30am-12.30pm
**Week 12** Tuesday, 22 May: 2-3pm
Before we finish

Post-class survey
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