

Literature and philosophy of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, whether classified as Romanticism, Classicism, Enlightenment, Idealism, or *Naturphilosophie*, shared an obsessive interest in the manner of human embedment in the natural world and the possible grounding and extent of human exceptionalism. The jurisdictions of literature, philosophy, and natural history frequently overlapped as each discipline, in differing ways, explored and experimented with natural forms, classifications, and foundations and methodologies for the study of nature.

In this seminar, we will investigate various emerging life sciences, human sciences, and literary works which interrogated theories of organisms and their social, political, epistemological, and ethical implications and assumptions. We will focus on the form of organisms (generation, morphology, *Bildung/Bildungstrieb*, inheritance, and teleology), their classifications (transformationalism, metamorphosis, race, and language family), and the methodological and epistemological grounds of knowledge about nature, including the particular methodological challenges attending the human position as both subject and object of naturalist investigation.

Authors will include Herder, Blumenbach, Kant, Goethe, Kleist, Fichte, Novalis, Schelling, Hoffmann, Kiemeyer, and Treviranus, among others.

*Readings in German;*  
*Class Discussions in English*

Dr. Stefani Engelstein

Wednesdays 4:40—7:10 PM

**Spring 2018**



# Forming, Classing, Grounding: Science and Literature in the Age of Goethe

## GERMAN 790.01

