

LT450s LITERATURE AND THE CITY: BERLIN PERSPECTIVES

IES Abroad Berlin
Summer

DESCRIPTION

Berlin, with its turbulent history in the 20th century, has always inspired poets, writers and authors in Germany and worldwide: In "Berlin Alexanderplatz" (1929), Alfred Döblin depicts Berlin as a modernist and futuristic city. In "The Divided Sky" (1963) Christa Wolf imagines Berlin as a city of romance during the Cold War, and in "Axolotl Roadkill" (2010) Helene Hegemann sketches Berlin as a psychedelic landscape of techno sounds. In our course, we will focus on authors who choose "Berlin" as a setting for their literary worlds, character developments, and dramatizations. We will ask how Berlin is constructed in these texts and which writing techniques are used to build up the city of Berlin in literary spaces and genres. Furthermore, we will also focus on the question of how Berlin's 'real' literary scenes at a certain time had an influence on the literary reconstructions of Berlin as a setting. Students interested in German literature, Berlin Studies and theories of spatial writing are very welcome to this class.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

OF INSTRUCTION: German

PREREQUISITES: None

ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Short lectures, live readings, group discussions, writing projects, field trips

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Course participation - 10%
- Response paper - 30%
- Midterm exam- 30%
- Final exam - 30%

Course Participation

Students must complete the assigned readings, participate in class discussions, engage in group tasks and attend all planned field trips. The IES grading rubric for participation is available on Moodle.

Response Paper

In your response paper you will be assigned to write a short response (300-500 words) on a literary text constructing Berlin as a setting. In Session 3-10 students present their response papers as a starting point for the discussions in class.

Midterm Exam

In your midterm exam you will be assigned to write a short paper (500-700 words) in class on a Berlin text and its writing techniques. Midterm exam takes place in session 5.

Final Exam:

In your final exam you will be assigned to write a research paper (1000-1500 words) on a Berlin text covered in class on the basis of either your response paper or your midterm exam. Your final paper is due in session 12.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- place literary texts within the histories, trends and traditions of Berlin writing from expressionism until today
- analyse writing techniques constructing "Berlin" as a setting of literary worlds and spaces
- understand Berlin's literature scenes at a certain time in history from expressionism until today

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

For our up-to-date attendance and exam policy, see:

<https://moodle.iesabroad.org/mod/page/view.php?id=1004317>.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Students are expected to abide by the IES Abroad Academic Integrity Code. Assignments need to be properly and amply footnoted where appropriate, with all sources attributed, including images. This not only applies to written assignments but also presentations by means of PowerPoint, Prezi or posters. Contributions may be checked with plagiarism-detecting software.

CONTENT:

Each session will be based on one primary text with a relevant selection (of 8-12 page) provided by the instructor on Moodle. Secondary literature and optional readings will be additionally assigned for each session. The lecturer may suggest more material (videos, blog entries, etc.) during class and via Moodle. The students are encouraged to bring related material to class in order to spark fruitful discussions.

Sessions	Content	Readings
Week 1	Session 1: Introduction Berlin as a modernist city	- Primary text: Jakob von Hoddiss: "Weltende" (1911), poem* <u>Optional:</u> - Alfred Döblin: <i>Berlin Alexanderplatz</i> (1929), selected reading* - Wolfram Groddeck. "Aspekte des Dekonstruktivismus in Jakob von Hoddiss 'Weltende'", In: <i>Deutschblätter</i> 28 (1992), S.2-23.
	Session 2: The Art of walking around Berlin as female space	- Primary text: Irmgard Keun: <i>Das Kunstseidene Mädchen</i> (1932), selected reading* - Katharina von Ankum. "'Ich liebe Berlin mit einer Angst in den Knien': Weibliche Stadterfahrung in Irmgard Keuns <i>Das kunstseidene Mädchen</i>", In: <i>The German Quarterly</i> 67 (1994), S. 369-388. <u>Optional:</u> - Susann Neuenfeldt. "Die Figur der Flaneurin", In: <i>Schauspiele des Sehens. Die Figur der Flaneurin, Voyeurin und Stalkerin</i>. Heidelberg: Winter Verlag, S. 41-67.
Week 2	Session 3: Berlin's Book Burning Resisting Nazi Berlin	- Primary text: Nelly Sachs: <i>In den Wohnungen des Todes</i> (1946), poems* - Christine Rosbert. "Nelly Sachs lesen", In: <i>Poetik einer Sprache der Toten. Studien zum Schreiben von Nelly Sachs</i>. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2004, S.17-39. <u>Optional:</u> - Christopher Isherwood: <i>Goodbye to Berlin</i> (1930), selected reading* <u>Student Presentation</u>

	Session 4: Romance in Cold War Berlin as a divided city	- Primary text: Christa Wolf: <i>Der geteilte Himmel</i> (1963), selected reading* - Anna Chiarloni. "Christa Wolf: Der geteilte Himmel", In: <i>Colloquia Germanica</i> 18 (1995), S. 332-343. <u>Optional:</u> - Jörg Magenau. <i>Christa Wolf: Eine Biographie</i>. Google Books 2013, selected reading* <u>Student presentation</u>
Week 3	Session 5: Midterm	Film screening in class: <i>Der geteilte Himmel</i> (Konrad Wolf, 1964, Romance) <u>Midterm exam in class</u>
	Session 6: Dancing around the red star Berlin as a reunited city	- Primary text: Wladimir Kaminer: <i>Russendisko</i> (1990), selected reading* - Ellen Rutten. "Tanzen um den roten Stern: Zwischen Ostalgie und SOZArt", In: <i>Osteuropa</i> 57 (2007), S. 109-124. <u>Optional:</u> - Beate Henn-Memmesheimer. "'Russendisco' - Motive und Effekte eines innovativen Tauschs", In: <i>Das Russische in den deutschen Diskursen</i>. Sammelband zur russisch-deutschen Tagung 2009., S. 1-37. <u>Student presentation</u>
Week 4	Session 7: Updating Bertolt Brecht in contemporary Berlin Berlin as a stage	- Primary text: Bertolt Brecht: <i>Baal</i> (1919, 2019), selected reading* - Christine Wahl. "Unser schlüpfriger Traum. Baal Premiere am Berliner Ensemble", In: <i>Tagesspiegel Kultur</i> (2019), S. 1. <u>Student presentation</u>
	Session 8: Field Trip	Field Trip to <i>Berliner Ensemble</i> Theater: Show: <i>Baal</i> (2019), director: Ersan Mondtag
Week 5	Session 9: Turning back the years Berlin as a "Kiez"	- Primary text: Sven Regener: <i>Herr Lehmann</i> (2001), selected reading* - Film screening in class: <i>Herr Lehmann</i> (Leander Haussmann, 2003, Comedy) <u>Optional:</u> - Marie-Helene Queval. "Irrungen und Wirrungen der Wende. Herr Lehmann. Sven Regener. Leander Haussmann", In: <i>Literatur und Film im Kontext von Moderne und Postmoderne</i>. Baden Baden: Tectum Verlag, 2008, S. 71-92. <u>Student presentation</u>

	Session 10: Embodying memories Berlin as a city of ghosts	• Primary text: Cloe Aridjis: <i>Book of Clouds</i> (2009), selected reading* • Claudia Öhlschläger. "Einleitung", In: Körper, Gedächtnis und Schrift: Der Körper als Medium kultureller Erinnerung. Wien: Schmidt Verlag, S. 3-19. <u>Student presentation</u>
Week 6	Session 11: Techno culture Berlin as psychedelic landscape	• Primary text: Helene Hegemann: <i>Axolotl Roadkill</i> (2016), selected reading* • Michael Szurawitzki. Susanne Führer. "Vom Wunderkind zur etablierten Autorin", In: <i>Deutschlandfunk Kultur</i>. 26.2.2019. <u>Optional:</u> • Michael Szurawitzki. "Zur Email-Kommunikation von Helene Hegemanns Roman <i>Axolotl Roadkill</i>", In: <i>Muttersprache 2</i> (2011), S. 118-132. <u>Student presentation</u>
	Session 12: Berlin - a hot spot?	• Farewell Discussion: Berlin Literature and the Internet <u>Final paper due</u>

*Selected reading material of primary texts (8-12 pages) will be available on Moodle.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Primary tests:

idjis, Chloe. *Book of Clouds* (2009), selected reading
 Brecht, Bertolt. *Baal* (1919, 2019), selected reading
 Hegemann, Helene: *Axolotl Roadkill* (2016), selected reading
 Kaminer, Wladimir. *Russendisko* (1990), selected reading
 Keun, Irmgard. *Das Kunstseidene Mädchen* (1932), selected reading
 Regener, Sven. *Herr Lehmann* (2001), selected reading
 Sachs, Nelly. *In den Wohnungen des Todes* (1946), Poems
 von Hoddiss, Jakob. "Weltende" (1911), poem
 Wolf, Christa: *Der geteilte Himmel* (1963), selected reading

Secondary texts:

Chiarlioni, Anna. "Christa Wolf: Der geteilte Himmel", In: *Colloquia Germanica* 18 (1995), S. 332-343.
 Grodeck, Wolfram. "Aspekte des Dekonstruktivismus in Jakob von Hoddiss 'Weltende'", In: *Deutschblätter* 28 (1992), S.2-23.
 Herrmann, Hans Peter. "Von Baal zur Heiligen Johanna der Schlachthöfe: Die dramatische Produktion des jungen Brechts", In: *Poetica* 5 (1972), S.191-211.
 Öhlschläger, Claudia. "Einleitung", In: Körper, Gedächtnis und Schrift: Der Körper als Medium kultureller Erinnerung. Wien: Schmidt Verlag, S. 3-19.
 Rosbert, Christine. "Nelly Sachs lesen", In: *Poetik einer Sprache der Toten. Studien zum Schreiben von Nelly Sachs*. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2004, S.17-39.
 Rutten, Ellen. "Tanzen um den roten Stern: Zwischen Ostalgie und SOZArt", In: *Osteuropa* 57 (2007), S. 109-124.
 Szurawitzki, Michael. "Zur Email-Kommunikation von Helene Hegemanns Roman *Axolotl Roadkill*", In: *Muttersprache 2* (2011), S. 118-132.
 Thüne, Eva Maria. "Kämpfen statt Kooperieren.", In: *Sprache und Literatur* 39 (2008), S. 60-75.
 von Ankum, Katharina. "Ich liebe Berlin mit einer Angst in den Knien": Weibliche Stadterfahrung in

Irmgard Keuns *Das Kunstseidene Mädchen*", In: *The German Quarterly* 67 (1994), S. 369-388.
 Wahl, Christine. "Unser schlüpfriger Traum. Baal Premiere am Berliner Ensemble", In: *Tagesspiegel Kultur* (2019), S. 1.

OPTIONAL READINGS

Bracewell, Michael. "Deutschland ist dein Amerika", In: *POP. Kultur und Kritik* 4 (2014), S.118-132.
 Führer, Susanne. "Vom Wunderkind zur etablierten Autorin", In: *Deutschlandfunk Kultur*. 26.2.2019.
 Henn-Memmesheimer, Beate. "'Russendisco' - Motive und Effekte eines innovativen Tauschs", In: *Das Russische in den deutschen Diskursen*. Sammelband zur russisch-deutschen Tagung 2009., S. 1-37.
 Loach, Barbara. "Topographies of Identity. Berlin's 'Ghosts' and 'Book of Clouds' by Cloe Aridjis", In: *English, Literature, and Modern Languages Faculty Presentations*. Online Paper 2014.
 Magenau, Jörg. *Christa Wolf: Eine Biographie*. Google Books 2013.
 Neuenfeldt, Susann. "Die Figur der Flaneurin", In: *Schauspiele des Sehens. Die Figur der Flaneurin, Voyeurin und Stalkerin*. Heidelberg: Winter Verlag, S. 41-67.
 Queval, Marie-Helene. "Irrungen und Wirrungen der Wende. Herr Lehmann. Sven Regner. Leander Haussmann", In: *Literatur und Film im Kontext von Moderne und Postmoderne*. Baden Baden: Tectum Verlag, 2008, S. 71-92.

INSTRUCTOR'S BIO:

Dr. Susann Neuenfeldt holds a Ph.D. from Humboldt University in Berlin. She studied English, American, and German literature and culture in Berlin and New York City at Humboldt University and New York University. She has been teaching German and American Studies for many years, specializing in political emotions and effects in the Cold War Era. She is the author of the book *Schauspiele des Sehens* on essayistic representations of female American observers (Winter Verlag, 2014) She published widely on Cold War cultures – from the perspectives of bodies, emotions, and artistic strategies. Since 2005 she has also been working as a theatre director for the Berlin collective Panzerkreuzer Rotkäppchen (PKRK). Since then, Susann has been directing a plays, performances and readings in on- and off-theatres in and around Berlin. She also teaches at the University of Arts in Berlin and at the summer school of Humboldt University.

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