



SO/CU 350-A - GERMAN POPULAR CULTURE
IES Abroad Berlin

DESCRIPTION:

This course provides fundamental insights into contemporary German popular culture: Who or what is currently 'hip' in the German context? How are German pop phenomena related to U.S. culture? Which formats are original, which transcultural? This course focuses on different pop-cultural phenomena of the 21st century from diverse media: from cinema and music, to TV, radical young theater, literature, and club culture. The seminar follows a historical approach. It is based on the assumption that German popular culture has been influenced by U.S. popular culture from its beginnings in the 20th century to the 1990s. As a cultural practice of "Self/Americanization", specific German formats have emerged that continue today, both in the East, the West, and the reunited Germany. Furthermore, the seminar investigates the political subtexts of German pop cultural practices. One theme of the seminar is that popular culture always works with 'the abject', i.e. the rejected and traumatic elements of a culture. At the end of the seminar, students will be familiar with the latest trends, the trendsetters, and the historical-theoretical discourses of German pop culture. In excursions, workshops, and guest lectures, students will also be encouraged to experience and participate in German pop culture.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Hakki Kurtulus

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

ADDITIONAL COST: none

PREREQUISITES: none

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Lectures
- In class discussions & cultural analysis
- Student presentations and research reports on chosen topics
- Field trips to pop culture sites
- Guest lectures and workshops
- Moodle will be used to enhance students' learning experiences.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Course participation - 10%
- Presentation - 20%
- Midterm Exam - 20%
- Research Paper - 25%
- Final Exam - 25%

Course Participation

Course participation includes regular attendance, participation in class discussions and moodle activities, familiarity with the reader texts and the topics covered in class. Students are expected to come prepared with personal thoughts or notes on the readings. The grading rubric for participation is available in the IES Berlin Academics Manual on Moodle.

Midterm Exam



The midterm exam has the dual purpose of testing students’ knowledge of facts, evaluating their ability to critically analyze and contextualize historical events, and political trends. It will focus on material covered in the first half of the course (90 minutes, session 6)

Research Paper

Students will write a research essay (ca. 2,000 words) which is due in session 19. In their essay, students develop a coherent argument on a chose topic with the support of textual sources to be cited according to MLA or Chicago standards. Students will be required to schedule a time to discuss their topic with the instructor before session 6.

Presentation

After the midterm exam, each session will be introduced by students with a 10-minute presentation on key concepts, central arguments and open questions of the readings assigned in the respective course session. These presentations will provide the possibility to focus on central aspects and open questions students have. In the first week, each student will be assigned for one presentation (to be held in session 14-23). Depending on the number of students in class, joint presentations by two or more students will be possible. In this case, each student will need to identify their contribution to the presentation.

Final Exam

The final exam focuses on material covered in the second half of the semester. Students should, however, also be able to integrate ideas discussed in the first half of the semester in their answers on the final (90 minutes, session 24).

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- identify the unique aspects of contemporary German pop culture
- relate pop culture to German politics and history
- apply categories of cultural analysis to pop cultural formats
- understand the term “pop culture”and its forms and functions in the German context
- compare German pop culture with American pop culture
- to identify the subtexts of German pop cultural phenomena

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance and punctuality in all courses and field studies are mandatory. Absences can only be excused for valid reasons. Unexcused absences can affect students’ grades. Students who miss 25% or more of all class sessions will fail the course. Missed exams cannot be taken at another time except in case of documented illness. Late submission of term papers and other work will result in grade reduction unless an extension due to illness or an emergency is approved. Please consult the IES Berlin Academics Manual on Moodle for additional details.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Students are expected to abide by the IES Abroad Academic Integrity Code. Assigned papers need to be properly and amply footnoted where appropriate, with all sources attributed. Poorly written and grammatically sloppy papers will be judged more severely. Work with a language tutor.

CONTENT:

Please note that films are to be watched outside class time and are available in the library at the IES center. All films have English subtitles. A reader including required and recommended readings will be handed out in the first session.]

Week	Content	Readings, Material and Assignments
Introduction		
Session 1	Introduction to seminar concept	Reading Mueller, Agnes C. <i>German Pop Culture: How American is it?</i> . Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004, pp. 3-17.
Session 2	German Stereotypes	Reading

		A. Hermens Ferdinand, The Danger of Stereotypes in Viewing Germany, <i>The Public Opinion Quarterly</i> , Vol. 9, No. 4 (Winter, 1945-1946), pp. 418-427 Published by: Oxford University Press
Historicizing German popular culture I		
Session 3	The Roaring Twenties: Case Study Marlene Dietrich	<p>Film <i>Der blaue Engel</i> (Germany 1930, Regie: Josef von Sternberg)</p> <p>Reading Ross, Corey. "Cinema, Radio, and Mass Culture". In: <i>Weimar Culture Revisited</i> (2011), pp. 23-48.</p> <p>Recommended Reading Slane, Andrea. <i>The Iconology of the Sexy Nazi Woman. Marlene Dietrich as Political Palimpsest</i>. Duke University Press, 2011.</p>
Session 4	Swing: popular culture as a form of resistance in Nazi Germany	<p>Reading Beck, Earl R. "The Anti-Nazi Swing Youth, 1942-1945." In: <i>Journal of Popular Culture</i>. Vol. 19, 3 (1985), pp. 45-53.</p>
Historicizing German popular culture II		
Session 5	The Holocaust as a paradigmatic shift and traumatic subtext in German popular culture	<p>Reading Fluck, Winfried. "California Blue: Americanization as Self- Americanization." In: <i>Americanization and Anti- Americanism: The German Encounter with American Culture after 1945</i>, edited by Alexander Stephan, Berghahn Books (2008), pp. 221–237.</p> <p>Optional Brenner, David A. "Working through the Holocaust Blockbuster: <i>Schindler's list</i> and 'Hitler's willing Executioners.'" In: <i>Germanic Review</i> 75, 4 (2000), pp. 296-311.</p> <p>Giesen, Bernhard. "The Trauma of Perpetrators: The Holocaust as the Traumatic Reference of German National Identity." <i>Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity</i>. University of California Press (2004), pp. 112-155.</p>
Session 6	Rebels without a cause in the 1950s, West Germany	<p>Film <i>Die Halbstarken</i> (Germany 1956, Regie: Urs Egger)</p> <p>Reading Russel, Hannah. "Horst Buchholz – The James Dean of German Cinema." On: Ohio State University Homepage 2015.</p> <p>Heiduschke, Sebastian. "Authority, Mobility, and Teenage Rebellion in <i>The Wild One</i> (USA 1953), <i>Die Halbstarken</i> (West Germany, 1956), and <i>Berlin – Ecke Schönhauser</i> (East Germany, 1957)." In: <i>ProjectMUSE</i> 49, 3 (2013), pp. 281-299.</p>

Historicizing German popular culture III		
Session 7	Hot summers in the 1960s, East Germany	<p>Film <i>Der geteilte Himmel</i>, (DDR 1968, Regie: Konrad Wolf) <i>Heißer Sommer</i> (DDR 1968, Regie: Joachim Hasler)</p> <p>Music Playlist <i>Heißer Sommer</i> (Frank Schöbel 1968)</p> <p>Reading Raundalen, Jon. "A Communist Takeover in the Dream Factory – Appropriation of Popular Genres by the East German Film Industry." In: <i>Slavonica</i> 11,1 (2005,), pp. 69-86.</p>
Session 8	West Germany of 1970s as Consumerist Heaven Vicco von Bülow as Loriot and a 'How to be able to Laugh After Auschwitz'	<p>Film <i>Alice in den Städten</i> (West Germany 1974, Regie: Wim Wenders)</p> <p>Music Popol Vuh, Can, David Bowie's Berlin Trilogy, Neu! <i>99 Luftballons</i>, Nena</p> <p>Recommended Reading Huber, Nicole / Stern, Rapoh. "From the American West to West Berlin: Wim Wenders, Border Crossings, and the Transnational Imaginary." In: <i>Transnationalism and the German City</i>, pp. 187-206.</p>
Historicizing German popular culture IV		
Session 9	The "Merry-Go-Round" as an apparatus of desire and escape in the 70s, GDR French Influence versus Soviet influence on the late GDR	<p>Film <i>Die Legende von Paul und Paula</i> (DDR 1974, Regie: Heiner Carow)</p> <p>Music Puhdys "Geh zu ihr und lass deinen Drachen steigen" (1974)</p>
Session 10	The popularization of the silent revolution '89 and the reunification	<p>Film <i>Coming out</i> (DDR 1989, Regie: Heiner Carow)</p> <p>Music "Wind of Change" (Scorpions)</p> <p>Youtube Documentary 4 11 89</p> <p>Reading Dennis, David Brandon, "Coming Out into Socialism: Heiner Carow's Third Way," from <i>A Companion to German Cinema</i>, pp. 55-81.</p>
Midterm exam		90 minutes in class exam

Historicizing German Popular Culture V		
Session 11	Techno: The sound of German reunification	<p>Film <i>Berlin Calling</i> (Germany 2008, Regie: Hannes Stöhr) <i>Als wir träumten</i> (Germany 2015, Regie: Andreas Dresen)</p> <p>Excursion Excursion DJ Workshop Berlin Kreuzberg, information will be given in class</p> <p>Reading Hockenos, Paul. <i>Berlin Calling: a Story of Anarchy, Music, and the Wall, and the Birth of New Berlin</i>. New York: The New Press, 2017.</p>
Session 12	Reconstruction and the revival: Osis vs. Wesis and Die getürkte Berliner Republik Electronic Music: The German School	<p>Film <i>Good Bye Lenin!</i> (2003, Wolfgang Becker)</p> <p>Music Tangerine Dream, Kraftwerk Einstürzende Neubauten, Meret Becker</p>
Turkish-German Rap, 'Schlager', feminist pop		
Session 13	Turkish-German Hip Hop & Rap	<p>Music Islamic Force, Kool Savas, Killa Hakan; Cartel</p> <p>Reading: Ickstadt, Hans. "Appropriating Difference: Turkish German Rap." In: <i>American Studies</i> 44,4 (1999), pp. 571-578.</p>
Session 14	German 'Schlager' and Indie Pop	<p>Music Helene Fischer, Jens Friebe</p> <p>Reading Currid, Brian. "'A Song goes round the world' – German Schlager as an organ of experience." In: <i>Popular Music</i> 19,2 (2000), pp.147-180.</p>
German reality TV and German series		
Session 15	German Comedy Shows: Multikulti humor	<p>TV series "Was Guckst du?" (2001-2005, Kaya Yener)</p> <p>Reading Rota, Genevieve. "Farmer wants a Fraeulein." In: <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i> 10/31/2018, p. 18.</p>
Session 16	German Series: Babylon Berlin, Berlin-Weissensee	<p>TV series <i>Babylon Berlin</i> (Germany 2017, Regie: Tom Tykwer)</p> <p>Reading Dowling, Siobhan. "Sex, Drugs, and Crime in the Gritty Drama". In: <i>The New York Times</i>. 2017.</p> <p>Dowling, Siobhan. "Ahead of the Third Reich: a dizzying</p>

		In: <i>The New York Times</i> , Nov 10, 2017.
Pop literature and popular journalism		
Session 17	Belletristik, the Pop Literature Made in Germany, example of Charlotte Roche	<p>Literature Roche Charlotte <i>Feuchtgebiete</i> (Dumont: 2008).</p> <p>Reading Er, Yanbing „In Search of Self: The Dysfunctional Feminism of Charlotte Roche's <i>Wetlands</i>“ In: <i>Women a Cultural Review</i>, 2015</p>
Session 18	Bild and Axel Springer Verlag	<p>Reading Klein Ulrike, “Tabloidized Political Coverage in the German” in <i>Tabloid Tales</i>, Rowman, 2000</p> <p>Research Essay due</p>
Pop theater and club culture		
Session 19	Excursion through Berlinale	Information will be given in class
Session 20	Metrosexual, Queer, and Trans: Appropriations in the Berlin Club Scene	<p>Reading Mishali, Yael. “(In)visibly Unsafe: Passing under the Radar and the Limits of Queer Space.” In: <i>Borderlands</i> 17, 1 (2018), pp. 1-31.</p>
Wrap-Up and Finals		
Session 21	Turning back to the German History as stability of Instability	<p>Film <i>Marianne and Juliane</i> (1981, Margarethe von Trotta) <i>Die Stille nach dem Schuss</i>, (2000, Regie: Völker Schlöndorff)</p> <p>Reading Seán Allan, “Ostalgic, Fantasy and the Normalization of East-West Relations in Post Unification Comedy”, in David Clarke (ed.), <i>German Cinema since Unification</i>, London 2006, pp. 105-126.</p>
Session 22	Wrap-up and final discussion	
Final exam		90 minutes in class

FIELD TRIPS:

Field trips will encourage students to participate and experience German popular culture firsthand.

FILMS

Menschen am Sonntag, (Germany, 1930: Robert Siodmak, Edgar G. Ulmer)

Der blaue Engel (Germany 1930, Regie: Josef von Sternberg)

Kuhle Wampe oder: Wem gehört die Welt? (Germany 1932, Regie: Slatan Dudow)

Die Mörder sind unter uns (DDR 1946, Regie: Wolfgang Staudte)

Die Halbstarke (West Germany 1956, Regie: Urs Egger)

Heißer Sommer (DDR 1968, Regie: Joachim Hasler)

Alice in den Städten (West Germany 1974, Regie: Wim Wenders),

Die Legende von Paul und Paula (DDR 1974, Regie: Heiner Carow)

Christiane F. - Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo (GDR, 1981 Regie: Uli Edel)
Coming out (DDR 1989, Regie: Heiner Carow)
Berlin Calling (Germany 2008, Regie: Hannes Stöhr)
Als wir träumten (2015, Regie: Andreas Dresen)
Babylon Berlin (Germany 2017, Regie: Tom Tykwer)
Baader Meinhoff Komplex (Germany 2008, Regie: Uli Edel)
Go Trabi Go (1991, Regie: Peter Timm)
Alles auf Zucker (2008, Regie: Dani Levy)

MUSIC

Bushido: *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (2011)
 Romano: *Jenseits von Köpenick* (2015)
 Dietrich, Marlene: "Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuß auf Liebe eingestellt." Aus: *Der blaue Engel* (1930)
 Einstürzende Neubauten, Berlin Babylon, (2000)
 Schoebel, Frank: "Heißer Sommer." Aus: *Heißer Sommer* (1967)
 Puhdys: "Geh zu ihr und lass deinen Drachen steigen." Aus: *Die Legende von Paul und Paula* (1974)
 Scorpions: "Wind of Change" (1989)
 Kalkbrenner, Paul: *Berlin calling* (2008)
 Filmmusik: *Als wir träumten* (2015)
 Ellen Allien: *Berlinette* (2003)
 Killa Hakan: *Kreuzberg City* (2007)
 Helene Fischer: *Farbenspiel* (2013)
 Udo Lindenberg: *Stärker als die Zeit* (2015)

REQUIRED READINGS

Beck, Earl R. "The Anti-Nazi Swing Youth, 1942-1945." In: *Journal of Popular Culture*. Vol. 19,3 (1985), pp. 45-53.
 Currid, Brian. "'A Song goes round the world' – German Schlager as an organ of experience." In: *Popular Music* 19,2 (2000), pp.147-180.
 Dennis, David Brandon. "Coming out into Socialism: Heiner Carow' Third Way," from: *A Companion to German Cinema 2012*, pp. 55-81.
 Dowling, Siobhan. "Ahead of the Third Reich: a dizzying Metropolis". In: *The New York Times*, Nov 10, 2017.
 Dowling, Siobhan. "Sex, Drugs, and Crime in the Gritty Drama". In: *The New York Times*. 2017.
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 Heiduschke, Sebastian. "Authority, Mobility, and Teenage Rebellion in *The Wild One* (USA 1953), *Die Halbstarke* (West Germany, 1956), and *Berlin – Ecke Schönhauser* (East Germany, 1957)." In: *ProjectMUSE* 49,3 (2013), pp. 281-299.
 Hockenos, Paul. *Berlin Calling: a Story of Anarchy, Music, and the Wall, and the Birth of new Berlin*. New York: The New Press, 2017.
 Huber, Nicole/Stern, Rapoh. "From the American West to West Berlin: Wim Wenders, Border Crossings, and the transnational Imaginary." In: *Transnationalism and the German City*, pp. 187-206.
 Ickstadt, Hans. "Appropriating difference: Turkish German Rap." In: *American Studies* 44,4 (1999), pp. 571-578.
 Jeremiah, Emily. "The Case of Helene Hegemann: Queerness, Failure, and the German Girl." In: *A Journal of Germanic Studies* 49,4 (2013), pp. 400-413.
 Layne, Priscilla. *White Rebels in Black. German Appropriation of Black Popular Culture*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018, pp. 6-19.
 Mishali, Yael. "(In)visibly Unsafe: Passing under the Radar and the Limits of Queer Space." In: *Borderlands* 17,1 (2018), pp 1-31.
 Mueller, Agnes C. *German Pop Culture: How American is it*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004, pp.3-17. Passmore, Leith Ray Michael. *Performing Terrorism: a case study of Ulrike Meinhoff*. Dissertation University of Western Australia. School of Humanities 1/1/2009.
 Raundalen, Jon. "A communist takeover in the dream factory – Appropriation of popular genres by the east German Film Industry." In: *Slavonica* 11,1 (2005), pp. 69-86.
 Ross, Corey. "Cinema, Radio, and Mass Culture". In: *Weimar Culture Revisited*, pp. 23-48.

Rota, Genevieve. "Farmer wants a Fraeulein." In: *The Sydney Morning Herald* 10/31/2018, p. 18.

Russel, Hannah. "Horst Buchholz – The James Dean of German Cinema." Ohio State University Homepage 2015.

Seán Allan, "Ostalgie, Fantasy, and the Normalization of East-West Relations in Post Unification Comedy", in David Clarke (ed.), *German Cinema since Unification*, London 2006, pp. 105-126.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Brenner, David A. "Working through the Holocaust Blockbuster: Schindler's list and 'Hitler's willing Executioners.'" In: *Germanic Review* 75,4 (2000), pp. 296-311.

Giesen, Bernhard. "The Trauma of Perpetrators: The Holocaust as the Traumatic Reference of German National Identity." In: *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. University of California Press (2004), pp. 112-155.

Poiger, Uta. *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a divided Germany*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2000.

Shafi, M. "Reworking the German Past: Adaptions in Film, the Arts, and Popular Culture." In: *CHOICE: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, Vol. 48, 5 (2011).

Sheffer, Amanda. Review: German-Jewish Popular Culture before the Holocaust. In: *New German Review: A Journal of Germanic Studies*, 24, 1 (2011).

Slane, Andrea. *The Iconology of the Sexy Nazi Woman. Marlene Dietrich as Political Palimpsest*. Duke University Press, 2011.