

BERLIN PERSPECTIVES

Berlin Museums – Focus on Memory and Migration

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| Semester: | winter semester 2020/21 |
| Course instructor: | Dr Victoria Bishop Kendzia, vbishopkendzia@gmail.com |
| Subject area: | Culture and Society |
| Credits: | 5 ECTS |
| Time: | Tuesday 14 –18 c.t. (14:15-17:45) |
| Room: | Zoom (Please note: This semester, all classes take place online. If however the general conditions allow it, the seminar room 0323-26 (3 rd floor) at Hausvogteiplatz 5-7 can be used by the courses.) |

Course description:

This interdisciplinary course explores some key aspects visible in Berlin's museological landscape. It will focus on issues of Self and Other constructions as attested in museums and exhibitions. The aim of the course is to use anthropological methods to explore the sites and critical analyses to reflect upon them. This thematic course touches on several disciplines. It is based in empirical social anthropology, especially in terms of theoretical framework and methodology. It does, however, involve a historical overview of the Jewish narrative in Germany from just before 1933 to the present and an overview of migration issues. The sites can be explored directly (the pandemic allowing) and/or virtually for students outside of Berlin.

Learning objectives:

The objective of this Bachelor-level course is to familiarize the students with how Berlin and Germany, by extension, are represented in a variety of museums and/or memorial sites and in the media. In addition, they are to be equipped with ethnographic methods in order to critically approach the material, reflecting on their own positionalities. They will also develop their abilities to read and reflect on a variety of relevant academic literature.

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

Knowledge

- Understand, describe and identify key aspects of Berlin's museological heritage.
- Reflect critically on scholarly texts and sites and media output relevant to the Jewish Narrative in Germany and the topic of migration.

Academic/Transferable Skills

- Use ethnographic and critical analysis methods to explore settings and sites.
- Identify and reflect on the positionality of scholarly authors, museum stakeholders, and themselves in a learning through research approach.
- Communicate and discuss key ideas in difficult heritage.

Competencies

- Read the most recent and relevant theoretical and empirical research on the topics.
- Apply relevant theories and concepts in independent work to analyse further narratives and representational strategies.

Assessment portfolio:

- I.** Completion of visits to museums **or** virtual assignment as outlined in the Moodle course. For each topic, the virtual assignments will include various tasks (such as visiting a website/watching a video and exploring certain artefacts and narratives there). These visits/virtual assignments account for 25 % of the final grade.
- II.** Participation in Zoom Meetings as scheduled **or** Posting your input on the relevant Discussion Forums in Moodle, by the due dates noted below. This accents for 25% of the final grade. *If the university opens the in class sessions could replace the Zoom sessions. Students from outside of Berlin can still get credit for posting input on the respective Moodle Forums.*
- III.** Submission of the content/discussion questions on the **required readings**, as assigned below. These timely submissions account for 25% of the final grade.
- IV.** An individually-written research report, based on your research project for this course, with bibliography (6-8 pages, not including bibliography or photos), double-spaced, Times New Roman as a (word document or pdf file only!) to be uploaded onto the Moodle assignment section by the due date indicated below, midnight, Berlin time. The topic should be relevant to the course. Do discuss this with the instructor in advance. You may write in English, German, Spanish or French. Late papers will lose 2% of a grade per day late. The paper is worth 25% of the final grade.

Language requirements:

English B2 required. English is the language spoken in class and the language of the required readings and presentations. German at any level is an asset, and would help in a more in-depth understanding of the field sites we explore.

Posts to the Discussion Forums, which all the participants can see and comment on should be in English.

Any other **written** work, assignments, visible only to me, and the final paper, may be submitted in English, German, Spanish or French.

Timetable:

There will be 8 sessions (four hours are scheduled to enable site visits in Berlin). Zoom sessions will not be longer than 2 hours.

(semester times: 02 November 2020 – 27 February 2021)

Session 1: 03.11.2020 **Introduction - Zoom Meeting (14:15-15:45)**

Introduction to the course, detailed explanation of syllabus and requirements, short lecture on key issues in the Jewish Narrative.

Session 2: 10.11.2020 **Excursion: The Jewish Museum Berlin or virtual assignments**

NB!!! DUE DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS to MOODLE – 13 NOV 2020 at 8 PM (20:00)

For students who cannot visit the museum: Submission of virtual assignments as detailed on Moodle.

For students who cannot attend the Zoom Meeting on 17 NOV.: Submission of your input (a short summary of your assignment, 1 page max) on the Moodle discussion Forum.

FOR ALL STUDENTS: Submission of discussion questions on the two required readings (2-3 per text) Ostow 2007; Feldman 2014

Session 3: 17.11.2020 **Zoom Meeting (14:15-15:45) Discussion of JMB visits/assignments**

In addition to discussing your own visits/assignments, we will also discuss the two required readings: Ostow 2007; Feldman 2014

Session 4: 24.11.2020 **Excursion/virtual assignments site tba** (students will have more than one option for site visits and can choose from these). They will be based on memory of WWII.

NB!!! DUE DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS to MOODLE – 27 NOV 2020 at 8 PM (20:00)

For students who cannot visit one of the sites: Submission of virtual assignments as detailed on Moodle.

For students who cannot attend the Zoom Meeting on 01 DEC.: Submission of your input (a short summary of your assignment, 1 page max) on the Moodle discussion Forum.

FOR ALL STUDENTS: Submission of discussion questions on the two required readings (2-3 per text) Dekel 2014; Rothberg/Yildiz 2011

Session 5: 01.12.2020 - **Zoom Meeting (14:15-15:45) Discussion of visits/assignments**

In addition to discussing your own visits/assignments, we will also discuss the two required readings Dekel 2014; Rothberg/Yildiz 2011

Session 6: 08.12.2020 – **Excursion/virtual assignments** site tba (students will have more than one option for site visits and can choose from these). They will be based on Migration.

There will be no classes in January. During this time you can work on your projects for this course.

NB!!! DUE DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS to MOODLE – 29 JAN 2021 at 8 PM (20:00)

For students who cannot visit one of the sites: Submission of virtual assignments as detailed on Moodle.

For students who cannot attend the Zoom Meeting on 02 FEB.: Submission of your input (a short summary of your assignment, 1 page max) on the Moodle discussion Forum.

FOR ALL STUDENTS: Submission of discussion questions on the two required readings (2-3 per text) Partridge 2010; Shooman 2016

Session 7: 02.02.2020 **Zoom Meeting (14:15-15:45):** Discussion of visits to date, and the final two required readings: Partridge 2010; Shooman 2016

NB!!! DUE DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS to MOODLE – 05 FEB 2021 at 8 PM (20:00)

For students who cannot attend the Zoom Meeting on 09 FEB.: Submission of your input (a short summary of your research project with images included 3 pages max (max 5MB including images) on the Moodle discussion Forum.

Session 8: 09.02.2020 **Zoom Meeting (14:15-15:45):** short presentations of student work, feedback, summary discussion

NB!!! DUE DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF FINAL PAPER – 19 FEB 2021 midnight Berlin time.

Literature:

All the required readings (and some optional material) will be made available on Moodle. Titles may be subject to change.

Required:

Ostow, Robin. (2007). "From Displaying 'Jewish Art' to (Re)Building German-Jewish History: The Jewish Museum Berlin." In Vijay Agnew (ed.). *Interrogating Race and Racism*. University of Toronto Press. 289-319.

Feldman, Jackie and Anja Peleikis (2014). "Performing the Hyphen: Engaging German-Jewishness at the Jewish Museum Berlin." *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures*. 23 (2): 43-59.

Dekel, Irit. (2014). "Jews and Others at the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin." *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* Volume 23, No. 2 (2014): 71-84

Rothberg, Michael and Yasemin Yildiz. (2011). "Memory Citizenship: Migrant Archives of Holocaust Remembrance in Contemporary Germany." *Parallax (Special Issue on Transcultural Memory)* 17.4, 32-48.

Partridge, Damani J. (2010). "Holocaust Mahnmal (Memorial): Monumental Memory Amidst Contemporary Race." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 52(4): 820-850.

Shooman, Yasemin. (2016). "Between Everyday Racism and Conspiracy Theories. Islamophobia on the German-Language Internet." *Media and Minorities*: 136-155.

Remarks:

NB: This is a BA-level course. Preference will be given to BA-level students, should there be a waiting list. MA-level students who wish to take this course should discuss this in advance with the instructor (via email is fine), to ensure that the course meets their needs.

Plagiarism Policy:

The presentation of another person's words, thoughts, ideas, judgments, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes plagiarism. The penalty for this is failure of the course.