



Exploring Difficult Heritage Through Berlin Museums

Winter Semester 2021/22: 28 October 2021 - 16 December 2021

CATEGORY

Migration and Identity

COURSE STRUCTURE

4 contact hours à 45 min per week (28 October - 16 December). There are eight sessions in total. Do note that these are double sessions, in order to accommodate site visits.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Time

Thursday 14 – 18 c.t. (2.15 pm - 5.45 pm)

NB: the first class will take place on 28 October, the last session on 16 December

Place

Hausvogteiplatz 5-7, 10117 Berlin
Room 0323-26

COURSE LANGUAGE

English required B2, and German an asset, but not required. All students must function at the B2 level in English in order to manage the scholarly readings and oral components of the course. Instruction is in English. Materials for general class participation have to be in English so that all can participate. Any written assignments, submitted directly to the instructor, may be written in: English, German, Spanish or French.

Language requirements (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)

English B2

German not required, but an asset.

TARGET GROUP

International exchange students of all subjects with a strong interest in the course topic.

Berlin Perspectives courses are designed for undergraduate students. Master students may

participate if their home university agrees. Regular degree-seeking students can select the course within the elective part of their study program (überfachlicher Wahlpflichtbereich üWP).

This course is directed at students interested in wide range of topics: museology, history, memory studies, ethics, Jewish studies, and migration studies are a few disciplines that this course can complement. The students should be able to read and critically analyze academic writing.

CREDITS = 5 ECTS

The Berlin Perspectives courses are offered by the Career Center as part of the elective program üWP. Registration takes place via Agnes.

All courses are accredited according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Registration on Moodle (HU's e-learning platform)

in case of online classes

- Fully functional device (laptop, tablet, PC)
- Stable internet connection
- Software: Zoom (video/audio)
- *Recommended* hardware: external headset for better sound quality

EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

Preparation for lively discussions: be on time, have at least the required readings completed, and points in mind for discussion or clarification.

Assignments: complete all assignments according to the specified requirements on the schedule including handing them over to the lecturer.

Commitment: pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions (classmates', lecturers).

Academic guidelines: Comply with academic integrity policies (such as no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical) especially the academic honor code and the student code of conduct.

Attendance policy: Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work – to excuse absence please contact the lecturer.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Berlin's rich museological landscape lends itself to in-depth exploration of Germany's difficult heritage: How are the upheavals of the 20th and 21st centuries, especially, remembered and represented? This course aims to enable the students to get to know a number of Berlin museums focusing on Memory and Post-WWII migration using anthropological methods and to critically analyze them within larger theoretical frameworks of "self" and "other" constructions. To explore the role of museums in rendering such constructions visible and therefore debatable. In the digital format it will consist of online tours and explorations of sites in question, assignments based on these, and Zoom Meetings for discussion, exchange in real time, and student presentations. In a blended format it will allow for optional museum visits for students in Berlin to replace a number of the online assignments, keeping the Zoom Meetings as above. In a completely in person course, it will consist of seminars in the classroom and at least three site visits. Accommodating these visits together as a group would require sessions of between 3-4 hours, so the number of sessions would then be reduced accordingly, should this become a completely in-person course. In class discussion sessions would remain as 2 hour ct. sessions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The objective of this Bachelor-level course is to familiarize the students with how Germany's difficult heritage is managed in a number of key Berlin museums. 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.

Learning Objectives

The aim is to have students:

- Understand, describe and identify key aspects of Berlin's museological landscape
- Reflect critically on scholarly texts and sites and media output relevant to the Museology, Memory and Migration in Germany.

and acquire the following skills and competencies:

- The use of ethnographic and critical analysis methods to virtually explore settings and sites.
- Identifying and reflecting on the positionality of scholarly authors, museum stakeholders, and themselves.
- Communicating and discussing key ideas in a constructive and respectful way

READINGS

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Dekel, Irit. (2014). "Jews and Others at the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin." *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* Volume 23, No. 2 (2014): 71-84
4. 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.
5. Partridge, Damani J. (2010). "Holocaust Mahnmal (Memorial): Monumental Memory Amidst Contemporary Race." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 52(4): 820-850.
6. Shooman, Yasemin. (2016). "Between Everyday Racism and Conspiracy Theories. Islamophobia on the German-Language Internet." *Media and Minorities*: 136-155.

ASSIGNMENT INFO

Workload and assignments

In order to be granted 5 ECTS, participants will be asked to

- actively attend all sessions (a minimum of 75% attendance is required)
- prepare and revise as assigned
- complete the following **assignments**:
 - i. Submit two to three discussion/content questions on each scholarly reading, as assigned, via Moodle.
 - ii. Participate in a group presentation during the last session on a topic of your choice, relevant to the course.
 - iii. Submit an individually-written research report with bibliography (6-8 pages),

Failure to fulfil one of the mentioned components results in failure of the class.

Assessment Components

The final grade will be composed of the above-mentioned requirements.

YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Victoria Bishop Kendzia

Dr. Victoria Bishop Kendzia's teaching method, although anthropologically inflected, is interdisciplinary in nature and is, therefore, not limited to the social sciences. It appeals to students from a wide variety of academic backgrounds from history to art, through to geography, theology, and politics. The focus of her work is on the urban landscape, especially, but not only, museums and memorials in and around Berlin. She defended her dissertation on visitor experience at the Jewish Museum Berlin in 2013 at the Institute for European Ethnology, Humboldt University Berlin. Her doctoral work was based on empirical research with young Berlin-based high school students in and around the Jewish Museum Berlin. She has a background in Museum Studies, having completed her master's degree in this field from the University of Toronto, Canada in 2001 and her Bachelor of Arts Honours at the same university in 1999. She has been publishing scholarly articles in her field since 2009 and teaching at the university level since 2008. Her most recent publication is the 2018 monograph: *Visitors to the House of Memory. Political Education and Identity at the Jewish Museum Berlin*. London and New York: Berghahn Books. A new paperback edition of this book is forthcoming in December 2020.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Session 1 - 28 October: In-Class: General Introduction to the course

Here the instructor will explain the syllabus and course requirements in detail, outlining guidelines for the reading questions, group presentations, and final papers. She will hold a lecture on the Jewish narrative in Germany. The concepts of Self and Other constructions and the power to interpret are key issues. In addition to method – conversation walk – will be introduced.

Session 2 – 04 November: Visit to the Jewish Museum Berlin

Visit to the Jewish Museum Berlin (JMB). Students will be given an assignment based on the conversation walk method.

Session 3 – 11 November : In-Class Discussion

Here we will discuss your visits to the JMB using the narrative interview method. Further, we will discuss the first two readings. The instructor will also hold a lecture about migration to Germany post WWII.

Preparation for this session is to submit 2-3 content/discussion questions on the first two required readings by Saturday 06 November midnight Berlin time.

1. 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.
2. 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.

Session 4 – 18 November: Visit to the German Historical Museum

The students will be given a specific assignment for this visit.

Week 5 - 25 November: In-Class Discussion

Discussion of your visits in comparative context. Discussion of readings three and four. Time will also be set aside to discuss your presentation ideas/questions.

Preparation for this session is to submit 2-3 content/discussion questions on required readings three and four by Saturday 20 November midnight Berlin time.

3. Dekel, Irit. (2014). "Jews and Others at the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin." *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* Volume 23, No. 2 (2014): 71-84
4. 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.

Week 6 – 02 December: Visit to a site relevant to Migration

Details tba. Use of comparative methods at the chosen site.

Week 7 – 09 December: In-Class Discussion

Discussion of the visit above. Discussion of readings five and six.

Preparation for this session is to submit 2-3 content/discussion questions on the first two required readings by Saturday 04 December midnight Berlin time.

5. Partridge, Damani J. (2010). "Holocaust Mahnmal (Memorial): Monumental Memory Amidst Contemporary Race." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 52(4): 820–850.
6. Shooman, Yasemin. (2016). "Between Everyday Racism and Conspiracy Theories. Islamophobia on the German-Language Internet." *Media and Minorities*: 136-155.

Week 8 –16 December: Student Presentations in groups and summary discussion.

This final session is dedicated to your group presentations. There is time for up to five presentations, including discussion and feedback.

The course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: 26 Aug 2021

NB: Should the pandemic session worsen, the course may have to go online (Zoom sessions would replace in-class sessions, and online assignments could replace museum visits, should museums be forced to close). For this reason, it is important that students have the technical requirements noted above.