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Humboldt Perspectives
Study Abroad



Fall term 2021: 6 September – 11 December 2021

Berlin in Migration Cinema: From Migrant Ghettos to Culturally Hybrid Urban Districts

Instructor

Dr. Deniz Güneş YARDIMCI

Schedule

weekly

Time

Tuesday, 16:00-18:30

Room

tba

Course Level & Target Group

Prior knowledge in migration studies and film studies is not required. However, an interest in migration related issues and media representation is of advantage. This course targets especially students from social sciences and humanities, but is also open to students from other disciplines interested in the topic. The course is suitable for students from 2nd year of studies upwards.

Humboldt Perspectives Study Abroad courses are designed for undergraduate students.

Language requirements

This course is taught in English, including readings in English. For the understanding of the texts and the discussions in class, a language level B2 (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) is required.

Credits

6 ECTS

Course Description

The labour migration from Southern European countries to Germany, which started in the mid-1950s, had an important socio-economic and socio-cultural impact on the countries' societies and influenced their film culture. German filmmakers began to feature the first guestworkers' difficult lives in films such as Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *Katzelmacher* (1969). In the 1990s, second- and third generation Turkish-German directors such as Fatih Akin and Thomas Arslan marked the end of the so-called 'guestworker cinema' and started to create a transnational and diasporic cinema featuring a culturally hybrid Germany. Berlin (especially Kreuzberg) has always been one of the favorite settings in all of these migration movies. The transformation of Berlin's first Guestworker Ghettos to culturally hybrid urban districts over the course of 60 years is very well reflected in all of these cinema cultures.

This interdisciplinary course crosses and connects the academic fields of migration studies, film studies, and cultural studies. In the first part of the course, we will explore how migration, immigrants, and diasporas are represented in cinema. The second part of the course then gets more specific and we approach the representation of Berlin in these migration movies.

Course Objective & Learning Outcomes

In this interdisciplinary course, students will learn how the socio-political and socio-cultural phenomenon of Turkish immigration into Germany has influenced both countries' cinemas from the 1960s until the present. They will explore the narrative and aesthetic shift in the cinematic portrayal of immigrants, diasporas, culture and identity that occurred over the past 60 years. The focus will lie on the social and urban transformation of Berlin into a culturally hybrid capital and how this change is featured in German and Turkish migration film. In this course, students will gain knowledge about film analysis, writing a screenplay, the characteristics of national and transnational cinema, German labour immigration history and theoretical concepts dealing with migration, diaspora, stereotype, culture, and identity. Moreover, students will learn the interrelation between real societal circumstances such as migration and film.

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

Knowledge

- Understand Germany's labour immigration history and identify its societal and cinematic impact

- Understand and identify the social and cultural transformation of Berlin and how this is reflected in different film cultures
- Understand and apply textual and contextual analysis in film•
- Understand and identify key literature on transnational cinema and Turkish-German migration films

Academic/Transferrable Skills

- Analyze and critically reflect on selected theories of migration, culture and transnationalism
- Select relevant theories and methods for analyzing migration films and transnational cinema•
- Communicate and discuss key concepts of migration cinema and transnational cinema

Competencies

- Analyze and discuss films
- Analyze and present a research topic in a group•
- Write a screenplay for a short film

Course Schedule

(14 weeks, 3 hours à 45 min. per week)

Part 1 – Introduction to Topic, Methodology and Theory

Session 1:

TOPIC: Introduction to Course // History of Labour Migration in Germany

- Introduction to course and required assessments, forming the presentation groups
- Introduction to final film project
- Immigration history of Germany from the 1960 until the present

Assignment until next session:

- Watch *Katzelmacher* (1969, Rainer Werner Fassbinder)
- 1-page reflection paper on *Katzelmacher* (1969, Rainer Werner Fassbinder)

Session 2:

TOPIC: First Phase of German Migration Cinema ('The Cinema of Duty' 1960-1990)

- Group Presentation 1: Defining 'Guestworker Cinema', 'Cinema of the Affected' and 'Cinema of Duty'

- Group presentation 2: 'Guestworker Cinema from 1960s - 1970s – Analysis of *Angst essen Seele auf/Fear Eats Soul* (1974, Rainer Werner Fassbinder)'
- Required reading 1: HAKE, Sabine and Mennel, Barbara (eds.) (2012b) 'Introduction' in *Turkish German Cinema in the New Millennium: Sites, Sounds and Screens*. Oxford: New York: Berghahn Books, pp. 1-18.
- Required reading 2: BERGHAIN, Daniela and Sternberg, Claudia (eds.) (2010c) 'Locating Migrant and Diasporic Cinema in Contemporary Europe' in *European Cinema in Motion: Migrant and Diasporic Film in Contemporary Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, pp. 12-49.

Assignment until next session:

- Watch *Angst essen Seele auf/Fear Eats Soul* (1974, Rainer Werner Fassbinder) and write a 1-page reflection paper
- Form a film crew and work on your film idea on 'Migration and Diasporas in Berlin'

Session 3:

TOPIC: Second Phase of German Migration Cinema ('Transnational Cinema' 1990-Present)

- Group Presentation 1: Defining 'Transnational Cinema', 'Diasporic Cinema' and 'Accented Cinema'
- Group presentation 2: 'Characteristics of Diasporic and Transnational Cinema – Analysis of *Auf der anderen Seite/ The Edge of Heaven* (2007, Fatih Akın)'
- Introduction to 'How to Write a Film Synopsis'
- Required reading 1: HIGBEE, Will and Lim, Song Hwee (2010) 'Concepts of Transnational Cinema: Towards a Critical Transnationalism in Film Studies' in *Transnational Cinemas* 1(1), pp. 7-21.
- Required reading 2: HIGSON, Andrew (1989) 'The Concept of National Cinema' in *Screen* 30(4), pp. 36-46.

Assignment until next session:

- Watch *Auf der anderen Seite/ The Edge of Heaven* (2007, Fatih Akın) and write a 1-page reflection paper
- Write a 1-2 page film synopsis for your film on 'Migration and Diasporas in Berlin'

Part 2 – Berlin on-Screen: From Migrant Ghettos to Culturally Hybrid Urban Districts

Session 4:

TOPIC: Kreuzberg becomes Multicultural: Representing Early Guestworkers' Lives in Berlin

- Group Presentation 1: 'Cinematic Representation of Early Guestworkers in Berlin – Analysis of: *Almanya Aci Vatan/ Germany Bitter Homeland* (1979, Şerif Gören)-
- Group Presentation 2: 'Cinematic Representation of Early Guestworkers in Berlin – Analysis of: *Polizei/Police* (1988, Şerif Gören)
- Introduction to 'How to Write a Screenplay'

- Required reading 1: BURNS, Rob (2012) 'From Two Worlds to a Third Space: Stereotypy and Hybridity in Turkish-German Cinema' in Karanfil, Gökçen and Şavk, Serkan (eds.) *Imaginarities Out of Place: Cinema, Transnationalism and Turkey*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 56-88.
- Required reading 2: GÖKTÜRK, Deniz (1999) 'Turkish Delight – German Fright: Migrant Identities in Transnational Cinema' in Working Paper for the ESRC Transnational Communities Programme Working Paper Series 99(1), pp. 1-14.
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Assignment until next session:

- Write a screenplay for your film on 'Migration and Diasporas in Berlin'

Session 5:

TOPIC: Berlin in Transnational Cinema 1: Culture Clash Comedies

- Group Presentation 1: 'Stereotypes in Cultural Hybridity in Comedies – Analysis of *Evet, ich will/Evet, I do* (2008, Sinan Akkuş)
- Group Presentation 2: 'Stereotypes in Cultural Hybridity in Comedies – Analysis of: *Türkisch für Anfänger/ Turkish for Beginners* (2012, Bora Dağtekin)
- Required reading: STEWART, Lizzie (2015) 'Turkish-German Comedy Goes Archival: *Almanya - Willkommen in Deutschland* (2011) ' in Osborne, Dora (ed.) *Edinburgh German Yearbook 9: Archive and Memory in German Literature and Visual Culture*. Rochester; New York: Camden House, pp. 107-122.

Assignment until next session:

- Watch *Evet, ich will/Evet, I do* (2008, Sinan Akkuş) **or** *Türkisch für Anfänger/ Turkish for Beginners* (2012, Bora Dağtekin) and write a 1-page reflection paper
- Work on your film on 'Migration and Diasporas in Berlin'

Session 6:

TOPIC: Berlin in Transnational Cinema 2: Thomas Arslan's Berlin Trilogy

- Group Presentation 1: "Diasporic Cinema and Accented Cinema – Analysis of *Der Schöne Tag/A Fine Day* (2001, Thomas Arslan)'
- Required reading: MENNEL, Barbara (2002): 'Bruce Lee in Kreuzberg and Scarface in Altona: Transnational Auteurism and Ghetto-centrism in Thomas Arslan's "Brothers and Sisters" and Fatih Akin's "Short Sharp Shock"' in *New German Critique* Special Issue on Postwall Cinema 87, pp. 133-156.

Assignment until next session:

- Watch *Geschwister/Brothers and Sisters* (1996, Thomas Arslan) and write a 1-page reflection paper
- Finalize your film on 'Migration and Diasporas in Berlin'

Session 7: Excursion to Berlin Film Museum

TOPIC: Film Museum // Presentation of Final Film Projects // Concluding Remarks

- Screening students' films
- Closing remarks
- Final discussion
- Feedback on course

Assignments

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

- actively attend all classes (a minimum of 75% class attendance is required)
- bi-weekly reflection papers
- participate in a group presentation
- final project (final paper or film)

Assessment Components

The final grade will be composed of

- participation in class and reflection papers (20% of final grade)
- presentation (30% of final grade)
- final project (50% of final grade)

Expectations & Policies

Preparation for lively discussions in the classroom: 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 schedule including handing over to the lecturer.

Commitment in class: Pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions (classmates', lecturers, locals engaged with on the visits).

Academic guidelines: Comply with academic integrity policies (such as no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).

Attendance policy: 80% class attendance are required. Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work.

Field trips: If classes involve a field trip or other external visits, these require attendance as well as appearance in time.

Your Instructor

Dr. Deniz Güneş Yardımcı is DAAD-lecturer at the European Institute of Istanbul Bilgi University. Since 2019, Yardımcı is teaching for the Berlin Perspectives module at Berlin Humboldt University. She is a sociologist, media- and film scholar specialized in Turkish-German relations with a focus on Turkish-German migration history, cultural identity, and the cinematic representation of migration and diasporas. Yardımcı has a PhD in Media Arts/Film Studies from Royal Holloway, University of London. She further holds a BA and MA in Sociology and a BA and MA in Media and Communication Studies/Film Studies from

the Johannes Gutenberg University-Mainz, Germany. Currently she is working on her book about 'Culture and Identity in Turkish-German Cinema'.

*Please note that the course and its syllabus are subject to change.
Last update: 29 November 2020*