

GERM 317.01: GERMAN CIVILIZATION & ITS ICONS

Instructor: Stefan Höppner

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 am – Noon or by appointment, 218C Craigie Hall

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Germany through Foreign Eyes: A Short History of Teutonics

This lecture course seeks to explore foreign, mostly North American views of Germany from the early 1800s to the present. Here are some of the questions we will address: What are the most common images of Germany? Where do they come from? What are they used for? If the Nazi era still looms large in current representations, are there changes in how it is portrayed? How accurate are these images (and when does it make sense to ask that)? Examples will cover a wide range of media, including literature, film, comics, and pop music. The course will be taught in English – no prior knowledge of German is required.

While this course is officially listed as a lecture, only part of it will be delivered as a presentation by the instructor. Part of each session will be set aside for class discussion, for which you are expected to be prepared. Assignments, such as reading texts and watching movies or movie clips, will be given by the instructor in advance – usually at the end of each session.

Texts

There is no general reading list. You will, however, be asked, to watch movies, clips, or read certain books that can be found on the Internet (since they are in the public domain), or as an excerpt on Blackboard. To make sure you are prepared for a given session, please review your instructor's assignments carefully.

Assignments, evaluations, and due dates

Marking		Grading	
Class participation	25%	A+ (96-100)	C+ (65-70)
Three Essays	30%	A (92-95)	C (62-64)
Midterm	15%	A- (86-91)	C- (59-61)
Final	30%	B+ (81-85)	D+ (55-58)
		B (77-80)	D (50-54)
		B- (71-76)	F (0-49)

Participation: Class discussion is a key factor in this course. The quality of the sessions will depend upon your preparedness and willingness to engage with each other. You must have read or watched and thought about the required readings or films before coming to class. You will need to read the assigned course material, look up the words you don't know, and prepare a preliminary analysis of the form and content of the poems we will discuss in class. Needless to say, you should print out and mark up your readings.

Please note that you do not have to have understood everything you have read to make a valuable contribution. Expressing doubts, disagreements, and asking for clarification is a useful way of contributing to discussion, especially as the language used in poetry may vary greatly from the everyday German you have

learned so far. Your class participation mark will be based on the quality rather than the quantity of your contribution. Dominating discussion without listening to others will damage your grade. Also, it is essential that all participants treat each other with respect and courtesy.

Students who feel unable to actively engage in classroom discussion must bring their concerns to the instructor's attention early so that an alternative strategy to ensure adequate performance can be sought. Unexplained absences will be penalized up to a loss of a full letter on the final grade.

Lecture Notes: To make sure you keep up with the content we discuss, you are expected to keep notes of the lectures; please make sure they help you keep track of the content. In addition, PowerPoint presentations of the day's content will be posted on Blackboard after class.

Essays: You will be required to write three response essays (2-3 pages each, letter-sized paper, Times New Roman font 12 pt, double-spaced) to the works of art discussed in this class. You can pick any three works of art (songs, texts, movies), but they should include at least one literary text and one film each. You will be expected to give your personal opinion, e.g. on the specific image of Germany conveyed, your personal attitude towards that image, its historical context etc. To make sure your impressions are still fresh, please turn in your essay no more than a week after we discussed a specific work of art. Make sure you spread the essays across term so you don't have to cram during the last few weeks before the final. To avoid the common "Yikes, I haven't finished all my assignments yet" end-of-term pile-up, you may only turn in one essay per week during the last four weeks of the semester.

By turning in an essay, you certify that the work is your own; that you have given proper credit and citation to the work of others; and that you have not committed any other form of plagiarism or academic dishonesty. For definitions of plagiarism, please see the course calendar. Students are required to complete all assignments in order to receive a passing grade in this course.

Midterm: There will be a 60-minute midterm on February 14, which will consist of two parts: a) Questions regarding the content covered in class (multiple-choice), and b) a choice of three essay questions, of which you need to pick and answer one.

Final: The Final Examination (90 minutes) will be scheduled by the Registrar during April 19-30, 2013. Requests for pre-assignment of examinations to special dates for whatever cause or reason cannot be accommodated (sorry, it's the Registrar's decision, not mine). Similarly, changes in the dates of scheduled examinations cannot be approved. No exceptions will be made to the Examinations Timetable. The structure will resemble that of the midterm, but there will be more questions, and more time allocated to the essay. Both midterm and final will, of course, be given in English.

Writing skills statement: All writings assignments will be marked according to content, form, analysis, and originality as well as clarity of writing including grammar, spelling, and organization. To improve your writings skills, contact the Effective Writing Centre (SS 301). If you are a student with a disability, who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to:

- Register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237), and
- Discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

Syllabus

	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1 January 8 / 10	Introduction / Randy Newman – <i>In Germany, Before the War</i>	Mark Twain – <i>The Awful German Language</i>
Week 2 January 15 / 17	Barbarians and what they are good for: Tacitus, <i>Germania</i>	Gothic Germany: Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i>
Week 3 January 22 / 24	Picturesque Germany: Mark Twain, <i>A Tramp Abroad</i>	Images of German Immigrants in North America, before and after 1914
Week 4 January 29 / 31	The End of the Weimar Republic: Christopher Isherwood, <i>Goodbye to Berlin</i>	Nazi Aesthetics and Its Reverberations: Leni Riefenstahl, <i>Triumph of the Will</i>
Week 5 February 5 / 7	Resistance on Film (I): Charlie Chaplin, <i>The Great Dictator</i>	Resistance on Film (II): Ernst Lubitsch, <i>To Be Or Not To Be</i> Michael Curtiz, <i>Casablanca</i>
Week 6 February 12 / 14	Resistance on Film and in the Comics: Donald Duck, <i>Education for Death</i> , and Captain America	Midterm Exam
Week 7 February 19 / 21	Reading Days – No Class!	Reading Days – No Class!
Week 8 February 26 / 28	Dealing with Germany: The Nuremberg Trials on Film	Cold War Madness: Billy Wilder, <i>One Two Three</i> / Stanley Kubrick, <i>Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb</i>
Week 9 March 5 / 7	Alternate History: Philipp K. Dick, <i>The Grasshopper Lies Heavy</i>	Imagining Post-War Germany: Walter Abish, <i>How German Is It</i>
Week 10 March 12 / 14	WW II Revision: Kurt Vonnegut, <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i>	Rocket Science: Thomas Pynchon, <i>Gravity's Rainbow</i>
Week 11 March 19 / 21	The Lure of Krautrock I: Kraftwerk and its Afterlife	The Lure of Krautrock II: Imagining Germany through foreign eyes – Amon Düül II, <i>Made in Germany</i>
Week 12 March 26 / 28	The Road to Rammstein: Laibach and Neue Slowenische Kunst	Was ist eine „teutonische“ Band? The International Reception of D.A.F., Rammstein and Einstürzende Neubauten
Week 13 April 2 / 4	The German Past in the Comics: Art Spiegelman, <i>Maus</i> (I)	The German Past in the Comics: Art Spiegelman, <i>Maus</i> (II)
Week 14 April 9 / 11	The German Past in the Comics: Jason Lutes, <i>Berlin – City of Stones</i>	Quentin Tarantino – <i>Inglorious Basterds</i>
Week 15 April 16	Timo Vuorensola – <i>Iron Sky</i>	No class!
Final exam	TBA	