

## Interreligious and Intercultural Tensions in Germany

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19 July – 13 August 2021

**CATEGORY** Cultural Studies & Religion

### COURSE STRUCTURE

The course content is equivalent to an on-site course offering 45 contact hours. The study time includes:

- virtual classroom lessons with the lecturer and the fellow students (50%)
- group exercises (25%)
- assignments and self-study (25%)

### TRACK B – WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF VIRTUAL CLASSROOM LESSONS

- Course days: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
- Time: 12.30 – 2.45 pm (Berlin time, UTC+2)  
6.30 pm – 8.45 pm (Beijing time, UTC+8)  
8.30 pm – 10.45 pm (Sydney time, UTC+10)  
5.30 am – 7.45 am (Chicago time, UTC-5)

### COURSE LANGUAGE

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

### TARGET GROUP

Undergraduate students of all subjects with an interest in interreligious and intercultural issues.

### CREDITS = 5 ECTS

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

### TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Fully functional device (laptop, tablet, PC)
- Stable internet connection
- Software: Zoom (video/audio)

- Registration on Moodle (HU's e-learning platform)
- Recommended hardware: external headset for better sound quality

## CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Learning extends beyond your virtual course! As a participant in HUWISU, you are invited to join cultural, social, and academic programs. Cultural activities are designed to help students meet fellow international students, learn more about Berlin, and practice German language abilities. Apply what you learn in class, share your extracurricular interests, and expand your social network beyond your course through these programs!



## VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES

With the support of the online format, HUWISU introduces new cultural and social activities. The cultural activities will be both synchronous and asynchronous.

Our scheduled live meetings might include games, cooking/baking together, or a trivia night. You still have the unique opportunity to build community across time zones and meet your fellow international students through synchronous programming. More information about the specifics is TBA.

Learn and read about Berlin history or German culture in between classes! No matter your field of study or interests, Berlin has artistic, political, and cultural significance. Take a look at the eBook "Perspectives on Berlin". It will include an extensive collection of digital resources about Berlin. Although you may be oceans away from Germany, connecting ourselves to Humboldt-Universität's culturally and historically rich location is still incredibly valuable.

### EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

**Preparation for lively discussions in the virtual 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 the schedule including handing them over to the lecturer.

**Commitment in online-class:** 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:** No unexcused absences are permitted. Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work – to excuse absence please contact the HUWISU office.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course follows the complex trajectories linking interreligious and intercultural narratives in Germany today. How does the culture of memory in Germany, with its Christian frame and Jewish focus converge and diverge with more recent narratives of migration that have made Islam a visible presence in Germany? How is Holocaust memory and memory of the Nazi past, more generally, linked to present-day racisms? These are the main question this course seeks to address. Students will interrogate this topic through online lectures, video material and related media, key scholarly readings, and workshops.

The focus is on quality rather than quantity. The readings are to be read carefully and discussion questions are to be prepared, as assigned, in advance of the respective Zoom meetings.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The aim of this course is to explore the tensions between Germany's culture of memory and present-day issues surrounding belonging and exclusion. In order to facilitate this, students will explore key sites of memory, post WWII migration to Germany, and the ongoing challenges of racisms today.

A key learning outcome is to build critical thinking skills in order to read the sites and materials in a way that is conscious of power asymmetries. This involves interrogating how memory is represented: by whom, with whom, and for whom? This careful and conscious interpretation also serves to develop an awareness of the students' own positionalities: Where do they fit in these discussions? What knowledge and experience do they bring to the topic? This self-reflexive approach is particularly fruitful in international contexts where students come from a variety of national and academic backgrounds. The aim is to create a learning environment where students can gain knowledge and insight not only from the instructor and the material, but also via comparisons with and from each other.

## READINGS

Reading materials will be available via Moodle during the course.

### Required:

Feldman, Jackie and Anja Peleikis. (2014) "Performing the Hyphen: Engaging German-Jewishness at the Jewish Museum Berlin." In *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures*. 23. (2). 43-59. (Those who have taken the Jewish Narratives in Germany class would have already read this.)

Costoiu, Andrada. (2008). "Thematic Articles – Migrants' Integration in Host Societies. Modes of Minorities' Integration: Explaining Historical, Economic and Political Factors." *Journal of Identity and Migration Studies* 2(2): 2-17

Michael Rothberg 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.

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

## **Suggested:**

Bunzl, Matti. (2005). "Between Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Some Thoughts on the New Europe." *American Ethnologist* 32.4: 499-508.

## **ASSIGNMENT INFO**

1. Active attendance during the Zoom meetings.
2. Preparing the readings in advance, as assigned, and submitting discussion questions in advance of the class in question. Submitting the weekly virtual assignments on specific sites.
3. A individual or group presentation during the Zoom meetings in the final week of the course. It can be about an actual site or a more abstract topic. Do clear this in advance with the instructor. You are to introduce the site/topic and using the ideas we have explored in class, present your assessment of the site/topic and the potential further research interests and discussion questions that arise from your exploration of the topic. The presentation should be ca. 15 minutes in length.
4. Each student must hand in an individually-written research report (6-8 pages, double-spaced, 12 font, Times New Roman), which can be based on the presentation. Due date will be set closer to the time, but is usually fourteen days after the end of the course. The content should reflect the interests of the students as well as what will be explored together throughout the course. Specific guidelines for the report will be uploaded to the Moodle course.

**The final grade will be composed of weekly assignments and active participation in class (50%) and the final academic paper (50%).**

## **YOUR INSTRUCTOR**

**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.

In this context, locations are approached as field sites that can be read, explored, and critically analyzed as dynamic sites that project and reframe key aspects of history and culture. The urban laboratory that is Berlin is particularly well-suited to this endeavor, given the historical and cultural upheavals it has witnessed during the 20th century.

She defended her dissertation entitled: *The Jewish Museum Berlin: Visitor Experience in the Context of Political Education* in 2013 at the Institute for European Ethnology, Humboldt University Berlin under the supervision of Prof. Wolfgang Kaschuba and Prof. Sharon Macdonald. Her doctoral work was based on ethnography of 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 monograph, (December) 2017 *Visitors to the House of Memory. Political Education and Identity at the Jewish Museum Berlin*. London and New York: Berghahn Books.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

The assignments will be explained in more detail on the Moodle course page. All reading and viewing material will be made available via Moodle.

### **Topic 1: Interreligious and intercultural dialogue as made visible in large national institutions.**

- **Zoom Meeting 1: 19-July: Introduction to the Course**
- Assignment 1: due 21 July i. A short written assignment (200 words) based on the Jewish Museum Berlin website, and ii: Discussion questions on the required reading: Feldman/Peleikis 2014
- **Zoom Meeting 2: 23 July: The Jewish Museum Berlin**  
This meeting will include discussion of your assignments, your ideas, impressions, and questions.

### **Topic 2: Migration to Germany and the Culture of Memory**

General discussion of migration after WWII, (short news program online, lecture by the instructor) and attempts from migrant groups to be included in the culture of memory. Required reading Costoiu 2008, Rothberg/Yildiz 2011.

- **Zoom Meeting 3: 26 July: Intersection Memory and Migration**
- Assignment 2 due 28 July – i. A short written assignment based on the video material and ii. Discussion questions submitted by the students on the two required readings: Costoiu 2008; and Rothberg/Yildiz 2011
- **Zoom Meeting 4: 30 July:** This will be a discussion based on your assignments and any open questions.

### **Topic 3: Critical Issues. Barriers to Belonging**

News program on Islam in Germany; Readings: Partridge 2010; Shooman 2016; (optional Bunzl 2005). A short written assignment based on the above news media and required scholarly readings (Partridge 2010; Shooman 2016).

- **Zoom Meeting 5: 02 August:** This meeting is follow-up to explore any open issues to date.
- Assignment 3 due 4 August i. Short notes on news media and ii. Discussion questions on Partridge 2010 Shooman 2016
- **Zoom Meeting 6: 06 August**

This Zoom meeting will be to discuss your assignments, the forthcoming student presentations and final paper.

### **Topic 4-Student Presentations and Summary Discussion**

- **Zoom meeting 7 – 9 August** – Student Presentations
- **Zoom meeting 8 – 11 August** – Student Presentations
- **Zoom meeting 9 – 13 August-** Feedback and Summary discussion.

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The course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: 27 April 2021