Course Title | Berlin's Graveyard Culture as Mirror of Society – Interdisciplinary Perspectives
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Category | History & Culture
Class Time | Session 2 – July 22nd – August 16th 2019
Track C | Weekly schedule
Tuesday: 1.30 pm - 3 pm & 3.30 pm - 5 pm
Wednesday: 1.30 pm - 3 pm & 3.30 pm - 5 pm
Friday: 9 am - 10.30 am & 11.00 am - 11.45 am
Course Level & Target Group | Course Level: no previous knowledge on the topic death and dying necessary; Understanding of postmodern approaches to educational research are of advantage.
This course is for all those who are interested in getting critically involved in questions around death and dying.
Course Language | The 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.
ECTS | 5 ECTS (45 contact hours)
Instructor | Anna Katharina Neufeld, M.A.

Course Description
The course "Berlin's Graveyard Culture as Mirror of Society - An Interdisciplinary Perspective" approaches the subject of life, death and dying from the spatial defined area of cemeteries. This means we are going to look at historical and cultural changes, as well as their implications on society, landscape art, law or upcoming industries.
The course will read texts in cultural and social history as well as in literature around the subject matter of death and dying and will complement these with excursions to different prominent graveyards in Berlin.
The course will focus on the relationship between life and death, on the changes in memorial architecture and landscape art (as far as alternative modes of green funerals and coffins), the transformation of a “culture of mourning”, as well as the varieties of different religions and spirituality cemeteries currently reveal.
Excursions to cemeteries as well as a crematorium are planned.

Course Objective & Learning Outcomes
Advancing from an historical perspective on sepulchral culture the course "Berlin’s Graveyards" will focus on historical and contemporary forms of funeral customs that can be found on cemeteries. Here Berlin’s cemeteries open a wide range of different possibilities: not only War Memorials or specific Jewish cemeteries can be found here which mirror a cross section of Berlin's past aristocratic, bourgeois or artistic and military society.
Berlin's cemeteries illustrate how cities grow, develop and change within different periods of time.
They further show how far our current way of dealing with death and dying is reflected in funeral customs as for instance the "FriedWald", anonymous burials or cemeteries for various different cultures prove.
The course aims to combine reading and excursion and join the impressions together. Doing so, makes clear that not only past and present / death and life meet on cemeteries but different disciplines and
perspectives such as law, architecture, literature, industry, social studies, ethnological perspectives as well as cultural techniques come together here.

Next to visiting a choice of significant cemeteries in Berlin (Dorotheenstädtischer Friedhof, Jüdischer Friedhof Schönhauser Allee, Alter Sankt Matthäus Kirchhof, Kirchhof St. Bartholomäus in Pankow) an excursion to a crematorium is planned.

**By the end of the course, students will be able to:**
- read cemeteries as *narrators* of cultural and social changes in a city / society
- have an (historical) overview over the cultural changes between life and death due to the knowledge the cemeteries offer
- get an idea of how death and dying is approached today and what challenges we face

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**Readings**

**Required**


The Brothers Grimm, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1812)


Tony Walter, “Historical and cultural variants on the good death” In: BMJ, 327, Bath 2003, pp. 218-220.


**Suggested / for presentations**


**Supplemental**


Course Schedule

TUESDAY – July 23rd: 1.30pm-3pm, 3.30pm-5pm
Welcome and introduction
Required Reading:

WEDNESDAY – July 24th: 1.30pm-3pm, 3.30pm-5pm
Churchyard / in the city
EXCURSION: Dorotheenstädtischer-Friedhof, Chausseestr. 126, 10115 Berlin
Required Reading:

FRIDAY – July 26th: 9am-10.30am, 11am-11.45am
Graveyard / outside the city
Jewish culture in Berlin
EXCURSION: Jüdischer Friedhof Schönhauser Allee, Schönhauser Allee 23–25
Required Reading:
Reading for Presentation:

TUESDAY – July 30th: 1.30pm-3pm, 3.30pm-5pm
Beautiful Dead Women
Required Reading:
- The Brothers Grimm, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (1812)
Reading for Presentation:

WEDNESDAY – JULY 31ST: 1.30pm-3pm, 3.30pm-5pm
The migration or emigration of the dead?
Required Reading:

FRIDAY – August 2nd: 9am-10.30am, 11 am-11.45am
Aesthetics and narrative
SCREENING in parts: Andreas Dresen, Halt auf freier Strecke (GER 2011) and Josh Boone, The Fault in Our Stars (USA 2014)
Required Reading

TUESDAY – August 6th: 1.30pm-3pm, 3.30pm-5pm
“rites des passage” - Ways of being buried
Required Reading:

WEDNESDAY – August 7th: 1.30pm-3pm, 3.30pm-5pm
The idea if community
EXCURSION: Alter St.-Matthäus Kirchhof, Großgöschenstraße 26, 10829 Berlin
Required Reading:
FRIDAY – August 9th: 9am-10.30am, 11am-11.45am
Waste – a contemporary memento mori?
EXCURSION: Krematorium Ruhleben, Am Hain 1, 13597 Berlin
Required Reading:

TUESDAY – August 13th: 1.30pm-3pm, 3.30pm-5pm
The World Wide Web, virtual cemeteries, and what else?
Required Reading:
- www.ifIdie.net – Intro-film
- Legacy Locker – Intro-film
Reading for Presentation:

WEDNESDAY – August 14th: 1.30pm-3pm, 3.30pm-5pm
Digital Hereafters
SCREENING Excerpts from the serial “Black Mirror”

FRIDAY – August 16th: 9am-10.30 am, 11am-11.45am
Group Project Presentation and concluding discussion
Wrap up / Feedback

Assignments
- Presentation of a text OR introduction of an excursion (10 minutes)
- Essay on one of the excursions (1-2 pages)
- Response in class (5 minutes)
- Actively taking part in course and excursions: bringing in ideas, knowledge and experiences
- Reading of the required texts
- (Final) Group project presentation (30 minutes)

Assessment Components
The final grade will be composed of a midterm project and final presentation as well as active participation in the class discussion.
The percentage weightings of the components are as following: Presentations / Introductions: 20%; Essay: 20%; Final Group presentation: 20%; Class participation: 40%.
A minimum of 80% class attendance is required. Failure to fulfil one of the mentioned components results in failure of the class.

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, local constituents engaged with on the visits).
Academic guidelines: Comply with academic integrity policies (such as no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical), especially the academic honour code and the student code of conduct (see FAQs on www.huwisu.de).
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 (80% class attendance are required).
Field trips: if classes involve a field trip or other external visits, these require attendance as well as appearance in time – transportation difficulties are never valid reasons for an excused absence.
Cultural Extra-curricular Activities

HUWISU offers a fine selection of interesting extra-curricular activities and aims to give all participants an unforgettable stay in Berlin. Your program includes excursions, sport activities and social gatherings providing you the opportunity to get to know the city, the university and your classmates better and to meet students from all parts of the world. The costs for these offers are included in the course fees.

Below, you find examples of previously offered cultural activities. You will be informed about the respective cultural program after your enrolment via email as well as during the course period.

Political and historical guided tours:
- **Federal Chancellery (Bundeskanzleramt):** It's the central coordination point for the entire government policy. The office is in constant contact to departments and other authorities.
- **German Parliament (Bundestag):** As the highest organ of the legislative in Germany it's elected by the German people. In practice Germany is governed by a bicameral legislature, of which the Bundestag serves as the lower house and the Bundesrat equals the upper house.
- **House of Representatives (Abgeordnetenhaus):** It's the state parliament (Landtag) of Berlin and located in the center of the reunified city. Together with the Martin Gropius Bau, the Topography of Terror and the Bundesrat, it presents an arresting contrast to the flair of the new Potsdamer Platz.
- **Topography of Terror:** A permanent exhibition with focus on the central institutions of the SS and police during the “Third Reich” and the crimes they committed throughout Europe. With the help of mostly photographic material, visitors are led through the major themes of the exhibition’s five main segments.
- **Political Archive:** As the “memory” of the Federal Foreign Office it preserves the files on German diplomacy since 1867, as well as the international treaties signed by the Federal Republic of Germany and its predecessors in title. The records are preserved, processed and made available for academic research.

Cultural guided tours:
- **Kreuzberg Tour:** Kreuzberg has emerged from its history as one of the poorest quarters in Berlin in the late 1970s to a cultural center of today’s Berlin. A unique area and one of the hippest neighborhoods in Berlin with many bars, pubs and clubs.
- **Museum Island (Museumsinsel):** was awarded UNESCO World Heritage Status in 1999 and is an ensemble of five museums: Old Museum, New Museum, Old National Gallery, Pergamon Museum and Bode Museum.
- **Berlin Cathedral (Berliner Dom):** Berlin’s largest and most important Protestant church is located on the Museum Island.
- **Daytrip to Potsdam:** Be inspired by the illustrious attractions of the UNESCO’s World Heritage while underway through the city of Potsdam. Immerse yourself in the history and present of Potsdam and discover many palaces, gardens, and historic quarters such as the “Holländisches Viertel” or the “Nikolaikirche”.
- **Exhibitions:** Berlin is known for its unique galleries and exhibitions, that is why we will visit at least one during the Summer University.

Social gatherings
- **Welcome Get-Together:** We invite you to meet all participants as well as the HUWISU staff in a relaxed atmosphere.
- **Boat trip:** Get to know Berlin from a completely new perspective and see Berlin's famous sights while floating along the river Spree.
- **Beach Volleyball:** A fun outdoor sport activity on long warm summer evenings for those who love to play and everyone who just want to enjoy watching the others play, lying in the sand, meet friends for some drinks, or simply relax in the middle of Berlin.
- **Biergarten:** You cannot leave Berlin without having experienced a Biergarten. The perfect place to finish off your busy day with a cool “Feierabend” drink.
- **Farewell Party:** At the end of the Summer University we will come together to celebrate the exciting time with HUWISU.
Your Instructor

Anna Katharina Neufeld studied English und German at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. After working for the International Literature Festival Berlin, at the German Historical Museum Berlin, as well as in the Jewish Museum Berlin, she now works as a freelance curator, curating several smaller exhibitions.

As scholar of the Evangelische Studienwerk e.V. she is currently writing her PhD at the department of cultural studies at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin on Dying narratives. In this context she has published articles, organized conferences and has worked as lecturer for different universities concentrating on altering aspects of her academic field.

Her focus on the present debate on death and dying, as well as her experiences in museology open her lectures for interdisciplinary approaches, which have accompanied her throughout her educational work. These are enriched by her interest in alternative forms of teaching and presentation.

Please note that the course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: December 2018