

**Name:** Dr. Erol M. Boran

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**Course title:** Berlin - A Tale of More than Just Two Cities

**Track:** B-Track

**Language of instruction:** English

**Contact hours:** 72 (6 per day)

**ECTS-Credits:** 6

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### **Course description**

Berlin's origins are doubled: Growing out of two settlements along the Spree River it evolved into Germany's capital and a thriving European metropolis. After World War II, Berlin, like Germany as a whole, once more faced a dual destiny, one that continues to haunt the city even after the fall of the Wall. While doubling and division appear to be persistent themes in its history, Berlin has always been more than just two cities, and especially so after its reunification.

One group that drastically changed Berlin's face were the Turkish migrant workers who arrived in the 1960s entering into a radically changing historical and political landscape. And in the 1990s, large groups of Ethnic Germans and Jews from former Russian territories moved into the recently re-amalgamated Berlin, at once moving the city into a new phase and reconnecting it with its problematic past. Present-day Berlin presents itself as a patchwork of diversity: temporal and spatial borders are crossed, lines are blurred, and multiplicity has become the state of affairs.

Nowhere is this more obvious than in Kreuzberg (itself subdivided into two distinct districts), arguably the most ethnically diversified part of Berlin. Surrounded by the Wall on three sides during the Cold War, Kreuzberg became an island within the island of West-Berlin fluctuating between radical openness and chronic claustrophobia, offering spaces to transgress social and temporal dispositions that characterized West-Germany (R. Mandel), attracting both an alternative scene and migrant communities. After reunification the periphery became once again central, and with it came investors and gentrification.

This class offers an exploration of the multiple faces of Berlin as they manifest themselves in literature, film, the media and 'in the flesh' (or rather the concrete). Reading and film viewings will be complemented by excursions to the city. Students examine primary materials in English translation drawn from literature, film, history, autobiography, anthropology and journalism. In addition to readings and assignments,

the course incorporates excursions to historical and (multi)cultural sites in the environs of Berlin (Jewish Museum, Turkish Bazaar, etc.), as well as optional outings to dramatic performances and other cultural events (e.g. Turkish-German theater & political cabaret, Russians' Disco).

### **Student profile**

This course strives to attract culturally inquisitive students who are similarly enthusiastic about lively class discussions and active explorations of the city. While the in-class focus is on texts and films, pre-knowledge of literary or film studies is not expected. While participants of all interests and backgrounds are welcome, students of literature, theater, film, sociology, cultural studies and minority studies might find this class particularly engaging and relevant to their programs.

### **Prerequisites**

none

### **Course Requirements**

The class meets twice a week for three 90-minute segments per day. The first two segments of each class typically involve lectures on historical and cultural topics as well as seminar-style discussions of the assigned readings. Some classes devote time to the analysis of films, and we occasionally use afternoon segments for excursions into the city. There will be several guided tours and a selection of performances and other events directly related to the course; after consultation with the course participants, one or two afternoon sessions might be moved to the evening to attend cultural events (depending on availability in English).

### **Grading**

30% Class Participation  
30% Course Project & Presentation  
40% Final Exam

### **Literature**

A course reader containing texts and excerpts will be provided. In addition to primary (i.e. literary) texts, the reader contains all additional required secondary course readings. Several DVDs for the course will be obtainable for viewing at the FUBiS office. Primary readings in excerpts by David Bergelson, Christopher Isherwood, Jurek Becker, Peter Schneider, Emine Sevgi Özdamar, Zafer Şenocak, May Ayim and Wladimir Kaminer.

**Course schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Program</b>
Tuesday, June 1, 2010	"(Hi)Stories of Division, Diversity & Duplicity I" A Historical / Literary / Filmic Overview
Friday, June 4, 2010	"(Hi)Stories of Division, Diversity & Duplicity II" How to Become a European Capital
Tuesday, June 8, 2010	"Shadows over Berlin: From Weimar to NS I" Expressionists, Communists, Cabaretists
Friday, June 11, 2010	"Shadows over Berlin: From Weimar to NS II" Jewish Life and the Advent of Fascism
Tuesday, June 15, 2010	"Post-War Partitions & Mass Migrations I" The Battle of Berlin and Building Walls
Friday, June 18, 2010	"Post-War Partitions & Mass Migrations II" Jumping the Wall and the Student Movement
Tuesday, June 22, 2010	"Turkish Tales of German Unification I" Ottoman Onslaughts and Creating Kreuzberg
Friday, June 25, 2010	"Turkish Tales of German Unification II" Orient(aliz)ing the Wall
Tuesday, June 29, 2010	"Versions of Post-Wall Cosmopolitanism I" Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging
Friday, July 2, 2010	"Versions of Post-Wall Cosmopolitanism II" The Multicolorful Capital of Germany
Tuesday, July 6, 2010	"Of Jews, Turks and Other Germans I" Perilous Kinships or Dangerous Liaisons?
Friday, July 9, 2010	"Of Jews, Turks and Other Germans II" Performing the Carneval of Cultures