

Course title:	Urban Imaginaries: Between Place and Space in Berlin
Instructor:	Omar Kasmani
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Track:	B-Track
Language of instruction:	English
Contact hours:	48 (6 per day)
ECTS credits:	5
Prerequisites:	Students should be able to speak and read English at the upper intermediate level (B2) or higher.

Course description

Urban studies and its discourse on the city draw in scholarship from fields as diverse as human geography, history, anthropology and the arts. Berlin, with its seemingly infinite possibilities for memory, imagination and creative self-fashioning, offers a rich analytical model. It is a city, which is as much a fixed place with a distinct topography as it is an imaginary that glides between remembering and forgetting. A measured understanding of the interplay of place, space and memory in Berlin's cityscape is key for students who are eager to learn about the city's many pasts and presents. FUBiS invites you to join us as we analyze and explore Berlin.

This seminar brings to the fore connections between Berlin's distinct topography, its radical histories, and its current trajectories as a political and cultural space. That cities are a complex assemblage – at best multiple constellations existing simultaneously – is enabled through perspectives on migration, queerness and religion for instance. In-class analysis and discussion of academic and literary texts about Berlin will prepare participants for course excursions. Our temporal-topographical inquiry will take us to a diverse set of historical sites, cultural places and neighborhoods in the city (such as the Berlin Wall Memorial, Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Schwules Museum, Sonnenallee).

We will conduct on-site discussions of these places/spaces in historical, spatial, social, and literary terms and record the urban with methodical observations, mapping and sound walks. Upon completing the course, students will have compiled a portfolio of short essays reflecting their critical reception of Berlin's places/spaces as well as their gendered and embodied engagements, observations and memories of the city. The course not only enables an appreciation of how places/spaces are living archives of Berlin's past and present, it also invites participants to create their own personal record of Berlin.

Learning Objectives:

After attending this seminar, students will

- understand the topographical, social, and symbolic organization of place/space in an urban setting, Berlin in particular;
- gain insight into the character of cities as multiple, contested and always-in-the making constellations

- be able to reflect how access to the city is always subjective and contingent because it is primarily gendered, embodied, classed and racialized.
- be familiar with how the city's history continues to shape contemporary Berlin and its social imaginaries.

Student profile

Ideal for students of humanities and the arts, cultural, political, and social sciences.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Required language skills

The language of instruction is English. Language proficiency on an advanced Intermediate level (Mittelstufe II) is a prerequisite for participation. For orientation purposes, you can assess your language skills here (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR):

<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168045bb52>

Course requirements

I. Active Participation

What is active participation?

- Being prepared for the seminar, e.g., having read the texts carefully.
- Constructive and productive participation in class and during the fieldwork.

II. Seminar Times and Fieldwork

The seminar takes place on Tuesdays and Fridays and includes fieldwork with the instructor in Berlin.

III. Presentation

You will prepare a 20-minute presentation (including discussion), in which you will present and explain a seminar topic. It is important that you prepare a handout with theses to debate with the other seminar participants.

IV. Course Blog

You will contribute 4 (four) 500-word posts to the class blog. Analyzing a specific aspect of a seminar topic or reading, your blog post can adopt scientific or literary styles and include visual and sonic elements.

Grading

Active Participation:	35%
Presentation:	30%
Course Blog:	35% (4 posts of 500 words each. Evaluation based on content, style, and quality of analysis)

Reading

A reader will be provided at the orientation meeting.

Suggested pre-reading:

- Anderson, Benedict, 2017 *Buried City, Unearthing Teufelsberg. Berlin and its Geography of Forgetting*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Low, Setha. 2009. Toward an Anthropological Theory of Space and Place. *Semiotica* 175, 1(4), pp. 21-37. DOI 10.1515/semi.2009.041

- Webber, Andrew J. 2017. (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of Berlin*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Genz, Carolin and Tschoepe, Aylin. 2018. Beyond urban transformations: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Urban Everyday Life: https://issuu.com/carolin.genz/docs/beyond-urban-transformation_2018

Course schedule

Date	Program*
Tuesday, July 20, 2021	<p>Week 1: Historicizing Berlin: Sites of Memory</p> <p>Session 1.1</p> <p>Anderson, Benedict. 2017. <i>Buried City, Unearthing Teufelsberg. Berlin and its Geography of Forgetting</i>. London, New York: Routledge, pp. 51-80; 137-158 (Chapters 2 and 5).</p> <p>Nolan, Mary. 2001. "The Politics of Memory in the Berlin Republic." <i>Radical History Review</i> 81: 113-32.</p> <p>In-Class Workshop</p> <p>The first session introduces the historical imagination of the city. Students will acquire an understanding of the importance of engaging both material and immaterial perspectives, relevant to the overall course. This will be achieved by workshoping some of the ideas from the assigned readings, especially Anderson (2017) as well as in-class reading of select excerpts from Stephen Barber's book "Berlin Bodies: Anatomizing the Streets of the City (Reaktion Books, 2017). Students will discuss their own imaginations/ expectations of the city. It will also prepare students for the first excursion.</p>
Friday, July 23, 2021	<p>Session 1.2</p> <p>Pike, David L. 2010. "Wall and Tunnel: The Spatial Metaphorics of Cold War Berlin." <i>New German Critique: An Interdisciplinary Journal of German Studies</i> 110: 73-94.</p> <p>Ladd, Brian. 2018. <i>The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape</i>, 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018, pp. 1-40.</p> <p>Excursion: The Berlin Wall Memorial (Bernauer Straße) http://www.berliner-mauer-dokumentationszentrum.de/ + Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe</p> <p>This session will take place outdoors. Students will be expected to carry forward the key ideas of the workshop</p>

	<p>and identify its material-architectural formations. They will engage in discussions on-site and begin a field-diary (to be carried along to all excursions).</p> <p>BLOG POST 1: DUE BY MON. 27 JULY</p>
<p>Tuesday, July 27, 2021</p>	<p>Week 2: Multicultural Berlin: Past and Present</p> <p>Session 2.1</p> <p>Costabile-Heming, Carol A. 2008. "Tracing History Through Berlin's Topography: Historical Memories and Post-1989 Berlin Narratives." <i>German Life and Letters</i> 58(3): 344-356.</p> <p>Allen, John. 2007. "The Cultural Spaces of Siegfried Kracauer: The Many Surfaces of Berlin." <i>New Formations: A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics</i> 61: 20-33.</p> <p>Özdamar, Emine S. 2005. "The Courtyard in the Mirror." <i>Transit</i> 2(1):3-22. Trans. by Leslie Adelson. [optional reading]</p> <p>This session will introduce students to themes of cultural diversity and migrant narratives of Berlin and how it manifests in literary imaginaries of the city. Students will build on the learnings of previous sessions by tying material dimensions of memory (architectural sites and memorials) with the city's immaterial/ hidden dimensions. – learning outcomes will also carry to the next session.</p>
<p>Friday, July 30, 2021</p>	<p>Session 2.2</p> <p>Kaya, Ayhan. 2001. "Kreuzberg 36: A Diasporic Space in Multicultural Berlin." In <i>Sicher in Kreuzberg: Constructing Diasporas: Turkish Hip-Hop Youth in Berlin</i>. Bielefeld: Transcript, pp. 87-126.</p> <p>Wunderlich, Filipa M. 2008. "Walking and Rhythmicity: Sensing Urban Space." <i>Journal of Urban Design</i> 13(1):125-139, DOI: 10.1080/13574800701803472</p> <p>Excursion: Walking in Kreuzberg</p> <p>The first-half of the session will take place in class. Students will be introduced to ideas of doing fieldwork in the city, especially the role of observation and walking-as-method for urban ethnography. The class will end</p>

	<p>with a walk in a neighborhood in Kreuzberg. Students will be expected to document their walk.</p> <p>BLOG POST 2: DUE BY MON. 3 AUGUST</p>
<p>Tuesday, August 3, 2021</p>	<p>Week 3: Berlin Otherwise: Queer and Migrant Imaginaries</p> <p>Session 3.1</p> <p>Kasmani, Omar. 2019. "Thin Attachments: Writing Berlin in Scenes of Daily Loves." <i>Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry</i>, no. 1 (4): 34-53.</p> <p>Yildiz, Yasemin. 2017. Berlin as a Migratory Setting. In: A. Webber, ed., <i>The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of Berlin</i>, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 206-226.</p> <p>Based on the readings, students will learn about queer and migrant relations of the urban and how the city exists otherwise (beyond/ behind/ underneath); also the ways in which the more-precarious and less-visible histories of the city can be archived/ recorded. The session will either take place at the museum entirely or will involve an excursion. Students will learn about Berlin's queer history through a guided visit to the museum's archive (to be confirmed) or through their interactions with museum objects/ discussion of the exhibit.</p> <p>Excursion: Schwules Museum</p>
<p>Friday, August 6, 2021</p>	<p>Session 3.2</p> <p>Adelson, Leslie. 2005. "Introduction: Toward a New Critical Grammar of Migration." In <i>The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature</i>. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1-30.</p> <p>Westerkamp, Hildegard. 2001. "Soundwalking." Sound Heritage 3.4 [online]: https://www.hildegardwesterkamp.ca/writings/writingsby/?post_id=13&title=soundwalking</p> <p>Applying learning outcomes from their walk in Kreuzberg, this session will take place outdoors and introduce students to mapping and recording urban diversities and immaterial/ hidden dimensions especially through a focus on sound. Students will further develop their field-diaries with exercises of mapping.</p> <p>Excursion: Soundwalk on Sonnenallee</p> <p>BLOG POST 3: DUE BY MON. 9 AUGUST</p>

	(This blogpost will be based on students' field-diaries, notes and maps)
Tuesday, August 10, 2021	<p>Week 4: Urban Futures</p> <p>Session 4.1</p> <p>Apicella, Sabrina; Yossi Bartal, Noel David & Hannah Schurian. 2014. "In the Eye of the Storm: Urban Transformations in Berlin." <i>Teaching the Crisis: Geographies. Methodologies. Perspectives</i> [online]: http://teachingthecrisis.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Berlin_Urban_transformations.pdf</p> <p>Jasper, Sandra. 2018. Sonic refugia: nature, noise-abatement, and landscape design in West Berlin. <i>The Journal of Architecture</i> 23 (6): 936-960.</p> <p>+ film screening (possibly: <i>Natura Urbana: The Brachen of Berlin</i>, Matthew Gandy 2017)</p> <p>In this session, students will discuss the questions of change and urban transformation. It will involve a film screening and discussion afterwards. Students will also reflect on their experiences in the city especially in relation to their expectations/ imaginations (identified in session 1).</p> <p>BLOG POST 4: DUE BY FRI. 14 AUGUST</p>
Friday, August 13, 2021	<p>Session 4.2</p> <p>The final session will involve student presentations and discussions.</p> <p>Concluding Remarks and Summary</p> <p>FUBiS Farewell Ceremony</p>

*Field trips may be subject to change depending on the availability of appointments and speakers. On field trip days, adaptation of class times is possible.