

# AH212 German Art and Identity

Seminar Leader: Prof. Dr. Aya Soika

Course Times: Wednesdays, 11:00 – 12:30, Fridays 9:45 – 12:30 (offsite visits every second week)

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Office Hours: by email appointment, Wednesday 12:30-14:00

## Course Description

The nineteenth century was the great age of “nationalism,” or the belief that the ideal political configuration was the linguistically and culturally unified population formed into a state. Nationalism was in part a progressive movement, reacting to rule by aristocratic hierarchies, imperial control, or conquering foreign powers. It also developed reactionary components, relying on notions of race or of ethnic homogeneity that were dangerously exclusionary or even annihilatory. Art has played a contradictory role in regard to nationalism, contributing to or appropriated by it to establish narratives of the history of a “people,” yet also attacking such constructs by dismantling the tropes they exploit. The relation between art and nationalism is particularly complex in the German case because of the territorial intricacy of the lands in which vernacular German-speakers or those claiming some kind of German identity lived. It is also complicated by an historical antithesis between German culture and the styles of expression that were defined as most desirable for art and for civilized life. This course traces the relationship between German art and German identity from the period that is seen as the first manifestation of a specifically “German” proto-national identity, the Reformation, through the Romantic movement that arose in the period of Napoleonic occupation, up to the modern critiques (and violent enforcements) of a “national” aesthetic in the twentieth century.

## Requirements

### Attendance

Attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than one absence in the seminar (e. g. one double session) will significantly affect the grade for the course. Please also make sure you depart early in order to reach the museums and/or seminar room, and please lock in your coats and bags before the beginning of class. The itinerary can be checked on [www.bvg.de](http://www.bvg.de), but make sure you are also equipped with a city map, digital or on paper.

Class Etiquette: If absent, a short notification via email, if possible sent before the beginning of class, is appreciated. Please keep your bathroom breaks to a minimum and note that punctuality is essential. Also note that the use of smartphones and notebooks is not allowed during seminars on campus as well as in other locations. You should stay with the group at all times (do not wander off and explore the galleries on your own whilst the conversation is still

going on) and please do your best to stay focused on the object of our discussion. This includes listening to students' presentations.

Students are advised to consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.

### Assessment

The course assessment consists of the overall seminar work (occasional response papers, mini presentations and a visual quiz, in addition to class participation and preparation of individual tutorials), two essays and one presentation. See also "Grade Breakdown".

### Writing Assignments

There are two essays for this course, one shorter mid-term essay (ca. 1500-2000 words) and one long final essay (ca. 3500-4000 words). A range of prompts will be provided in advance.

The mid-term essay is due on, 12th March, midnight.

The final essay is due on 12th May, midnight.

Essays should include footnotes/references, bibliography and a list of illustrations. The structure and draft of your essays can be discussed in individual tutorials. Please note that prior consultation with the Bard in Berlin Writing Centre may be recommended in order to reflect upon writing and structure.

Grading Criteria: Line of argument with regard to essay question; Awareness of context and existing literature on the topic; Structure and Format (consistent use of annotations, bibliography & list of illustrations is desirable)

### Presentation

Students deliver a presentation of ca. ten minutes' length (the list of topics will be announced). Please make sure that you rehearse beforehand in order to avoid exceeding this timeframe. A one-page document with structured presentation notes (and, where applicable, a power point presentation) should be submitted via a shared document on google drive the evening before class.

### Written Responses

Responses should be of ca. 300-500 words' length, and posted via the google document on the google drive. Responses will be accessible to all participants of our class in order to encourage and stimulate our communal discussion.

Grading Criteria: Structure, Relevance to the topic; Awareness of context and scholarly debates, during the presentation and in the Q&A session afterwards; Timing; Relevance and structure of Presentation Notes

### Quiz

The session on 22nd March includes a quiz. You will be shown several objects/art works and provided with short texts related to the course contents (including works encountered during visits to museums and galleries or excerpts from our weekly readings).

Grading Criteria: correct identification of image (author, title, date, medium, location) / quote and relevant factual information, socio-historical / art historical contextualization and interpretative analysis including references to reception history and interpretations you have encountered in the readings or which have been discussed in the seminar; in the case of the text excerpt an analysis with view to the overall questions raised and arguments made should be provided.

### Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Essays that are more than 24 hours late cannot receive a grade of higher than C (see also policy on late submission in the Bard College Berlin Student Handbook).

### **Grade Breakdown**

Listed below is the percentage grade allotted to each essay, and to classroom participation and assignments.

Seminar Grade = Attendance (Participation/Preparation of art works and texts, occasional responses/tasks and Presentation)

Seminar Grade: 30%

Quiz: 20 %

Essay 1: 20 %

Essay 2: 30 %

## Schedule

Scheduled class times are available online under the relevant course heading:

<http://www.berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses/fall-2016/>

### Week 1

01.02.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

Introduction

What is German Art / What is German Culture?

The Legacy of Symbols of National Identity (Reichstag & Brandenburg Gate)

Students' Mini-Presentations (topics were allocated via email)

Reading:

Please read the Syllabus carefully and familiarize yourself with the drive. Prepare your mini-presentation

### Week 1

03.02.2017, Friday

Reichstag (Tour) / Bundestag / Brandenburg Gate / Holocaust Memorial

Readings:

Brian Ladd, Center and Periphery in the New Berlin: Architecture, Public Art, and the Search for Identity, In: A Journal of Performance and Art, Vol. 22, No. 2, Berlin 2000, pp. 7-21

Rolf J. Goebel, Berlin's Architectural Citations: Reconstruction, Simulation, and the Problem of Historical Authenticity, In: PMLA, vol. 118, no. 5, Oct. 2003, pp. 1268-1289

### Week 2

08.02.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

**TASK:** Mini-Presentations of participants: Prepare a 5-minute presentation on the list of works distributed in Week 1 (Anselm Kiefer, Wege der Weltweisheit; The German Forest; Origins of Germany / Varus; Foundation Myths; Nazarener (Marianne); The Oak Tree; Gerhard Richter, Birkenau ... )

Readings:

Stephanie D'Alessandro, „History by Degrees: The Place of the Past in Contemporary German Art“. In: Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies, vol. 28, no. 1, 66-81, 110-111

Rosalyn Deutsche, Hans Haacke and Miwon Kwon, „Der Bevölkerung: A Conversation“, In: Grey Room, no. 16, 2004, pp. 60-81

### Week 3

15.02.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

The origins of a national identity within early 19th century culture.

Caspar David Friedrich / German Romanticism / The Legacy of Romanticism in German Art

Presentation: Caspar David Friedrich and the Wars of Liberation / The Renewal of Landscape Painting in early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Germany

Readings (selection TBC):

Caspar David Friedrich, “Observations on Viewing a Collection of Paintings...”, ca. 1830, in: *Art in Theory. 1815-1900. An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, ed. by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, pp. 48-54;

Heinrich von Kleist, “Exmotions upon Viewing Friedrich’s Seascape”. In: PDF called Ramdohr et al, pp. 172-173;

Clemens Brentano and Achim von Arnim, “Various Emotions on Viewing a Seascape with a Capuchin by Friedrich”, In: PDF called Ramdohr et al, pp. 174-175;

Catalogue Entries on Works in the Alte Nationalgalerie: “Romantic Landscape”, in: *Spirit of an Age. Nineteenth-Century Paintings from the Nationalgalerie, Berlin*, London 2001, pp. 58-77

William Vaughan, “Correcting Friderich (Friedrich): nature and society in post-Napoleonic Germany”, in: *Art in Bourgeois Society*, ed. by Andrew Hemingway and William Vaughan, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998, pp. 208-228

### Week 3

17.02.2017, Friday, 9:45-12:30

Alte Nationalgalerie: Caspar David Friedrich, Adolph Menzel, Max Liebermann

Readings:

Forster-Hahn, Françoise (1996): “Shrine of Art or Signature of a New Nation?” The National Gallery(ies) in Berlin, 1848-1968”, in: *The Formation of National Collections of Art and Archaeology*, ed. by Gwendolyn Wright, Hanover/London, pp. pp. 78-99;

Relevant entries on Works in the Alte Nationalgalerie. In: *Spirit of an Age. Nineteenth-Century Paintings from the Nationalgalerie, Berlin*, London 2001

## Week 4

22.02.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

Imperial Berlin, the Working Class and the Modernists (Menzel; Liebermann)

Presentation: The political Menzel / The Iron Rolling Mill: Acquisition and Reception  
Liebermann and the Impact of French Art

Readings:

Peter Paret, "Adolph Menzel from Different Perspectives", in: Peter Paret, *German Encounters with Modernism, 1840-1945*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001, pp. 7-44

Albert Boime, *Art in the Age of Civil Struggle, 1848-1871* (Ch. 7, "Menzel's Aufbahrung der Märzgefallenen – Public Funeral for the Victims of the March Revolution", pp. 554-576 and "Coda: Menzel and the Transition to Empire", pp. 783-799)

Marion Deshmukh, Max Liebermann. Observations on the Politics of Painting in Imperial Germany, 1870-1914, in: *German Studies Review*, 3.1980, pp. 171-226

Shearer West, "Unity and Fragmentation: Institutions, Secessions, Jugendstil", in: Shearer West, *Utopia and Despair. The Visual Arts in Germany, 1890-1937*, pp. 12-32

## Week 4

25.02.2017, Saturday, 9:45-12:30

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Hieroglyphen, Exhibition at Hamburger Bahnhof. Museum der Gegenwart

Reading:

Sherwin Simmons: Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers: Art, Luxury, and Immorality in Berlin, 1913-16. In: *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 82, No. 1 (Mar., 2000), pp. 117-148 (jstor)

"II. The Brücke / Introduction; E. L. Kirchner, Program of the artist group, Brücke, 1906; Chronicle of the Brücke, 1913; Letter to Erich Heckel and Max Pechstein, March 31, 1910; Letters to Gustav Schiefler, June 27, 1911, and March 16, 1913, pp. 21-27". In: *German Expressionism. Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism*, ed. by Rose-Carol Washton Long

## Week 5

01.03.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

A new Art for Germany: Expressionism's conflicted notion of national identity

Presentations: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Street Scene, Oil on Canvas, 1913 (restituted), formerly Bruecke Museum, Berlin;

Emil Nolde, Das Leben Christi (The Life of Christ), 1912, Oil on canvas polyptich;

Franz Marc, Der Turm der Blauen Pferde (The Tower of the Blue Horses), Oil on canvas, 1913 (formerly National Gallery, Berlin, lost)

Readings:

Jill Lloyd, *German Expressionism: Primitivism and modernity*, New Haven, Conn./ London 1991, Introduction

Shearer West, "Rural and urban: seeking the Heimat" / "The spiritual in art" / "The invention and dissemination of Expressionism" in: Shearer West, *Utopia and Despair. The Visual Arts in Germany, 1890-1937*, Manchester 2000, pp. 33-106

### Week 5

03.03.2017, Friday, 9:45:00-12:30

Deutsches Historisches Museum. Visit to the German Historical Museum

Presentations: The First World War; The Weimar Republic

Reading:

Sharon J. Macdonald, "Museums, national, postnational and transcultural identities", pp.1-16

Susan A. Crane: Memory, Distortion and History in the Museum. In: *History and Theory*, 36, pp. 44-63 (jstor)

### Week 6

08.03.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

German Art and World War One

Reading:

Shearer West, "Community and personality: art on the" in: Shearer West, *Utopia and Despair. The Visual Arts in Germany, 1890-1937*, Manchester 2000, pp. 107-133

Peter Jelavich, "German culture in the Great War", in: *European Culture in the Great War. The arts, entertainment and propaganda, 1914-1918*, ed. by Aviel Roshwald and Richard Stites, Cambridge 1999, 32-57

Richard Cork, "'A Murderous Carnival': German Artists in the First World War", in: *War, Violence and the Modern Condition*, ed. by Bernd Hüppauf, Berlin/New York 1997, 241-276

\*\*\* Sunday, 12.03.2017: Mid-term essay due\*\*\*

### Week 7

15.03.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

Berlin Dada; Höch – Colonialism and Postcolonialism in German Art

Presentations: Cut with a kitchen Knife; Dada Art Fair

#### Readings:

Richard Hülsenbeck, First German Dada Manifesto, 1918; Hülsenbeck/Raoul Hausmann, What is Dadaism and what does it want in Germany?, in: *Art in Theory. An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, ed. by Charles Harrison et al., Oxford: Blackwell 1994, pp. 253-257

Wieland Herzfelde and Brigid Doherty, "Introduction to the First International Dada Fair"

Brett M. Van Hoesen, "Performing the Culture of Weimar Postcolonialism: Hannah Höch's *From an Ethnographic Museum* and its Legacy"

Paul Fox, „Confronting War Shame in Weimar Germany: Trauma, Heroism and the War Art of Otto Dix“, in: *Oxford Art Journal*, 29, 2, 2006, 247-67

### Week 7

17.03.2017, Friday, 9:45-12:30

Berlinische Galerie / Bauhaus Archiv

#### Readings:

S. West, *Utopia and Despair*: Chapter 6: Commodity and Industry: From the Werkstätte to the Bauhaus;

Oskar Schlemmer: *Diary Extracts, 1922-23*. In: *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp. 306-309;

Walter Gropius: *The Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus, 1923*. In: *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp. 309-314

Week 8

22.03.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

\*\*\* Visual Quiz \*\*\*

Week 9

29.03.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

Walter Benjamin / Rise of Nazism

Presentations: John Heartfield / Leni Riefenstahl

Readings:

Walter Benjamin (1936), "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical  
Reproduction" <https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm>

Evans, Richard J., *The Third Reich in Power, 1933-1939*, London 2006, vol. 1, Chapter 2: The  
Mobilization of the Spirit, 120-140, 164-187, 207-218

Week 9

31.03.2017, Friday, 9:45-12:30

Topography of Terror / Visit and Architecture Walk

Reading:

Rentschler, Eric, *The Legacy of Nazi Cinema: Triumph of the Will and Jew Süss Revisited*, in: *The arts in  
Nazi Germany. Continuity, conformity, change*, ed. by Jonathan Huener and Francis R. Nicosai, New  
York: Berghahn 2006, 63-83

Hans-Ernst Mittag, "Art and oppression in fascist Germany" , in: *The Divided Heritage*, op.cit., pp. 191-  
215

Week 10

05.04.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

Art during National Socialism / The Degenerate Art Exhibition

Presentations: The Degenerate Art Campaign; Looted Art & Restitution Policy

Readings:

Hitler's Speech at the Opening of the House of Art in Munich, July 18<sup>th</sup> 1937, in: *Art in Theory. An Anthology of changing ideas*, ed. by Charles Harrison et al., Oxford: Blackwell 1994, 423-426

Neil Levi: "Judge for Yourselves!"-The "Degenerate Art" Exhibition as Political Spectacle. In: *October*, Vol. 85, (Summer, 1998), pp. 41-64 (jstor).

Peters, Olaf, Genesis, Conception, and Consequences: the "Entartete Kunst" Exhibition in Munich in 1937, in: *Degenerate Art. The Attack on Modern Art in Nazi Germany, 1937*, exh.cat., New York/Munich/London: Prestel 2014, ed. by Olaf Peters, 106-125

Shearer West, "Reaction: 'degenerate art'" in: Shearer West, *Utopia and Despair. The Visual Arts in Germany, 1890-1937*, Manchester 2000, pp. 181-206

Week: 12 & 14.04.2017

NO CLASS \* SPRING BREAK \*

### Week 11

19.04.2017

Propaganda and Architecture in Nazi Germany

Presentation: Albert Speer, Great Hall / Germania, Model / Map  
The Great German Art Exhibition

Readings:

Petropoulos, Jonathan, *Artists under Hitler. Collaboration and Survival in Nazi Germany*, New Haven: Yale University Press & London 2014, chapter 13 on Albert Speer, 279-302;

Schlenker, Ines, *Defining National Socialist Art: The First "Große deutsche Kunstausstellung" in 1937*, in: *Degenerate Art. The Attack on Modern Art in Nazi Germany, 1937*, exh.cat., New York/Munich/London: Prestel 2014, ed. by Olaf Peters, 90-105

### Week 12

26.04.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

Vergangenheitsbewältigung  
Joseph Beuys / Anselm Kiefer

Readings:

Frank Trommler: Germany's past as artifact. In: *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 61, no 4, 1989, pp. 724-735;

Andreas Huyssen, Anselm Kiefer: The Terror of History, the Temptation of Myth, In: *October*, vol. 48, Spring 1989, pp. 25-45

Andreas Huyssen: The Voids of Berlin. In: *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Autumn, 1997), pp. 57-81;

Michael Naumann: Historical Consciousness in Germany after the Genocide. In: *New German Critique*, no. 80, 2000, pp. 17-28

### Week 12

28.04.2017, Friday, 9.45 – 12:30

Hamburger Bahnhof

Presentation: Joseph Beuys' concept of „Social Sculpture“; Anselm Kiefer

Readings:

Timothy O'Leary, Fat, Felt and Fascism: The Case of Joseph Beuys, In: *The Sydney Society of Literatur and Aesthetics*

### Week 13

03.05.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

Memorial Culture continued / Gerhard Richter

Readings:

Peter Weibel: Repression and Representation: The RAF in German Postwar Art. In: Exhibition catalogue "Art of Two Germanys", 2009, pp. 257-260;

Svea Bräunert: The RAF and the Phantom of Terrorism in West Germany. In: Exhibition catalogue "Art of Two Germanys", 2009, pp. 261-273

Rainer Usselman, 18. Oktober 1977: Gerhard Richter's Work of Mourning and its new audience, In: *Art Journal*, vol. 61, no. 1, Spring 2002, pp.4-25

Week 14

10.05.2017, Wednesday, 11:00-12:30

The Voids of Berlin

Readings:

Andreas Huyssen: The Voids of Berlin. In: *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Autumn, 1997), pp. 57-81;  
Michael Naumann: Historical Consciousness in Germany after the Genocide. In: *New German Critique*,  
no. 80, 2000, pp. 17-28;

Karen E. Till: The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place. Minnesota 2005, Chapters 5 & 6: Aestheticizing  
the Rupture: Berlin's Holocaust Memorial, pp. 161-190; Memory in the New Berlin, pp. 193-228.

Week 14

12.05.2017, Friday, 9:45-12:30

Kreuzberg Excursion / Jewish Museum / Brunch?

Readings:

Michael Rothberg & Yasemin Yildiz, Memory Citizenship: Migrant Archives of Holocaust Remembrance  
in Contemporary Germany, In: *Parallax*, 17:4, 32-48

\*\*\*\* 12.05.2017, Final Essay due \*\*\*\*

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## Essay Deadlines

The mid-term essay is due on, 12th March, midnight.

The final essay is due on 12th May, midnight.

## Library and Book Purchase Policies

All texts will be accessible through a special folder on google drive, and through online links. A selection of relevant books will be placed on the reserve shelf in the BCB library.

The following books are available in our BCB library in greater number (please ask Sinziana for help); they will be useful throughout the semester:

*Spirit of an Age. Nineteenth-Century Paintings from the Nationalgalerie, Berlin*, exh.cat.,  
London: National Gallery Company 2001

West, Shearer, *The Visual Arts in Germany. 1890-1937. Utopia and Despair*, New Brunswick:  
Rutgers University Press 2001

*Art in theory. An anthology of changing ideas, 1900-2000*, ed. by Charles Harrison, Christopher  
Wood, Oxford: Blackwell 1998