HIEU 144: Topics in European History  Fall 2011

Confronting Genocide: How Germans Remember Their Past

Death is a Master from Germany (Paul Celan)

This is an upper-division lecture/discussion course that aims to provide students with an overview of the ways Germans in East and West have dealt with their “unmasterable” past. Topics include the trauma of war, destruction, expulsion, and genocide; guilt, punishment, and restitution; cultural representations of the past; and the institutionalization of memory. Alongside the historical instruction, students will be introduced to the Visual History Archive, the Shoah Foundation’s archive of about 52,000 interviews with Holocaust survivors and witnesses. They will learn to critically “read” audiovisual sources as a type of text and evaluate interviews for the purpose of research.

Instructor: Susanne Hillman  shillman@ucsd.edu or 858-534-7661

Office hours: Wed. 2-4:30 pm or by appointment (SSHL Research Services, behind reference desk)

Assigned Readings:

- Wolfgang Borchert, The Man Outside.
- Karl Jaspers, The Question of German Guilt. [electronic reserves]
- Lawrence Langer, Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory.
- W.G. Sebald, On the Natural History of Destruction.
- Albert Speer, Inside the Third Reich.
- Peter Weiss, The Investigation.

Books are available for purchase at the campus bookstore.

Films:

Course Requirements:

- Attendance and participation: 10%
- Pop quiz: 10% of course grade
- Speer quiz: 10% of course grade
- Film report: 10% of course grade
- Research paper: 30% of course grade
- Final exam: 30%

In addition, you are required to attend either one of the two Holocaust survivor talks scheduled on 5 Oct. and 2 Nov. from 5-7 pm!

CLASS SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 23  Introduction: Germany’s Unmasterable Past / Holocaust “Moments”

  Reading: begin Speer, Inside the Third Reich

SEPTEMBER 26  Background: Germany, the Belated Nation (1871-1918)

SEPTEMBER 28  The Nazis Come to Power (1919-1933)

SEPTEMBER 30  The Third Reich I: The Racial State (1933-1939)

  Reading: Borchert, “Generation Without Farewell”

  “Railways, by Day and by Night”

OCTOBER 3  The Third Reich II: The Twisted Road to Auschwitz (1939-1945)

  Reading: Borchert, “The Crows Fly Home at Night”

  “There are Voices in the Air – at Night”

  “Conversations over the Roofs”
OCTOBER 5        Germany at War: Bystanders, Victims, Perpetrators

        Reading: Borchert, “The Skittle Alley”
        “Jesus Won’t Play Any More”
        “The Cat was Frozen in the Snow”
        “The Nightingale Sings”
        “Radi”

Holocaust survivor talk: attendance mandatory!

OCTOBER 7        Reaping the Whirlwind: the Trauma of Air War

        Reading: Sebald, “Air War and Literature”

OCTOBER 10       Germany’s Stunde Null: Blaming Hitler

        Reading: Borchert, “The Coffee is Indefinable”
        “The Kitchen Clock”
        “Rats do Sleep at Night”
        “He too had a Lot of Trouble with the Wars”
        “In May, in May cried the Cuckoo”
        “God’s Eye”

OCTOBER 12       The Nuremberg Trial: Victors’ Justice?

        Reading: Jaspers, The Question of German Guilt

OCTOBER 14       Germans Outside the Door: POW Homecomings

OCTOBER 17       “The Man Outside” (reading and discussion of play)

        Reading: Borchert, “The Man Outside”
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>OCTOBER 19</td>
<td>Germany Divided: Rehabilitation and Restitution</td>
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<td>OCTOBER 21</td>
<td>The Auschwitz Trial: Reckonings</td>
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<td>OCTOBER 24</td>
<td>“The Investigation” (reading and discussion of play)</td>
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<td><em>Reading:</em> Weiss, <em>The Investigation</em></td>
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<td>Kovach &amp; Walser, “Martin Walser: Our Auschwitz” (1965)</td>
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<td>OCTOBER 26</td>
<td>1968: Blaming the Fathers</td>
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<td><em>Reading:</em> Langer, <em>Holocaust Testimonies</em>, pp. 1-76</td>
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<td>OCTOBER 28</td>
<td>Albert Speer: The Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</td>
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<td><em>Reading:</em> Finish Speer</td>
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<td><strong>Speer quiz at beginning of class!</strong></td>
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<td>OCTOBER 31</td>
<td>Nazi Children</td>
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<td>NOVEMBER 2</td>
<td>The Bitburg Controversy: Reagan and Kohl</td>
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<td><em>Reading:</em> Kovach &amp; Walser, “Martin Walser: No End to Auschwitz” (1979) and “Handshake with Ghosts” (1979)</td>
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<td><strong>Holocaust survivor talk:</strong> attendance mandatory!</td>
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<td>NOVEMBER 4</td>
<td>The Historians’ Debate: failed <em>Vergangenheitsbewältigung</em></td>
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<td>NOVEMBER 7</td>
<td>Unification and Its Discontents: Rostock, Solingen, Mölln</td>
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<td><strong>Film report due at beginning of class!</strong></td>
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NOVEMBER 9  Neo-Nazis and Holocaust Deniers: discussion

NOVEMBER 11  Jews in United Germany

Reading: Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies*, pp. 77-161.

NOVEMBER 14  The Goldhagen Debate: A Nation of Murderers?

NOVEMBER 16  The Wehrmacht Exhibit: Blaming the Grandfathers

NOVEMBER 18  Film: *The Unknown Soldier*, dir. M. Verhoeven

NOVEMBER 21  Memorials: KZs, Memoirs, Museums

Research paper due at the beginning of class!

NOVEMBER 23  The Ruins of Memory: Surviving the Cataclysm

Reading: Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies*, pp. 162-205

NOVEMBER 26  Thanksgiving holiday – no class!

NOVEMBER 28  The Walser Moment: Auschwitz as Moral Bludgeon


NOVEMBER 30  The “Silent Majority”: Autobahn and Mother Cross

DECEMBER 2  Humanizing Hitler

Film and discussion: *Downfall*, dir. O. Hirschbiegel