



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Destruction Construction Reconstruction: Shaping Berlin's Space and Image - 54617

Last update 24-08-2020

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Cont. German Studies:politics, Soc.&Cult

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Kobi Ben-Meir

Coordinator Email: kobibobm@gmail.com

Coordinator Office Hours:

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Kobi Ben-Meir

Course/Module description:

In 1990, a large part of the city of Berlin was either an open field waiting to be built, or soon became one. Astonishingly, much of this space has been completely transformed in the course of the last three decades. The course will highlight that the decision to destroy, build or reconstruct a building is a political decision, which actively shapes the city's memory and image.

Since the 18th century, Berlin has been highly skilled in its own image-making and in the on-going process reimagining itself. Studying new urban projects and reconstructed old ones in light of their predecessors, allows one to understand the image the city would like to project, and how it imagines itself.

This course will explore the reshaping of the space of Berlin as methods to construct urban identity(ies). It will study contemporary visual culture from a cross-disciplinary approach, and will aim to encourage students coming from different disciplines to engage with artworks, object, building and spaces as sources of knowledge for their own study, in their own respective disciplines.

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- understand the historical context of Berlin's contemporary visual and conceptual image;
- analyze the political aspects of the architecture of Berlin as methods of image-making and memory shaping;
- identify major trends in Berlin's contemporary urban design;
- engage with visual culture as source of knowledge for their study.

Attendance requirements(%):

80%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

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- The fragmentation of Berlin's space: the present in light of the division of the city.
 - The reinvention of Berlin's image during the 18th and 19th centuries.
 - The concept of "Critical Reconstruction", the reconstruction of the historical centre of Berlin and the adaptation of its symbolism.
 - From the Berliner Schloss, to Palast der Republik, and (back) to Humboldt Forum.
 - Monumental buildings in Berlin – contemporary ambitions and ghosts of the past.
 - Holes, voids and memorials.
 - "The Death Zone": Contemporary Potsdamer Platz and Kulturforum.
 - "Poor but Sexy": The contemporary reinvention of Berlin as a city of culture.

Required Reading:

Selected chapters from (TBC):

- Colomb, Claire, 2011. *Staging the New Berlin: Place Marketing and the Politics of Urban Reinvention Post-1989*. London – New York: Routledge.
- Huyssen, Andreas, 2003. *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Ladd, Brian, 1997. *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- MacGregor, Neil, 2014. *Germany: Memories of a Nation*. London: Allen Lane.
- Staiger, Uta, Henriette Steiner and Andrew Webber, 2009. *Memory Culture and the Contemporary City*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Taberner, Stuart and Frank Finlay (eds.), 2002. *Recasting German Identity: Culture, Politics, and Literature in the Berlin Republic*. Camden House.
- Till, Karen E., 2005. *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 20 %

Project work 80 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information: