

Twentieth-Century Berlin: An Urban Historical Perspective

Semester:	Summer semester 2018
Course instructor:	Lily Philipose (email: lilyphilipose@gmail.com)
Subject area:	Social Sciences / History
Credits:	5 ECTS
Time:	Tuesday 16:00-18:00 s.t.
Room:	0323

Course description:

Urban history is a form of historical inquiry that enriches our understanding of cities and urban landscapes, often using an interdisciplinary approach. This course is an introduction to specific points of interest in the political, social and cultural developments in Berlin between the 1920s and the 1990s, showing how they illuminate German twentieth-century history. It links city sites, monuments and buildings to collective memory and political debates.

We learn about the fascinating stories of twentieth-century political events, places, people, buildings and monuments in Berlin presented by three urban historians, and we also learn the basic principles and approaches of urban history. We make urban history come alive through audio-guide narrated city walks, develop our own piece of micro-history by re-searching neighborhoods, and take part in an urban preservation project — restoration of the Alexander Haus in Groß Glienicke — that brings this city's urban history into the present.

Learning objectives:

By the end of the course, students will acquire the following skills:

Knowledge Skills

- Understanding the basic principles of urban history, urban biography and micro-history
- Understanding the role played by memory and memorialization of the past in urban monuments and sites
- Developing an overview of German and Berlin twentieth-century history

Academic/Transferrable Skills

- Closely reading and critically reflecting on key texts
- Organizing critical thinking in short, written pieces
- Using primary and secondary research in urban history
- Interpreting and communicating findings from primary and secondary research

Competencies

- Applying the principles of urban and micro-history in practical group tasks
- Participating in an ongoing preservation project and applying to it the theoretical knowledge of urban history

Assessment Portfolio:

- Regular attendance, active participation (20%)
- Reader's Response papers submitted weekly via moodle (20%)
- Participation in Community Project (25%) Tentative dates are: June 19 and June 26, but dates will be finalized after confirmation with the Alexander Haus
- Written reflection on Community Project, 3-5 pages, normal font (5%)
- Final project (Urban History Walk based on primary/secondary research Scheduled for: July 10 and July 17, 2018. Format: either physical walk or virtual walk (approximately 20 minutes). (25%) Accompanying micro-history profile, due: July 10, 3-5 pages, normal font. (5%)

Language requirements:

A high level of academic spoken and written English is required for this course (at least B2). The language spoken in class is English, and all papers and project work will be done in English, but the readings introduce the class in an easily accessible way to those historical ideas and concepts that, when applied to Berlin, are often expressed in German. Also, the community project and the final (practical) micro-history project will give students an opportunity to interact with both German and non-German speakers in Berlin, outside the classroom. In general, given that this is an international group of students, including those from non-English speaking countries, the instructor will remain sensitive to the differing levels of English

abilities, and assessment will be on the level of ideas rather than on sophistication of language expression.

Timetable (April 17th-July 20th):

Session 1: 17.04.2018

Introduction to Urban History

The Principles of Urban History/ The Story of the House on the Lake

Readings: Ewen, Introduction. "Why Urban History?"

Harding, Prologue.

Session 2: 24.04.2018

Berlin and Three Urban Historical Approaches

Focus: Berlin Walls

Readings: Ladd, Introduction and Chapter 1, "Berlin Walls"

Large, Chapter 2, "World City?"

Harding, Part 1, "Glienicke"

01.05.2018 (Holiday)

Session 3: 08.05.2018

Era of Empire and Era of Parliament

Readings: Ladd, Chapter 3, "Metropolis"

Large, Chapter 3, "Discord in the Castle"

Harding, Part 1 (continued)

Session 4: 15.05. 2018

The Reich Capital

Readings: Ladd, Chapter 4, "Nazi Berlin"
Large, Chapter 6, "Hitler's Berlin"
Harding, Part 2, "The Lake House"

Session 5: 22.05.2018

City Walk (using the Detour Audio-Guide series) "Tiergarten: Gigantic Germania" (74 minutes). Meet at U Zoologischer Garten. Bring Notebook of Ideas. Complementary reading is from Session 4.

Session 6: 29.05.2018

"Stunde Null"

Readings: Ladd, Chapter 5, "Divided Berlin"
Large, Chapter 9, "The Divided City"
Harding, Part 2, "The Lake House"

Session 7: 05.06.2018

City Walk (using the Detour Audio-Guide series) "Prenzlauer Berg: 28 Years of Separation (83 minutes). Meet at U Zoologischer Garten. Bring Notebook of Ideas. Complementary reading is from Session 6, and additional reading is: Ewen, Chapter 2, "Cities, Spaces and Identities".

Session 8: 12.06.2018

Peaceful Revolution

Readings: Ladd, Chapter 6, "Capital of the New Germany"
Large, Chapter 10, "From Bonn to Berlin"
Harding, Part 3, "Home"

Preparation for the Community Project

Session 9: 19.06.2018

Community Project: Restoring the Alexander Haus

Details will be provided by the organizing team at the Alexander Haus closer to the date.
Meet at U Zoologischer Garten.

Reading: Harding, Part 5, "City of Potsdam"

Session 10: 26.06.2018

Community Project: Restoring the Alexander Haus, Week Two

Reading: as above.

Session 11: 03.07. 2018

Reflections: Lessons Learned in Community Project

Reading: Harding, Epilogue and Postscript.

Preparation for Presentation of Final Projects

Session 12: 10.07.2018

Presentation of Final Projects

Micro-History Neighborhood Walk/Written commentary based on primary and secondary research

Session 13: 17.07.2018

Presentation of Final Projects/ Reflections on the Course

Literature:

Ash, T. G. (2013) "The New German Question", *The New York Review of Books*, Aug. 15.

Ewen, S. (2015) *What is Urban History?* Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Harding, T. (2015) *The House by the Lake*. London: Windmill.

Judt, T. (2005) *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945*. NY: Penguin.

Ladd, B. (1997) *Ghosts of Berlin*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press.

Large, D. C. (2000) *Berlin*. NY: Basic Books.

Richie, A. (1999) *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin*. NY: Harper Collins.

Remarks:

Diversity Learning Mission Statement:

The class benefits from the diversity of cultural backgrounds and experiences of living in a variety of towns and cities brought by this international group of students. Their backgrounds and experiences directly enrich the course content in urban history. Although the focus is on Berlin and on German history, the lessons learned are seen through the prism of life in other cities and other countries, and through the diversity of ideas and experiences.

Attendance Policy:

The pass grade is dependent on the satisfactory completion of all course requirements as set out in the assessment portfolio, including class participation, written work, excursions and final projects. In addition, the pass grade requires 80% attendance. Excused absences are those supported by medical certificates.

Plagiarism Policy:

Students who submit work that is not their own, or who use the ideas of others without due acknowledgement, including the ideas of fellow students, those found in published work or on the internet, are committing plagiarism. Plagiarism constitutes a misrepresentation of the student's knowledge and abilities and is a serious form of academic dishonesty that will result in an automatic failing grade.