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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10-12pm, or by appointment



Classics of German Cinema

(3 credits)

Fall 2014

01:470:360-01; cross-listed with Cinema

Studies: 01:175:377:06

Index 19581

T/Th 2:50-4:10pm

Scott Hall 220

Course Description

This course introduces students to films of the Weimar, Nazi and post-war period as well as to contemporary German cinema. We will explore issues of social class, gender, historical memory, violence, and conflict by means of close analysis. The class seeks to sensitize students to the cultural context of these films and the changing socio-political climates in which they were made. Special attention will be paid to the issue of style. Directors include Robert Wiene (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1920), F.W. Murnau (*The Last Laugh*, 1924), Fritz Lang (*Metropolis*, 1926), Josef von Sternberg (*The Blue Angel*, 1930), Leni Riefenstahl (*Olympia*, 1936), Wolfgang Staudte (*The Kaiser's Lackey*, 1951), Volker Schlöndorff (*The Young Törless*, 1966), Werner Herzog (*Aguirre*, 1972), Hans Jürgen Syberberg (*Ludwig*, 1972), Rainer Werner Fassbinder (*The Marriage of Maria Braun*, 1979), Helma Sanders-Brahms (*Germany, Pale Mother*, 1980), Wim Wenders (*Wings of Desire*, 1987), Fatih Akin (*Head-On*, 2004), and Michael Haneke (*Caché*, 2005).

Taught in English. May count for credit toward the German major or minor, depending on student's area of concentration.

PREREQUISITES: None.

FINAL GRADE

Class participation	25%
3 film analyses (1-2 pages)*	30%
Oral presentation**	15%
Final paper (15 pp.)	30%

*additional response papers will receive extra credit.

** close analysis of a film segment (20 min.)

All required texts are available on Sakai.

All required movies are available on Course reserves (Alexander Library), some of them will be presented in additional screenings (German House Seminar Room).

Grade distribution: A=90-100%; B+=85-89; B=80-84; C+=75-79; C=70-74; D=65-69; F=64 and below

DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

- Attendance

All students must attend regularly and arrive prepared; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Those who miss more than two class sessions without a compelling excuse should expect a one-step reduction in the course grade (i.e. an A becomes a B+, a B+ becomes a B). Every additional three absences may entail a further one-step grade-reduction. Three late arrivals count as one absence. Note: It is the responsibility of students who have been absent (for any reason) to find out what they have missed and obtain materials that may have been handed out.

- Disability Support Services

Students who may be requesting accommodations due to disabilities are encouraged to familiarize themselves with procedures and policies regarding disability support services at the following website: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>. It is recommended that students seeking accommodations begin filing paperwork as soon as possible as the documentation review process may take up to 30 business days. Students are encouraged to speak with teachers about these issues at the beginning of the term. All such conversations will be kept strictly confidential.

- Academic Integrity

Violations of academic integrity are an extremely serious matter, and can lead to a student's failing the course and being referred to the University's Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action. When referring to ideas other than your own, always

acknowledge your sources clearly and completely, whether you are quoting or paraphrasing. Note also that use of online translation services is not permitted as a tool for generating work that you submit for course credit. Please see the University's policies on academic integrity at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>, and discuss with your instructor any questions you may have about this and related issues.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

Haunted Screen: Expressionist Cinema

Week 1

T 9/2 • Th 9/4

Introduction. Film: Robert Wiene, [The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari](#) (Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari, 1920).

Readings: Lotte Eisner, [Haunted Screen](#), pp. 9-37; Siegfried Kracauer, [From Caligari to Hitler](#), pp. 61-76.

Week 2

T 9/9 • Th 9/11

Film: Murnau, [The Last Laugh](#) (Der letzte Mann, 1924).

Readings: Eisner, [Haunted Screen](#), pp. 207-221; Kracauer, [From Caligari to Hitler](#), pp. 96-106.

Femme Fatales in Weimar Germany

Week 3

T 9/16 • Th 9/19

Film: Fritz Lang, [Metropolis](#) (1925/26); clips from Walter Ruttmann, [Berlin, Symphony of a Big City](#) (1929) and Fritz Lang, [Woman in the Moon](#) (1929)

Readings: Eisner, [Haunted Screen](#), pp. 222-236; Andreas Huyssen, "The Vamp and the Machine."

Week 4

SCREENING M 9/22: *The Blue Angel*

T 9/23 • Th 9/25

Film: Josef von Sternberg, The Blue Angel (Der blaue Engel, 1930); clips from W.S. van Dyke, Tarzan, the Ape Man (1932) and Sternberg, Blonde Venus (1932).

Readings: Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" and Sybil DelGaudio, "Role-Playing and Performance as Layering: The Blue Angel and Blonde Venus."

Fascinating Fascism

Week 5

SCREENING M 9/29: *The Blue Light*

T 9/30 • Th 10/2

Film: Leni Riefenstahl, The Blue Light (Das blaue Licht, 1932); clips from Riefenstahl, Triumph of the Will (1935) and Ray Müller, The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl (1993).

Readings: Susan Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism" and Walter Benjamin, "The Artwork in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction."

Authoritarian Characters

Week 6

SCREENING M 10/6: *The Kaiser's Lackey*

T 10/7 • Th 10/9

Film: Wolfgang Staudte, The Kaiser's Lackey (Der Untertan, 1951); clips from Helmut Weiss, Die Feuerzangenbowle (1944) and Staudte, Murderers Among Us (1946).

Readings: André Bazin, "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema" and Theodor W. Adorno, *The Authoritarian Personality*, pp. 1-27.

Week 7

T 10/14 • Th 10/16

Film: Volker Schlöndorff, Young Törless (Der junge Törless, 1966); clips from Leontine Sagan, Girls in Uniform (1931) and Alexander Kluge, Yesterday Girl (1966); The Oberhausen Manifesto (1962).

Readings: Robert Musil, The Confusions of Young Törless [1906]

Week 8

SCREENING M 10/20: *Aguirre – The Wrath of God*

T 10/21 • Th 10/23

Film: Werner Herzog, Aguirre, The Wrath of God (Aguirre, der Zorn Gottes, 1972); clips from Francis Ford Coppola, Apocalypse Now (1979) and Herzog, Fitzcarraldo (1982).

Readings: Roland Barthes, "Myth Today" (from *Mythologies*, 1957) and Timothy Corrigan et. al., "Walking on Ice" (online content)

German Mythologies

Week 9

**SCREENING M 10/27: *Ludwig – Requiem for a Virgin King*
T 10/28 • Th 10/30**

Film: Hans Jürgen Syberberg, *Ludwig – Requiem for a Virgin King* (Ludwig, Requiem für einen jungfräulichen König, 1972); clips from Luchino Visconti, *Ludwig* (1972).

Readings: Walter Benjamin, "Theses of the Philosophy of History," Eric L. Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," and Gilles Deleuze, "The Problem of Syberberg" (from *Cinema: The Time-Image*).

Gender and German History

Week 10

T 11/4 • Th 11/6

Film: Rainer Werner Fassbinder, [The Marriage of Maria Braun](#) (Die Ehe der Maria Braun, 1979); clips from Douglas Sirk, [La Habanera](#) (1937) and Fassbinder, [Veronika Voss](#) (1982).

Readings: Anton Kaes, "The Presence of the Past: Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *The Marriage of Maria Braun*" and Fassbinder, [The Anarchy of the Imagination](#), pp. 104-111, 134-143, 196-214.

Week 11

**SCREENING M 11/10: *Germany, Pale Mother*
T 11/11 • Th 11/13**

Film: Helma Sanders-Brahms, [Germany Pale Mother](#) (Deutschland, bleiche Mutter, 1980); clips from Schlöndorff, [The Tin Drum](#) (1979).

Readings: Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia" and Theodor W. Adorno, "The Meaning of Working Through the Past."

Post-Apocalypse

Week 12

**SCREENING M 11/17: *Wings of Desire*
T 11/18 • Th 11/20**

Film: Wim Wenders, Wings of Desire (Der Himmel über Berlin, 1987); clips from Jean Luc Godard, Two or Three Things I Know about Her (1967) and Silberling, City of Angels (1998) (final scene).

Readings: Rainer Maria Rilke, "Ninth Elegy" (from *Duino Elegies*) and Walter Benjamin, "Theses of the Philosophy of History."

Cinema and Migration

Week 13:

SCREENING M 11/24: *Head-On*

T 11/25

Film: Fatih Akin, Head-On (Gegen die Wand, 2004); clips from Ulrich Seidl, Import Export (2007).

Readings: Zafer Şenocak, Atlas of a Tropical Germany: Essays on Politics and Culture, 1990-1998, pp. 1-9, 83-98, and Savas Arslan, "Fatih Akin's Homecomings."

Week 14

SCREENING M 12/1: *Caché*

T 12/2 • Th 12/4

Film: Michael Haneke, Hidden (Caché, 2006).

Guest: Susan Doose.

Readings: Lisa Coulthard, "Negative Ethics: The Missed Event in the French Films of Michael Haneke."