

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
His 740: Selected Topics in European History
“Exiled in Paradise: German Émigrés in America”

“Write something European.”

–Greta Garbo, in Hollywood, to Salka Viertel

Spring Semester 2011
Instructor: Dr. Emily J. Levine
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Tu, 3:30–6:20pm, MHRA 3209

DESCRIPTION

According to the historian H. Stuart Hughes, the influx of German émigrés to the United States led to the “deprovincialization of the American mind.” The unique communities of émigrés created outposts of German and German-Jewish life in such places as New York (so-called “Weimar on the Hudson”), Los Angeles, and even Asheville, North Carolina. These scholars also made vast contributions to Anglo-American scholarship in fields as diverse as sociology, art history, and comparative literature, and had an indelible impact on the fine arts, architecture, and film industries.

This graduate seminar examines the ramifications of this transformation in multiple fields across the humanities and in the institution of the university. Drawing on memoir, theory, art, architecture, and film, among the questions posed will be: How did these German ideas “work” in the American context? How did German Jews negotiate their relationship to Germany and America? How did changing contexts—cultural, political, and institutional—affect these scholars and their ideas? And can we identify historiographical or methodological patterns as these exiles’ legacy? Themes of the course include transnational cultural and intellectual history, cultural translation, and transatlantic relations.

REQUIREMENTS

All students must attend and participate in all class meetings. The completion of all assignments is necessary for a passing grade. No “incompletes” will be given for this class and **no late work will be accepted.** So plan ahead!

GRADING

Active seminar participation	10%
Weekly one-page reading responses	20% (average of responses)

Two oral presentations	20% (average of presentations)
Book review	25%
Analytic paper	25%

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

1. Class Participation

An active exchange of ideas is essential to this course. Students are required to complete all the reading (including occasional viewing) assignments by the assigned due date and to arrive at class ready to discuss them.

Given the limited amount of course time and that this is a graduate level course, **you may only miss two classes without penalty**. After you miss two classes, your absence will adversely affect your participation grade. **I reserve the right to withdraw you from the course if you miss four or more classes.**

2. One-page reading responses

All students are required to submit a one–two page response to the reading. These responses should **both** be posted to Blackboard by 11pm the Monday evening prior to the Tuesday class meeting **as well as** given to me in hardcopy **at the beginning of class**.

3. Oral Presentations

Students will be required to give two presentations to the class over the course of the semester. These presentations are given at the beginning of class and are intended to help “jump start” the seminar’s discussion for the day. The presentations are allotted the first **15 minutes of class** during which the instructor will allow you to lead the discussion. Think about how to balance background information, presentation, and questions that require analytic rather than descriptive answers and promote robust discussion.

The second oral presentation will be given on **March 1st** in class in conjunction with your book review. The oral presentation will be 15 minutes (10 minutes for presentation and 5 minutes for Q&A). More information about the oral presentations will be given the week before the assignment is due.

4. Book Review

Writing book reviews is an essential part of participating in the academic profession. In addition to reading primary source texts, we will also be reading new scholarly works in the field and discussing forums and genres of book reviews. You are required to complete

one book review (*due March 1st*) on a book to be chosen from the select bibliography on émigré literature or otherwise approved by the instructor.

5. Final Paper

All students will produce a 12-15 page analytic paper on one of the topics/texts that we have looked at in the class over the course of the semester. **The final paper is due on Monday, April 25th by 5pm.** Though you are not required to do any additional outside research, you may wish to choose a topic that is related to your graduate/doctoral research or a field in which you already have some basic historical and background knowledge. The paper should be analytic in nature, using the secondary source material to situate the primary text, and offering your historical interpretation on that text.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Online readings, posted to Blackboard, designated with *

Franz Neumann, *Behemoth: the structure and practice of national socialism, 1933–1944*

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*

Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: the representation of reality in Western literature*

Ehrhard Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific: German exile culture in Los Angeles and the crisis of modernism*

Serge Guilbaut, *How New York stole the idea of modern art: abstract expressionism, freedom, and the cold war*

Film: Ernst Lubitsch, *To Be or Not To Be* (1942)

SYLLABUS

Tu, 1/11: Introduction to Transnational Cultural and Intellectual History

Email sign-in sheet; assign oral presentations; discuss assignments

Tu, 1/18: Narrow Escapes, Mythology and Methodologies

Readings:

Anthony Heilbut, “The Intellectuals’ Migration: The Émigré’s Conquest of American Academia,” *Change* (1984, JSTOR)*

Eric Jennings, “Last Exist from Vichy France: The Martinique Escape Route and the Ambiguities of Emigration,” *JMH* (2002, JSTOR)*

Allan Bloom, “The German Connection,” in *The Closing of the American Mind**

Allan Megill, “Globalization and the History of Ideas,” *JHI* (Special Issue devoted to Intellectual History in a Global Age, 2005, JSTOR)*

Donald Kelley, “Intellectual History in a Global Age,” *JHI*, (2005, JSTOR)*

Recommended (for full background see appended bibliography):

Lewis A Coser, *Refugee Scholars in America*

Anthony Heilbut, *Exiled in Paradise*

Alfred Kazin, *New York Jew*

Alfred Kazin, "Homage to Varian Fry," *The New Republic*, 1998

Robert Hughes, "A Cultural Gift from Hitler," *Time*, 1997

SCHOLARLY INNOVATION

Tu, 1/25: The Social Sciences in the Shadow of Totalitarianism

Readings:

Franz L. Neumann, "The Social Sciences"*

_____, *Behemoth: the structure and practice of national socialism, 1933–1944*,

Recommended:

Gerhard Loewenberg, "The Influence of European Émigré Scholars on Comparative Politics, 1925-1965," *American Political Science Review* 100, no. 4 (2006) JSTOR

C. Wright Mills, Book review of Franz Neumann's *Behemoth* in *Partisan Review* Sept/Oct 1942*

Tu, 2/1: Under the Judgment of Exiles

Readings:

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*

_____, "What Remains? The Language Remains": A Conversation with Günter Gaus On October 28, 1964*

Peter Novick, "Self-Hating Jew Writes Pro-Eichmann Series," *The Holocaust in American Life**

Recommended:

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951)

_____, and Karl Jaspers, *Correspondence, 1926–1969* (1993)

Tu, 2/8: Critiques of Mass Culture

Readings:

Theodor Adorno, "Scientific Experiences of a European Scholar in America." *

_____, "Prologue to Television"; and "The Ideology of Television"*

Martin Jay, "Adorno in America." (JSTOR)*

Recommended:

Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception*

Tu, 2/15: Mimesis and the Birth of Comparative Literature

Readings:

Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis: the representation of reality in Western literature*
_____, "On the Political Theory of Pascal"*
Henri Peyre, "The Study of Literature"*

Recommended:

Carl Landauer, "'Mimesis' and Erich Auerbach's Self-Mythologizing."
German Studies Review, 11, no. 1 (1988), 83-96.
Geoffrey Hartman, *A Scholar's Tale: The Story of a Displaced Child of Europe*

Tu, 2/22: Kunstgeschichte, American Style

Readings:

Erwin Panofsky, "Three Decades of Art history"*
_____, "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures," and "The Ideological
Antecedents of the Rolls-Royce Radiator" from *Three Essays on Style**
Colin Eisler, "*Kunstgeschichte* American Style: A Study in Migration"*

Recommended:

Chris Wood, "Art History's Normative Renaissance."*
Carl Landauer, "Erwin Panofsky and the Renaissance of the Renaissance,"
Renaissance Quarterly, 47, no. 2 (1994)

WEIMAR OUTPOSTS

3/1: The University in Exile: New York, Chicago, Princeton, Asheville?

Readings:

Martin Jay, "Frankfurt School in Exile"*
_____, "Urban Flights" in Thomas Bender, ed. *The University and the City* *

Recommended (see appended bibliography for full list):

Peter M. Rutkoff, *New School: a history of the New School for Social Research*
Jeffrey Mehlman, *Émigré New York: French Intellectuals in Wartime Manhattan, 1940-1944*
Caroline Collier and Michael Harrison, *Starting at Zero: Black Mountain College 1933-1967*
Vincent Katz, ed. *Black Mountain College: Experiment in Art: Essays by Vincent*

Katz, Martin Brody, Robert Creeley and Kevin Power

3/1: Book Review due at the beginning of class

Oral Presentations in conjunction with book review

3/8: No class: UNCG Spring Break

3/15: Weimar on the Pacific, Los Angeles

Readings:

Ehrhard Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific: German Exile Culture in Los Angeles and the Crisis of Modernism*

Bertolt Brecht, "Contemplating Hell," (poem, 1941)*

Recommended:

Thomas Mann, *Germany and the Germans* (Library of Congress, 1945)

ARTS, ARCHITECTURE, AND FILM

3/22: Abstract Expressionism, the Transatlantic Connection

3:30-4:30: Meet at the Weatherspoon Art Museum

Viewing, abstract art with Ann Grimaldi, Curator of Education

Readings:

Serge Guibault, S. *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War**

Recommended:

Stephanie Baron with Sabine Eckmann, *Exiles and Émigrés: The Flight of European Artists from Hitler*

3/29: From Weimar to Hollywood

Reading:

Kristin Thompson, *Herr Lubitsch Goes to Hollywood: German and American Film after World War I*, available as Ebook*

Viewing (in class)

Ernst Lubitsch, *To Be or Not To Be* (1942)

Recommended:

Salka Viertel, *The Kindness of Strangers*

LEGACIES

4/5: Defending and Challenging the Ivory Tower

Readings:

Erwin Panofsky, "In Defense of the Ivory Tower"*

Ernst Kantorowicz, "The Fundamental Issue: Documents and Marginal notes on the University of California Loyalty Oath"*

Norman F. Cantor, "The Nazi Twins: Percy Ernst Schramm and Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz," in *Inventing the Middle Ages**

Sign up for paper conferences

4/12: Exiles Writing History: The Writing of Exile History

Readings:

Steven Aschheim, "The Émigré Historians and the Making of German Cultural History"*

Philipp Stelzel, "Working Toward a Common Goal? American Views on German Historiography and German-American Scholarly Relations during the 1960s," *Central European History* 41 (2008)*

Recommended:

Hartmut Lehmann and James J. Sheehan, eds. *An Interrupted Past: German-Speaking Refugee Historians in the United States After 1933*

paper conferences

4/19: No Class

paper conferences

Monday, April 25: Final Paper Due by 5pm, MHRA 2117