

CULTURE, SOCIETY AND POLITICS OF GERMAN SPEAKING COUNTRIES

IRE214

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Office Hours: Wednesday 12-14 or by appointment

Credits: 4 ECTS points

Course Description

This interdisciplinary course provides students with an extensive introduction to the three largest German-speaking societies in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. During the semester, we will review and discuss specific social, political, and cultural events occurring in the last century that highly affected the different German-speaking countries. Contemporary political developments will also be discussed and evaluated against the background of historical processes. Among the various topics included in the course are: European politics and world wars; the German split and reunification; social diversity and contemporary minority culture.

Course Objectives

Students will become familiar with histories, politics and cultural diversity in the German-speaking countries. Students will gain insights into ideas, trends and discourses that have shaped the contemporary German, Austrian and Swiss societies. Gaining relevant knowledge would enable students to discuss similarities and differences as well as analyze current events in a larger spectrum (the future of the EU, rise of the political right, etc.).

Grades

Grades will be based on two quizzes (40%), a final exam (60%). Students are expected to read the required literature for each lecture and to attend the lectures. Successful completion of the course requires the successful completion of **BOTH** grade components.

Quizzes

Upon completion of the Germany and Austria sections of the course, a summarize quiz will be held in class. Each quiz will include 10 multiple-choice questions and 2 open questions. **Please make sure not to miss the quizzes as they cannot be repeated or taken in a different date.**

Exam

A final exam will be held in three different dates towards the end of the semester. While students only need to take the test ONCE, they are free to choose whether to take it in late December, mid January or early February. The exact exam dates will be posted on IS during the semester and no later than week 10. Please note that students need to register for a specific exam date vis the IS. Further information concerning the exam (structure, duration) will be given in class towards the end of the semester.

General Notes

This course is offered in English with all readings and discussions in this language. Don't worry if English is not your native language- minor linguistic errors will not affect the assessment of your work. Even though this is a lecture and not a seminar your active participation in class is expected and particularly valued. After every class, the power-point presentation used will be uploaded to the IS.

Important dates

No session => 9.10.2019

Quiz I => 13.11. 2019

Quiz II => 27.11.2019

Final Exam =>

Course plan

The course will start in the second week of the semester.

Session 1, September 25th: General Introduction

Course's general framework: Structure, goals, requirements etc. General introduction to the course' topic, preliminary discussion.

Questions for discussion:

1. Your experiences visiting/studying in and previous knowledge regarding the course' topic;
2. What are the similarities/differences between the German speaking countries? Are they more similar or distinct?

Assigned Reading

Germany's country profile, Germany's media profile, Germany's country timeline (BBC)

Session 2, October 2nd: Introduction to Germany, German Federalism

Facts and figures, German federalism, political parties, education system, economy, foreign relations, army, historical turning points, Germany and the EU.

Assigned Reading

Gunlicks, A. (2003). The Länder and German Federalism. Manchester University Press (Chapters 1, 2, 12).

Fulbrook, M. (1992). The divided nation: a history of Germany, 1918-1990. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Chapter 1).

Further Reading

Gunlicks, A. (2003). The Länder and German Federalism. Manchester University Press (Chapters 3, 8, 10).

Berg-Schlosser, D., & Rytlewski, R. (Eds.). (1993). Political culture in Germany. Palgrave Macmillan, London (Chapter 18).

Session 3, October 9th: Marks, Hegel and Luther's Reformation- No session!

Marks, Hegel, Martin Luther's protest writing and reformation.

*** No session will be held in class. However, the assigned reading will be included in the quiz and final exam.

Assigned Reading

Thornhill, C. (2007). German Political Philosophy: The Metaphysics of Law. Routledge. (Chapters 1+ 5).

Further Reading

Sharpe, L., & Lesley, S. (1991). Friedrich Schiller: drama, thought and politics. Cambridge University Press.

Zipes, J. (2014). Grimm Legacies: The Magic Spell of the Grimms' Folk and Fairy Tales. Princeton University Press (Introduction + Chapter 1).

Session 4, October 16th: Political History and Political Thought Between World Wars

WWI, Weimar republic, WWII, Fascism, Nazism and the Holocaust.

Assigned Reading

Fulbrook, M. (1992). *The divided nation: a history of Germany, 1918-1990*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Chapters 2-4).

Thornhill, C. (2007). *German Political Philosophy: The Metaphysics of Law*. Routledge (Chapter 9).

Further Reading

Fulbrook, M. (1992). *The divided nation: a history of Germany, 1918-1990*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Chapter 6).

Pulzer, P. G. (1995). *German Politics, 1945-1995*. Oxford University Press.

Alexander, J. (2004). *Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany: the 'fascist' style of rule*. Routledge.

Session 5, October 23: German Unification and the Question of 'National Identity'

Communism and democracy in divided Germany during the Cold War, German unification

Assigned Reading

Anderson, J. (1999). *German unification and the union of Europe: the domestic politics of integration policy*. Cambridge University Press (Chapter 2).

Fulbrook, M. (1992). *The divided nation: a history of Germany, 1918-1990*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Chapters 12 and 14).

Further Reading

Fulbrook, M. (1992). *The divided nation: a history of Germany, 1918-1990*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Chapters 7, 8 and 13).

Anderson, J. (1999). *German unification and the union of Europe: the domestic politics of integration policy*. Cambridge University Press (Chapter 7).

Berg-Schlosser, D., & Rytlewski, R. (Eds.). (1993). *Political culture in Germany*. Palgrave Macmillan, London (Chapter 17).

Session 6, November 6th: German Minorities in Contemporary Times

Turkish life in contemporary Germany, Afro-German cultural predicaments, The refugee crisis and its' effect on the German society, contemporary extremism and Neo-Nazis.

Assigned Reading

Alba, R., Schmidt, P., & Wasmer, M. (Eds.). (2004). *Germans or foreigners? Attitudes toward ethnic minorities in post-reunification Germany*. Springer (Chapter 1).

Vollmer, B., & Karakayali, S. (2017). The Volatility of the Discourse on Refugees in Germany. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 16(1-2), 118–139.

Further Reading

Ehrkamp, P. (2005). Placing identities: Transnational practices and local attachments of Turkish immigrants in Germany. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration studies*, 31(2), 345-364.

Wright, M. M. (2003). Others-from-within from without: Afro-German Subject Formation and the Challenge of a Counter-Discourse. *Callaloo*, 26(2), 296-305.

Session 7, November 13th: Introduction to Austria, Culture & Religion + Quiz I

Introduction to Austria: facts and figures, political structure, education system, the Austrian economy, foreign relations, army, Austria and the EU, Culture, religion and historical turning points.

Short quiz covering everything we learned about Germany.

Assigned Reading

Austria country profile, media profile and timeline (BBC).

Allport Alan. Austria. *Modern World Nations*. Chelsea House Pub (May 1, 2002), Chapters 3+5.

Further Reading

Solsten, Eric, and David E. McClave, eds. Austria, a country study. Vol. 550, no. 176. Department of the Army, 1994 (available here: <https://www.loc.gov/item/94021665/>)

Allport Alan. Austria. *Modern World Nations*. Chelsea House Pub (May 1, 2002), Chapters 2+6.

Session 8, November 20st: Austrian National Identity, Politics and Contemporary Minorities

Austrian national identity migration and minorities.

Assigned Reading

Thaler, P. (2001). The ambivalence of identity: The Austrian experience of nation-building in a modern society. Purdue University Press (Chapter 1).

Böse, M., Haberböllner, R., & Koldas, A. (2001). Mapping Minorities and their Media: The National Context–Austria. Research paper, Project EMTEL II, Diasporic Minorities and their Media in the EU.

Wets, J. (2006). The Turkish community in Austria and Belgium: The challenge of integration. *Turkish Studies*, 7(1), 85-100.

Further Reading

Thaler, P. (2001). The ambivalence of identity: The Austrian Experience of Nation Building in a

Modern Society. Purdue University Press (Chapters 2 and 3).

Hemetek, U. (2010). The music of minorities in Austria: conflict and intercultural strategies in Applied Ethnomusicology: Historical and Contemporary Approaches, 182.

Session 9, November 27th: Introduction to Switzerland + Quiz II

Facts and Figures, system of government and parties, education system, the Swiss economy, foreign relations, Army, Switzerland and the EU.

Short quiz covering everything we learned about Austria.

Assigned Reading

Austria country profile, media profile and timeline (BBC).

Kriesi, H., & Trechsel, A. H. (2008). The politics of Switzerland: Continuity and Change in a Consensus Democracy (Chapter 1).

Further Reading

Fahrni, D. (2003). An outline history of Switzerland: from the origins to the present day.

Church, C. H. (Ed.). (2007). Switzerland and the European Union: a close, contradictory and misunderstood relationship. Routledge (Chapter 1).

Kriesi, H., & Trechsel, A. H. (2008). The politics of Switzerland: Continuity and change in a consensus democracy (Chapters 5 + 6).

Session 10, December 4th: Direct Democracy, Federalism & Political Stability

Swiss Politics: Political tradition, institutions and parties, why is Swiss politics so stable?

Assigned Reading

Feld, L. P., & Kirchgässner, G. (2000). Direct democracy, political culture, and the outcome of economic policy: a report on the Swiss experience. *European Journal of Political Economy*, 16(2), 287-306.

Linder, W., & Vatter, A. (2001). Institutions and outcomes of Swiss federalism: The role of the cantons in Swiss politics. *West European Politics*, 24(2), 95-122.

Kriesi, H., & Trechsel, A. H. (2008). The politics of Switzerland: Continuity and change in a consensus democracy (Chapter 4).

Further Reading

Kriesi, H., & Trechsel, A. H. (2008). The politics of Switzerland: Continuity and change in a consensus democracy (Chapter 3, 5, 6).

Schoch, B. (2000). Switzerland-a model for solving nationality conflicts? Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, Report No. 54/2000.

Session 11, December 11th: Comparative Analysis

Political competencies, structure and dispute resolutions- comparative analysis.

Assigned Reading

Lehmann W. Attribution of Powers and Dispute Resolution in Selected Federal Systems. European Parliament Directorate-General for Research (working paper) 10-2002 (Chapters 3+4).

Kriesi, H., Grande, E., Lachat, R., Dolezal, M., Bornschie, S., & Frey, T. (2008). West European politics in the age of globalization (Vol. 6). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Chapter 13).

Further Reading

Kriesi, H., Grande, E., Lachat, R., Dolezal, M., Bornschie, S., & Frey, T. (2008). West European politics in the age of globalization (Vol. 6). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Chapter 12).

Leidinger, H., Moritz K., Moser K. (2010) Streitbare Brüder: Österreich: Deutschland / Kurze Geschichte einer schwierigen Nachbarschaft (Quarrelsome Brothers: A brief history of a difficult neighborhood) St. Pölten 2010: Residenz Verlag.

Session 12, December 18th: Final Session

Summary and concluding remarks, the final exam, feedback.

Discussion:

1. Revisiting the questions presented in the first session.
2. Potential political developments in the near future.

Assigned Reading

Please review the course materials and prepare questions!