

# Berlin Program Summer Workshop **GERMANY LOOKS EAST**

JUNE 2013 | REPORT



**Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies  
Germany Looks East**

**Report on the Second Berlin Program Summer Workshop  
June 20 - 21, 2013, Freie Universität Berlin**

**Introduction**

The Berlin Program Summer Workshop has quickly come to constitute an emergent tradition: born out of discussions amongst participants in the BP's 25th Anniversary Alumni Conference held at the Freie Universität in the summer of 2011, the workshop now regularly features the opportunity for scholars of German Studies from institutions all over North America and elsewhere to exchange their work in the German capital.<sup>1</sup> In line with the Call for Papers, this year's workshop - "Germany looks East" - focused on different dimensions of German-speaking Europe's relationship to "the East," a reference-point multiply examined and challenged in workshop contributions. On behalf of all workshop participants, the organizing committee would like to thank the Freie Universität Berlin for continuing to support the important Berlin Program and for its hospitality. We also thank the Berlin Program's academic coordinator Karin Goihl for her continued outstanding support.

**Opening Session**

Karin Goihl opened the two-day assembly by extending a warm welcome to all and by sharing information about the Berlin Program and the workshop's origin and structure. One of the members of the organizing committee, Matthew Miller, followed Karin Goihl to highlight the workshop's agenda. Building on the topic's conceptualization outlined in the Call for Papers and the study of participants' previously circulated papers, his remarks aimed at providing an overview of the inquiry's general themes. In what follows, this overview has been redacted to reflect some of the work accomplished during our assembly.

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<sup>1</sup> As co-organizer April Eisman noted in her opening remarks, the workshop this summer brought together papers by scholars working not only in the US, but also in Germany, England, Wales and Hungary. The speakers ranged from doctoral students to full professors, and represent both small colleges and large universities. She was also happy to report that we are almost evenly divided in terms of gender - which is the focus of her current book *Women Artists in East Germany* - with nine men and seven women offering papers over the course of the two days.

Given the relative historical and geographic fixity of the western borders of German-speaking Europe and Europe as a whole, it is clearly the fluidity of Europe's eastern boundary that has given rise to much contestation and travesty - but also potential. As the historian Robin Okey has written:

whereas the linguistic border between German and Romance speech is the most stable in Europe, that between German and Slav has been the most fluid. It is thus the central/eastern divide which has become the most important of all European regional relationships, behind which lies the fraught encounter of the powerful German nation with its Slav, Magyar and Baltic neighbors.<sup>2</sup>

The continued eastward expansion of the European Union, now into more and more Danubian countries in the southeast (with Croatia having joined in 2013), the openness of Europe's relationship to Russia, the futures of still transitioning "Balkan" states in the wake of Yugoslavia's violent disintegration, the perpetual privileging of perspectives of "Core European" countries<sup>3</sup> to the exclusion of Eastern European perspectives all demonstrate the timeliness of the workshop's inquiry as well as German Studies' most recent "turn." From a contemporary standpoint, the question of German-speaking Europe's relation to the East provides an opportunity for reexamining *mögliche Spielräume der Europäisierung* amidst continuing inner-European tensions. At the same time, our inquiry was not merely motivated by concerns of the present, but rather explored, in detail, various historical chapters of German-speaking Europe's unwieldy relationship to "the East" as far back as the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with attention to migration patterns, such as the Saxons in Transylvania, reaching back much further still. This work of historical reconstruction and analysis demonstrated the relativity and longstanding perspectival embeddedness of all geographic distinctions that will bear on future European possibilities also. The image selected by BP technology wizard Dominik Fungipani for the workshop's program brochure is entirely relevant in this regard: Caspar David Friedrich's "Wanderer above the Sea of Fog," the reproduction of which Dominik surreptitiously reversed, underscores both the self-

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<sup>2</sup> Okey, Robin. "Central Europe/Eastern Europe: Behind the Definitions." *Past & Present* no. 137 (11, 1992): 102-133: 102-103.

<sup>3</sup> This phrase is lifted from Jürgen Habermas' conception included Germany, France, and the Benelux countries. See Habermas, "February 15, Or, What Binds Europeans Together: Plea for a Common Foreign Policy, Beginning in Core Europe." *Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe: Transatlantic Relations after the Iraq War*, Daniel Levy, Max Pensky, and John Torpey, eds. (New York: Verso, 2005).

referential quality of any view “into the foreign” and the extent to which this relationship is often clouded by distortions incumbent upon one’s perspectival positionality.<sup>4</sup> Various concrete case studies presented at the workshop demonstrated the contingency, but also pliability of processes of cultural, geographic, and political “distinction-making” (*Unterscheidungsvermögen*). The distinction between east and west (as Berlin Wall, as Viennese *porta orientis*, as linguistic divides between Germanic/Slavic or Germanic/Magyar peoples, as the geo-political-cultural divide between Europe/Russia, etc.) proves to be part of a wide-ranging *Gefälle*<sup>5</sup> of evaluative possibilities, so often wielded and abused in the discourse of cultural and political power plays. Indeed, “East vs. West” has been accompanied by conceptions of center and periphery, inner and outer – and the civilized vs. the barbaric. Because such distinctions prove contingent upon observational processes, no spatial delineation of “the East” (such as “borderlands,” “Balkans,” “Russia,” the “Orient,” etc.) is normatively tenable, except as reflection on historical categories.<sup>6</sup> To Okey’s lines above one might add a recent – and succinct – formulation of Arjun Appadurai’s, who observes that history constitutes geography to begin with, and not, as G. W. F. Hegel and later Carl Schmidt would have had it, the other way around.<sup>7</sup> From “the East’s” status as a kind of vanishing point of western perspectives stems the imperative that cultural and geographic distinctions be subjected to critical scrutiny and analysis of the kind delivered by virtually all the workshop papers.

One touchstone for this work is Karl Schlögel’s now slightly dated, but still timely *Die Mitte liegt ostwärts: Europa im Übergang*, a collection of essays published in 2002, in which the German scholar of Eastern Europe, writing for a German audience, gently, but firmly polemicizes against Germany’s too facile neglect of its culturally and politically diverse neighborhood. Mindful of the longstanding historically asymmetrical relationship that Germany has had with Eastern Europe, Schlögel warns of the epistemological trappings of a

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<sup>4</sup> Colin Lang, workshop discussion.

<sup>5</sup> Larson Powell, workshop discussion.

<sup>6</sup> In the sense of “historical region” as used by Okey, 105-6. Cf. also workshop participant Winson Chu’s paper and references to the “Phantom Borders” project at <http://phantomgrenzen.eu/>. How spectral are borders’ *Nachleben?*

<sup>7</sup> Appadurai, Arjun, *The Future as Cultural Fact: Essays on the Global Condition* (New York: Verso, 2013), 66. See also, as most apt to several of the papers examination of German cultural identity in Eastern Europe, Appadurai, “Sovereignty without territory,” *Geography of Identity*, Patricia Yaeger, ed. (Ann Arbor: U. of Michigan P, 1996), especially page 54.

situation in which “das Privileg, die Differenz [in den Ländern der europäischen Mitte] wahrnehmen zu können, einseitig ist. Der Verkehr nach der alten Mitte gleicht bis heute dem in einer Einbahnstrasse.”<sup>8</sup> Working through such imbalances, which are almost always caught up in important processes of valuation, Schlögel suggests that sheer neglect or, alternatively, a recolonizing relation to the East through economic means could be prohibited or at least ameliorated through a critical reconstruction of German orientalism, with a “German Edward Said”<sup>9</sup> to see such a project through. While Schlögel’s approach would presumably need to be supplemented with an account of the practical challenges underlying this relationship in economic terms – including, in my view, a transnational politics and the language of European solidarity – his work certainly goes a long way towards fulfilling what *Die Mitte liegt ostwärts*’ programmatically demands. Indeed, in another appeal that holds equally – I would say even more so in the wake of actually existing socialism’s passing in Europe – Schlögel bridges the gap between his discussion of the epistemological dimensions of the challenges of cultural perception and evaluation and the insufficiently developed account of their political and structural moorings by holding onto the possibility of eroding dichotomies through cultural exchange and exploration:

Wir sind ohne weiteres bereit, den höchsten Preis für die Verarmung unserer Vorstellungswelt zu bezahlen. Allerdings ist die Eindimensionalität des weiten Raums [which Schlögel continually associates with forms of neoliberal Anglo-American modernity] auch weniger aufreibend als die Vieldimensionalität des kleinen mittleren Europas.<sup>10</sup>

Whereby it is clear that a reawakening of the imagination can take place in and through grappling with Europe’s own inner diversity. While Schlögel soberly disassociates such interest from any claims about the tenability of past utopias, I believe his project very much overlaps with the need to comb the diverse histories anchored in a formerly socialist Eastern Europe that the miscarried discourse of

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<sup>8</sup> Schlögel, Karl, *Die Mitte liegt ostwärts: Europa im Übergang* (Munich: Hanser, 2002), 21.

<sup>9</sup> Schlögel, 247. See also Suzanne Marchand’s *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010) to which Karin Goihl just directed my attention in advance of Marchand’s participation in a panel discussion on “Deutscher Orientalismus - Zwischen Kolonialgeschichte und Antibürgerlichem Denken” at the *Haus der Kulturen der Welt*, Berlin:

<[https://www.hkw.de/de/programm/2013/salon\\_fuer\\_aesthetische\\_experimente/veranstaltungen\\_83194/veranstaltungsdetail\\_91636.php](https://www.hkw.de/de/programm/2013/salon_fuer_aesthetische_experimente/veranstaltungen_83194/veranstaltungsdetail_91636.php)>.

<sup>10</sup> Schlögel, 56.

utopia also created. Without such work, the legacies of the so-called second world will continue to be neglected at the peril of our own futures.

Working through the east, to cite workshop participant Larson Powell's similarly titled paper, is a process underway. The multifaceted and catastrophic history of German-speaking Europe's relation to the East yields legacies still underexplored. To canvass just a few historical sites thereof one can point to the settlements of the Baltic East by the earliest documented Prussians, subsequent chapters of Eastern Europe's colonization by Germans under conditions of early modernity, the eastward reach of the Danube monarchy and its supernational myth, the polysemous and long contested concepts of *Mittleuropa*/Central Europe, the Wilhelmine Empire's colonial forays into German East Africa, the travesties of the Nazi Germany's imperial eastward incursions in war and genocide – and the cultural history of the GDR in the context of actually existing socialism. The workshops' case studies derived from these and related chapters of a fraught relationship.

In a last follow-up to the Call for Papers: one can grasp geographic and historical distinctions as repercussions of procedures of self-definition and orientation (of individuals and nations, as well as fields of academic inquiry) that are fundamentally relational in nature. As many of the contributions explored in more detail than one can possibly capture in an overview, inner and outer differentiations abound to demonstrate “nesting orientalisms”<sup>11</sup> all over German-speaking Europe, Eastern Europe, between them, and between the whole ensemble and an external Eastern other, be it Ottoman, Russian, or another other, including, as co-organizer April Eisman noted, a Far East entirely omitted from the territory covered in the workshop. Omissions notwithstanding, the critical examination of such scenarios of inner and outer differentiation goes a long way towards dispelling the myth of cultural homogeneity supposedly (i.e. traditionally) captured by the concept of nation, whereby conceptions of (culturally inherited) national characteristics served as a condition of belonging to the state – and to a great extent retain such power until this day.<sup>12</sup> Discussions about the constructedness of national

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<sup>11</sup> Bakic-Hayden, Milica, "Nesting Orientalism: The Case of Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (Winter 95, 1995): 917-931.

<sup>12</sup> I paraphrase here from Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, and Susanne Zantop, eds., *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and its Legacy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 6 and passim. Due to the organization of German Studies around the concepts of language and nation, the field always risks, at the level of method and hence insight, a recursive iteration of its defined objects of analysis. Ideally, the

communities are by no means new to us. But academic work that investigates such phenomena hardly determines everyday perceptions which appear to be rekindling something of a nationalist orientation in the New Europe. In this regard, the line above about *mögliche Spielräume der Europäisierung* is highly ambivalent, since all turns on what “Europeanization” entails. This, too, is fraught territory. In the previously paraphrased introduction to *The Imperialist Imagination*, the editors cite Andreas Huyssen’s critical stab at Germany’s turn to the European Union as a detour of Germanness and all the trappings that that category entails:

The decision to opt for a European identity in order to avoid the Germanness in question, so typical of postwar intellectuals, was and remains a delusion. ... Rather than representing an alternative to the nation, Europe was always its very condition of its possibility, just as it enabled empire and colonialism.<sup>13</sup>

Still more ominously, Maria Todorova, in the 2009 afterword to her magisterial *Imagining the Balkans*, has argued that

what we are witnessing today in the geographic Balkans—namely, the eradication of the final vestiges of a historical legacy of ethnic multiplicity and coexistence, and its replacement by institutionalized ethnically homogenous bodies—may well be an advanced stage of the final Europeanization of the region, and the end of the historic Balkans and the Ottoman legacy.<sup>14</sup>

In both instances, then, Europeanization signifies not the *Aufhebung* of the nation-state, but the consolidating implementation of its traditional conception, a process driven home again and again with violence and the state’s monopoly of the same. And yet, if the most interesting aspects of European culture have been and continue to be fundamentally relational and thus also “transnational” in some sense, and if the relational processes of the self-constitution of the nation and the national can be grasped in terms of the play of *différance* whereby the national itself no longer enjoys any status of priority (in the old Aristotelian sense of this term), but appears rather derivative of a relationship, i.e. of a co-existence not yet

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workshop’s topic turns this limitation into an opportunity for innovation, without being able to jettison entirely disciplinary restrictions that would hold quite differently in, say, the field of comparative literature or forms of interdisciplinary studies insofar as these can be practiced as culturally egalitarian undertakings.

<sup>13</sup> Huyssen, cited in *The Imperialist Imagination*, 6.

<sup>14</sup> Todorova, Maria Nikolaeva, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 199.

subjected to the dictates of identitarianism,<sup>15</sup> then, at least conceptually speaking, the phenomenon of “Europeanization” can still feature – at the level of myth, but also at the level of those cultural practices that would bring forth such myth – the aspiration to craft a future that would redeem (*einlösen*) what the reconstruction of missed past opportunities suggests as history’s *unabgegoltene Mitgift*: a peaceable, transnational, and multiethnic future. To be sure, such a projection presupposes work on other questions. Is the nation-state and its structural role within the European Union part of the problem? Must it prove an arbiter of Europe’s future? What could figure as alternative arbiters to guard against deference to the institutionalized politics of the status quo and/or “the (neoliberal) economy”? The reference to “cultural production” will by itself be too nebulous to suggest an alternative.<sup>16</sup> Other structural transformations would surely be necessary, such as the reconstitution of European politics along transnationally political and European parliamentary lines, a step that by itself is no guarantee for a democraticization of the EU. Yet Huyssen and Todorova’s lines cited above are commentaries on the trajectory of European history in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They may not hold for the 21<sup>st</sup>, in which the category of the nation continues to wane at the level of perception and reality of people’s lives and self-definitions and in which the most interesting forms of creative culture – in theater, film, and the visual arts – appear increasingly postnational and thus also represent a social laboratory for Europe’s multiethnic future.

In lieu of being able to outline any further path out of such challenges here, it can hopefully suffice to underscore the importance granted to the irreducible role played by culture in the workshop’s presentations. By culture, I mean the making thereof in the widest sense of cultural production and thereby aim to point to the public activities of intellectuals, artists, writers, musicians, publicists, even politicians. Notably, in its enframing constructions of self and other, culture’s role can prove highly ambivalent. The sheer constitution and manipulability of interpersonal relationships provides occasion for much contestation in terms of valuation: for the hostile exacerbation as well as utopian celebration of difference; for the preservation of now untimely legacies as well as their forced and often all too facile abjection (“post-89”) amidst

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<sup>15</sup> These lines intend an Adornian *Miteinander des Verschiedenen*, rather than Heidegger’s conception of *Mitsein*.

<sup>16</sup> See the work of the European philosopher Étienne Balibar on this, who advocates for Europe’s need for its own fictive identity in *We, the People of Europe?: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004), 9 and *passim*.

the inauguration of an eternal, but futureless present. Many of the papers led us through the thorns of such paths, out of which, given the cordial nature of the exchange, we re-emerged perhaps tired, but minimally scathed, and happy to have at least enriched an inquiry over the course of which we dispelled a few of German-speaking Europe's – and our own – “orientalisms” ... for more, peruse the panel reports and take-aways below.

Matthew Miller, Berlin, 5. July, 2013

### **Panel 1: The Former East**

Moderator: Karrin Hanshew, Michigan State University

Paul Niebrzydowski, The Ohio State University

#### **Das Deutsche Polenbild: Historicizing German Depictions of Poles, 1919–1934**

Winson Chu, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

#### **Lost and Found: “The East” and Hierarchies of Germanness in Poland after the First World War**

The first panel of the Berlin Program Summer Workshop focused on Germany's closest eastern neighbor: Poland. Paul Niebrzydowski's paper, “Das Deutsche Polenbild: Historicizing German Depictions of Poles, 1919-1934,” examined the ways Poles were depicted in German propaganda and press, and the changes to these depictions. Niebrzydowski took Gustav Freytag's 19<sup>th</sup> century novel *Soll und Haben* as a baseline, contrasting Freytag's poor, backward Poles with the trope of Poles as dangerous predators that emerged with Polish reunification and independence, and noting the continued portrayal of Poles as primitive and wild. The Pole-as-predator trope, in turn, formed a contrast to the strategic depiction of Józef Piłsudski that coincided with the brief warming of Polish-German relations during the early Nazi years.

Winson Chu's chapter, “National Socialism and Hierarchical Regionalism: The German Minorities in Interwar Poland,” examined competition and conflict between German minorities in post-World War I Poland, introducing the concept of “hierarchical regionalism” to complement Celia Applegate's “resistant” and “accommodating” regionalisms. Chu described the way in which Germans from western Poland (i.e., from former German territories) tried to maintain their dominance in the face of competition from other German populations, most notably the *Jungdeutsche Partei*, based in former Austrian Silesia. This competition for funds and influence “mobilized and radicalized the minority.”

Questions and discussion touched on topics such as the general trope of eastern wilderness, and its identification with danger, the effect of anti-Polish propaganda on the Polish minority in Germany, the legal situation of the German minority in Poland, and the idea of competition for resources as a radicalizing factor.

Nicholas Sveholm, Berlin Program Fellow 2012/13

**Panel 2: The Cold War East**

Moderator: April Eisman, Iowa State University

Jonathan Osmond, Cardiff University

**The Influence of Soviet Socialist Realism on painting in the early GDR: The Example of Horst Schlossar**

Bill Waltz, University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Claiming Cultural Heritage in East Germany: The Soviet Influence and German Pedigree of the Bitterfeld Path**

Christina Gerhardt, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

**Looking East: East Germany in Christian Petzold's *Barbara* (2012)**

Silke Wagler, State Art Collections Dresden

**East (German) Experience in Contemporary German Art**

The second panel analyzed the East German experience through various artistic practices: painting, literature, film, and artworks of mixed media. Jonathan Osmond presented the art of Dresden painter Horst Schlossar in the larger context of Soviet socialist realism. Schlossar depicted many rural and industrial scenes regarding workers' everyday experiences. This style and subject matter was politically promoted as a replacement for earlier schools of German formalism and naturalism. However, Schlossar's work does not rigidly fit this mold—especially in his representations of subjects from the GDR's Sorbian minority—exemplifying how East German artists carved their own space within the Soviet artistic vision.

Bill Waltz discussed the treatment of GDR literature in the wake of the Bitterfeld Path, which encouraged the integration of workers with the arts and called for the formation of a uniquely East German socialist literature. Although an infrastructure of cultural groups and activities was established, Waltz's analysis of correspondence between governing bodies of cultural policy found that meeting the Bitterfeld Conference's objectives was not a smooth process and that claims of an integrated worker/artist environment appeared to be overstated.

Christina Gerhardt investigated how Christian Petzold's film *Barbara* deals with the theme of *Heimat*, how it contrasts with previous depictions of the GDR in film, and as a departure for Petzold and the Berlin School. *Barbara* is an example of post-*Wende* filmmaking that displays the "return of the real" in "Neo-neo-realism," depicting people in everyday circumstances yet straying from "heritage cinema." It plays with genre, especially melodrama, to engage the viewer and foreground characters' emotional dramas in addition to or above political context.

Last, Silke Wagler showed how artists in the 1990s-2000s reflected on life in and after the GDR through various mediums, such as paintings, woodcuts, and installations. These works embody East German identity and memory through the themes of the Berlin Wall, altered architectural landscapes, and utopian ideals, as recontextualized in reunified Germany.

Lauren Flood, Berlin Program Fellow 2012/13

## Werkstattbericht

Moderators: Thomas Haakenson, Minneapolis College of Art and Design & Matthew Miller, Colgate University

Martin Treml, Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung Berlin

### **A Topography of Europe's Plural Cultures: Report on a Research Project at the ZfL 2006-2010**

Switching gears mid-afternoon, we had the pleasure of welcoming Martin Treml of Berlin's Center for Literary and Cultural Studies to the BP workshop. A widely published historian of religion and Jewish Studies, Treml's main fields of research include theories and figures of Western religions, German-Jewish cultural history since 1750, and the reception of antiquity. In his work at the Center, Treml has overseen and coordinated a number of important research and editorial projects that have strengthened interdisciplinary studies in the Humanities in line with the Center's programmatic and productive methodological combination of literary (philological) and cultural (*kulturwissenschaftliche*) studies. Treml presented the Center's "Topographie pluraler Kulturen Europas, in Rücksicht auf die ›Verschiebung Europas nach Osten‹," a research project directly related to the workshop's theme and one that constitutes a fascinating contribution to the field of European studies.

The Center's *Topographie* project, the main phase of which was conducted in 2006-2009, focuses on the multifaceted semantics of the European East, embraces Europe's cultures in their plurality (including their religious plurality), delivers a topographical approach to exemplary sites (from Berlin to Beirut, from Vilnius to Istanbul), examines cultural transfers between perceived centers and peripheries, and attends to the different ways in which cultures are ordered in the parameters of *Textordnungen*, *Bilderordnungen*, *Kleiderordnungen*, *Affektordnungen*, *Grundordnungen*. Treml explained how the interdisciplinary approach signaled in this last series has served to unlock Europe's multiple and interrelated cultural traditions in the myriad forms in which they appear. Historical sensitivity to metaphorical usages of geographic and cultural concepts, an interest in the legacies of empires within Europe and a focus on exemplary sites as *lieux de memoire* further refine this work. Moreover, while acknowledging the force of (Weberian and other) conceptions of the "normative validity" of the Western Europe's model of modernity, Treml explained the project's commitment to a pluralistic conception of multiple modernities on the continent as a way to offset imbalances between West and East by undercutting this schematic dichotomy. To this end, the genealogically grounded *Kulturwissenschaft* exemplarily represented by this project does more than merely describe or explain cultures, but also contributes to a more complex analysis and more adequate understanding of contemporary

European challenges.<sup>17</sup> Challenging questions in the Q&A generated a still sharper sense of the project's relation to contemporary epistemes and the inner-workings of research initiatives at the Center. For more, we can recommend the first substantive publication from this project, from which I cite one passage from the introduction on imaginary topographies:

Orte sind nicht nur Gegenstand der Geographie. Sie sind nicht nur auf Landkarten eingezeichnet, sondern auch in literarischen oder filmischen Fiktionen, politischen Visionen, individuellen wie kulturellem Gedächtnis. Die geographischen Orte erhalten in der imaginären Überformung meist erst ihre spezifische Bedeutung. In Fiktion wie Politik werden sie um neue Bedeutungsspektren angereichert, in der Rhetorik dienen sie als Erinnerungsstützen, und kulturgeschichtlich haben sie eine identitätsstiftende Funktion für einzelne Individuen wie ganze Gemeinschaften.<sup>18</sup>

Matthew Miller

### **Panel 3: Judaism as/and the East**

Moderator: Thomas Haakenson, Minneapolis College of Art and Design

Leo Riegert, Kenyon College

#### **Subjects and Agents of Empire: German Jews in Post-Colonial Perspective**

Joy Calico, Vanderbilt University

#### **Vienna Looks East: Arnold Schoenberg's A Survivor from Warsaw (1951)**

The third panel, "Judaism as/and the East," brought together two studies on Jewish intellectuals, demonstrating their inclusion and exclusion within Austria-Hungary while showing how they understood their place in society.

In the first paper, "Subjects and Agents of Empire: German Jews in Post-Colonial Perspective", Leo Riegert, Jr., an Assistant Professor at Kenyon College specializing in German-Jewish Literature, argued that while there are a handful of studies on "colonial fantasies" about Jews, scholars need to examine works by Jewish writers more thoroughly. With that goal, Riegert analyzed Karl Emil Franzos' "Markttag in Barnow" to show how Jewish authors in the Hapsburg Empire constructed perceptions of culture and space particularly in

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<sup>17</sup> Trembl, Martin and Sigrid Weigel, "Preprint, Nr. 3: Topographie pluraler Kulturen Europas in Rücksicht auf die ‚Verschiebung Europas nach Osten,‘" June 28, 2013: <<http://www.zfl-berlin.org/europa-osten.html>>

<sup>18</sup> Esther Kilchmann, Andreas Pflitsch, Franziska Thun-Hohenstein (Hg.), *Topographie pluraler Kulturen: Europa von Osten her gesehen* (Berlin: Kulturverlag Kadmos, 2011), 18.

regards to the 'East'. He showed that Franzos' work was not actually subversive, but instead presented a fluctuating narrative with a highly constructed 'insider' and 'outsider' which depicted a civilized Europe and an 'other' exotic place. To explain this, Riegert turned to post-colonial theorist Homi Bhabha's theories on mimicry and mocking to show how Franzos simultaneously engaged with and struggled against his social and cultural surroundings.

Joy Calico, Associate Professor of Musicology at Vanderbilt University, presented the second paper "Vienna looks East", discussing her current research on Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw* (1951). This paper examined the issue of the remigration of ideas through an analysis of the lead-up to and critical reception of Schoenberg's 12-tone composition. Using this event as a central point, Calico analyzed the relationship between Vienna and its former Jewish citizens in both directions and the former's acknowledgement of the Second World War. In so doing, she demonstrated the continually problematic relationship many Jews had with their former home, the refusal of the Viennese intellectual society to deal with its own Nazi past, and the place of the individual in a tumultuous (artistic) society.

Brittany Lehman, Berlin Program Fellow 2012/13

#### **Panel 4: Thinking East**

Moderator: Matthew Miller, Colgate University

Gábor Gángó, Pázmány Péter Catholic University

#### **Bulwark of the Christianity or a "second America"? Leibniz's East European Perspectives**

Larson Powell, University of Missouri-Kansas City

#### **The Meaning of Working through the East**

Gángó's article and panel comments detail Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz's evolving views of Eastern Europe in the tumultuous latter half of the 17th century. Following the peace of Westphalia in 1648, much of Western and Central Europe was organized against an aggressive Ottoman Empire. The dynamic and uncertain geopolitical situation generated by this conflict, when combined with the rise of a third regional power (Russia), created the physical and conceptual space for a reimagining of "Eastern Europe." According to Leibniz, the "surfacing" of Eastern Europe during this time transformed the space from an ambiguous buffer zone to a region ripe for European cultural colonization. In particular, the kingdoms of Poland and Hungary, which he sometimes referred to as "Polonia Hungariaque," fascinated Leibniz. Gángó situates Leibniz's "Eastern Europe" not as an opposing or barbaric counterpart of "civilized" Western Europe but as a vital conduit of culture and information between Europe and China. During the panel, Gángó mentioned that Leibniz's attempts to linguistically connect China with Europe were not particularly successful but one of Leibniz's critical intellectual contributions may have been his conceptual framing of China as a civilized "anti-Europe." This allowed Eastern Europe to be understood as part of a global "harmonious contour" linked closely with Western Europe rather than as a barbaric backwater.

Powell's work investigates the evolving nature of Holocaust memory following the end of the Cold War. As Powell mentioned during the panel discussion, this particular paper is an opening to a larger project on Germans and Eastern Europe. Consequently, instead of presenting a fully developed thesis, he traces two historical models of Holocaust understanding. The first is put forth by Theodor Adorno and the second by Timothy Snyder. According to Powell, the difference between them, "is not only one of the Cold War and its aftermath, but also between two different epochal types of representation of memory." In particular, Powell highlights the "spatial" differences between Adorno's "cultural memory" of the Holocaust centered on the "negative space" of Auschwitz and Snyder's newer analysis which conceptually integrates the Holocaust into the wider devastation of Eastern Europe's "Bloodlands." Powell's analysis seems to chart a middle course between these two understandings. While many have argued that Snyder's controversial critique has gone too far in relativizing the Holocaust, Powell notes that a completely dislocated understanding of the Holocaust ignores the sources, perspectives, and the very real landscapes of "the East." With his measured acceptance of the so-called "spatial turn," Powell hopes that "memory culture" will not serve as a barrier to a greater focus on historical and geographical context in our understanding of the Holocaust.

Matthew Valji, Berlin Program Fellow 2012/13

#### **Panel 5: Other Easts**

Moderator: Jenny Wuestenberg, Freie Universität Berlin

Michelle Moyd, Indiana University

**Soldiering and *Kismet*: African Colonial Soldiers and Military Colonial Imaginaries in German East Africa, 1890-1918**

Holly Brining, The University of Texas at Austin

**Beyond the *Hakawati*: Creativity and Its Consequences in the Novels of Rafik Schami**

Jennifer Miller, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

**Cold War Borders and Suspicious Persons: Turkish 'Guest Workers' Between East and West Berlin through the Eyes of the *Stasi***

In the first presentation of this engrossing panel, Michelle Moyd examined the relationships between officers of the German Schutztruppe in East Africa and the *askari*, the African soldiers who fought for the *Schutztruppe* during the German colonial period. She argued that these relationships were governed by a "military orientalism" in which the knowledge - such as European racial discourses of the time - the *Schutztruppe* brought to East Africa shaped the concrete, daily ways in which they interacted with the *askari*. The examples Moyd gave of these interactions focused on Islamic ideals such as that of *kismet* (fate) and the *ngoma*, a dance that incorporated movements from the military parade. These ideals and practices, for Moyd, became part of a complex negotiation on the role of the *askari* in the colonial order established by the German military, and on the legitimacy of this order for East Africans. In

the discussion of her presentation, Moyd elaborated further on the role gender analysis played in her larger project, and on how the German military - as late-comers to colonialism - viewed its colonial enterprise.

Holly Brining shifted terrain from East Africa to Germany and the fictional Arab worlds of Rafik Schami, a writer who was born in Syria, but spent his adult life in Germany and wrote almost exclusively in German. She focused on the relation between creativity and freedom in two of Schami's novels. Relying on her definition of creativity as "any pursuit that produces something novel and engages the participant intellectually or emotionally," Brining argued that female characters in two of Schami's novels - *Das Geheimnis des Kalligraphen* and *Reise zwischen Nacht und Morgen* - free themselves from oppressive domestic lives as they start the creative enterprise of writing journals. Some male characters in these novels have a similar relation to creativity, but, as Brining pointed out, others misuse their creativity in harmful ways. The conversation focused on the implications of this relation between creativity and freedom, particularly in the context of both the European and Arab settings in which the characters of the novels move.

Jennifer Miller again shifted locations, and told a story of Turkish guest workers who moved between the boundaries separating East and West Berlin with surprising fluidity. Though viewed as suspicious and thus closely tracked by - or eventually collaborating with - the *Stasi*, these Turkish guest workers experienced a degree of what Miller called "social liberty." Access to consumer goods and culture in the West made the Turkish guest workers in Miller's account attractive to East German women. These workers, in turn, built relationships not available to them in West Berlin. Miller presented not only oral history interviews in which Turkish guest workers reported on their success courting East German women, but also *Stasi* reports that testify to the frequency with which guest workers and East German women established long-term relationships across borders. The discussion focused on whether other ethnic groups of guest workers in Berlin, or groups of Turkish women, were also moving across the borders in Cold War Berlin, and on the notions of masculinity underlying the power relations between Turkish guest workers and German men in both the East and West.

Eric Savoth, Berlin Program Fellows 2012/13

#### **Panel 6: The Eastern Other and 'German' Identity**

Moderator: Colin Lang, Virginia Commonwealth University & Berlin Program

Jonathan Kwan, The University of Nottingham

**Transylvanian Saxons and Imperial Germany, 1871-1882: Politics, Culture and the Limits of *Deutschtum***

Nicole Thesz, Miami University

**A Place of Truth: The East in Günter Grass's 'Danzig Trilogy' and post-Wall Novels**

In this panel, Jonathan Kwan and Nicole Thesz explored Eastern Europe's tangled past through the Transylvanian Saxon community between 1871 and 1882 and the "East" in Günter Grass's postwar novels. Kwan examined the repercussions of the founding of the German state on the Saxon community in Austria-Hungary and how the Saxons sought to understand what this changing political and economic climate meant for their long-cherished autonomy. In his examination of writings by two contemporary historians, Wilhelm Wattenbach and Heinrich von Treitschke, Kwan uncovered a variety of responses to the German state and growing nationalist sentiments. He argued that these stances included an attempt to strengthen traditional Saxon privileges within the political climate but that they eventually gave way to increasing nationalist and ethnic demands. Nevertheless, the newly founded German Empire only played a small role in Saxon development of an ethnic German, nationalist narrative.

Alternatively, Thesz contended the ways in which Grass uses Eastern Europe as a place of authenticity and truth in *Hundejahre* (1963), *Ein weites Feld* (1995), and *Die Box* (2008). She demonstrated how the "Eastern" places in Grass's novels, East Germany or Danzig, serve as places that are distinctly different from postwar West Germany. Danzig, which is representative of Eastern Europe, is a complex and guilt-ridden place, often associated with the Nazi past. Nevertheless, the West is a place of exile, lacking the appeal of Grass's home in the East and the location where he witnessed the covering up of what happened in the East during the war. Additionally, Thesz explored how Grass employed East Germany in his work to highlight negative aspects of consumerist West Germany and the superficiality associated with it. Thesz argued that Grass often attributes Eastern European and East German figures as more down-to-earth and willing to confront the lessons of the past.

Julie Ault, Berlin Program Fellows 2012/13

### **Concluding Plenary Discussion**

Moderators: April Eisman, Thomas Haakenson, Matthew Miller

In the wake of the cordial discussions and collaborative spirit animating and accompanying all of the panels in extended Q&A rounds, we returned, at the end, to the beginning, that is, to the Call for Papers, to the citation by Immanuel Kant on the use of metaphoric distinctions for orientation, and to the retrospective reconstruction of what had been accomplished over the busy past 30 or so hours. Co-organizer Tom Haakenson fostered further direct dialogue on precisely this last score by encouraging participants to turn to one another to share their thoughts. This exchange generated further reflections on the workshop topic within the field of German Studies, the field's potential innovations and limitations, the advantages of comparative work and the institutional challenges thereof, the general importance of observational sensitivity, and an analysis of the reasons for territory uncovered, with first stabs at possible areas of focus for next year's workshop. As much of this dialogue has been incorporated into the opening text above as possible.

Thereafter, many participants proceeded to the *Berlinische Galerie* both for lunch at the Otto Dix-Café and to enjoy a tour through the museum for modern and contemporary art's collection. And from co-organizers I gather that a possible focus for next year's workshop is already being discussed: "Virtual German." Stay tuned for more details from the now solid BP network at <http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/bprogram/roundtables/index.html> ...

Matthew Miller, for the organizing committee

### Organizing Committee

**April Eisman** is Associate Professor of Art History at Iowa State University

**Karin Goihl** is Academic Coordinator of the Berlin Program at the Freie Universität Berlin

**Tom Haakenson** is Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Professor of Liberal Arts at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design

**Matthew D. Miller** is Assistant Professor of German at Colgate University in Hamilton, NY

### Berlin Program Activities

The Berlin Program coordinates events in Berlin and North America. Each year, alumni panels and roundtables at the annual German Studies Association conferences address timely topics, e.g.: *Studying Memory: Methodologies and Tools for Research* (2013), *A New Era in German Bevölkerungspolitik? Legacies and Myths in German Discourses on Demography* (2012), *Architectures of Berlin* (2011), *The Visual Arts in Cold War Germany and Beyond* (2010).

With our summer workshops at the Freie Universität Berlin, we seek to create a multidisciplinary platform in the sense of a learning community. This year's topic *Germany Looks East* offered an opportunity to rethink key concepts and premises that link German-speaking Europe and the East. Open to Berlin Program fellows and alumni as well as scholars working in German and European studies, the interdisciplinary setting serves our efforts to strengthen the academic exchange in the field. A similar event is planned for June 2014.

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