

Art and Dictatorship

Jan Thomas Köhler, M.A.

Email Address:	info@fubest.fu-berlin.de
Time Slot:	Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.
Language of Instruction:	English
Contact Hours:	45
ECTS Credits:	6

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to art and politics in the context of dictatorship, focused on the examples of Hitler's Germany, Stalin's USSR, Mussolini's Italy, and Franco's Spain. In the first part of the semester, students will gain an understanding of art in a democratic society by analyzing the art and architecture of the Weimar Republic in Germany.

Official art and architecture in Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union will then be examined, focusing on the works of Albert Speer, Giuseppe Terragni, Arno Breker, and Leni Riefenstahl. Modernist and Jewish artists were persecuted, forced into emigration or deported to concentration camps. Under the Nazi regime in Germany, the exhibition "Degenerate Art" tried to propagate the fascist idea of what art should not be like.

Nazi Art Looting and the difficult and long way to Art Restitution will be examined, focusing on the case of the Dutch art dealer and collector Jacques Goudstikker and the "art collector" Hermann Göring.

Art also served as a medium to commemorate the Holocaust: the memorials at Buchenwald concentration camp or the Holocaust memorial in Berlin are prominent examples. In the course of the semester, students will get an overview of important European art and architecture movements of the early 20th century. In addition, the course aims at providing a deeper understanding of art under totalitarian conditions.

As a complement to the lectures, formal field-trips to historically significant sites and museums constitute an integral component of the course.

Learning Objectives

"Art and Dictatorship" introduces students to the Europe of dictatorships, with special emphasis on the interaction between art and society in various dictatorships. It examines the responsibility of the artist in society and for society and the way politicians dealt with old and contemporary art. A further focus is the processing of experiences of dictatorship in today's memorial structures, with a focus on the situation in Germany, especially in Berlin. Here again, art and the person of the artist play a major role. In the final analysis, the theme of responsibility is key among the learning objectives: the responsibility of today's societies towards their past and the references to today's social and political systems. Taking different points of view – victims, perpetrators, followers – should help to recognize totalitarian structures and dangers in the present.

Student Profile

Should be in their fourth semester of college/university education or beyond.

Assignments and Grading

Attendance and active participation (incl. weekly reading responses): 200 Points

Midterm Exam: 200 Points

Final Exam: 200 Points

Presentation in class or during field trip (max. 10-15 min.): 200 Points

Independent Project Report: 200 Points

Completion of the Midterm Exam as well as the Final Exam is needed for a grade.

FUB Grade	Points of 1,000
1.0	980-1,000
1.3	950-979
1.7	900-949
2.0	850-899
2.3	800-849
2.7	750-799
3.0	700-749
3.3	650-699
3.7	600-649
4.0	500-599
5.0	< 500

Attendance

Attendance in class is mandatory. We also expect you to be punctual out of respect to both your instructor and your fellow students. If you cannot attend class because you are ill, please report sick to the FU-BEST office (info@fubest.fu-berlin.de) and to your instructor by e-mail before class.

Absences are **excused** in case of **illness**; however, for the fifth sick day and every other sick day after that (consecutive or cumulative, counted not per individual course but for the program overall), you will need to turn in a doctor's notice ("Attest" in German) to the FU-BEST office in order for them to count as excused, too.

If you miss an exam due to an excused absence, your instructor and the FU-BEST team will arrange a make-up exam for you; you may also be entitled to a term paper deadline extension. If you, however, do not fulfill all course requirements needed for a grade by the (later) date determined by the program, passing the course is no longer possible.

Please also note that if you miss more than half of a course's sessions (even if due to excused absence), passing the course is no longer possible.

Personal travel and visits by relatives or friends are **not** accepted as reasons for absence (i.e., absences for these reasons always count as unexcused).

Regarding **unexcused** absences, please note the following:

- Any unexcused absence has consequences for at least the participation portion of the grade.
- Two unexcused absences lead to a formal warning and a lowering of the course grade by a fraction.
- Three unexcused absences will result in an "F" (5.0) on the transcript.

An absence for more than half of a particular day's session will be considered an absence for that day.

Literature

Digitized readings posted on the online learning platform Blackboard.

Course Schedule

Calendar	Topics, Readings, etc.
Session 1	<p>Topic: Introduction and presentation of the syllabus and the in class and field trip presentations</p> <p>Introduction — The situation in Germany before 1933: Culture, art and architecture of the Weimar Republic.</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willet, John: The New Sobriety. 1917-1933. Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, London 1978, pp. 72-84 and pp. 90-132. <p>Video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Bauhaus" or "Weimar Berlin".
Session 2	<p>Topic: Art and architecture in fascist Italy and Spain; Art and architecture in Stalin's USSR.</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bowlit, John E.: "Stalin as Isis and Ra: Socialist Realism and the Art of Design," in: The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts, Vol. 24, Design, Culture, Identity: The Wolfsonian Collection (2002), pp. 35-63. Flint, Kate: "Art and the Fascist Regime in Italy," in: Oxford Art Journal, Vol. 3, No. 2, Propaganda (Oct. 1980), pp. 49-54. Mras, George P.: "Italian Fascist Architecture: Theory and Image", in: Art Journal, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Autumn 1961), pp. 7-12. Mosse, George L.: The Political Culture of Italian Futurism: A General Perspective, in: Journal of Contemporary History, Vol. 25, No. 2/3 (May - June, 1990), pp. 253-268. <p>Video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storia d'Italia, Fascist Italy (n. 5)
Session 3	<p>Topic: Encounter in Paris 1937: Paris World's Fair and national representation (Soviet Union, Germany, Italy, Spain)</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daniel, Marko: Chronology (pp. 18-29). Ades, Dawn: Paris 1937. Art and the Power of Nations (pp. 58-62). Daniel, Marko: Spain. Culture at War (pp. 63-69). Plates (pp. 70-107). Fiss, Karen: The German Pavillion (pp. 108-110). Trueba; Josefina Alix: Alberto Sanchez. An Artist at the Crossroads (pp. 111-114). Ozenfant, Amédée: Notes of a Tourist at the Exhibition, 1937, (pp. 115-118). <p>all in: Ades, Dawn; Benton, Tim; Elliot, David and White, Iain Boyd (eds.): Art and Power. Europe under the dictators 1930-45, London 1996.</p>

<p>Session 4</p>	<p>Topic: Visit to the Jewish Museum in Berlin</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schneider, Rolf: Jewish Museum Berlin, Berlin 2001, pp. 1-32. • "Berlin's Jewish Museum: An Interview with Tom Freudenheim", in PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art, Vol. 22, No. 2, Berlin 2000 (May), pp. 39-47. • Libeskind, Daniel: Between the Lines: Extension to the Berlin Museum, with the Jewish Museum, in: Assemblage, No. 12 (Aug., 1990), pp. 18-25.
<p>Session 5</p>	<p>Topic: Nazi Art Looting and Restitution – The Jacques Goudstikker Collection and Hermann Göring</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutton, Peter C.: Jacques Goudstikker (1897-1940) Art Dealer, Impressario and Tastemaker (pp. 14-34). • Shendar, Yehudit and Goldberg, Niv: The Insatiable Pursuit of Art – The Jacques Goudstikker Collection and Nazi Art Looting (pp. 35-54). • Kaye, Lawrence M.: The Restitution of the Goudstikker Collection (pp. 55-61). • Toussaint, Clemens: How to find One Thousand Paintings – The Fate of Jacques Goudstikker's Looted Art Collection (pp. 62-70). <p>all in Sutton, Peter C. (ed.): "Reclaimed – Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker", Exhibition Catalogue, Bruce Museum Greenwich, Connecticut, New Haven/London 2008.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henry, Marilyn: Recovering looted art: A rich man's game, in: Jerusalem Post [Jerusalem] 03 Apr 1998, p. 17. • Follain, John: "This Pounds 22m old master is stolen property. So why is it on display in an American museum?", in: Sunday Times [London (UK)] 24 Sep 2006, p. 14. • Guidelines for implementing the Statement by the Federal Government, the Länder and the national associations of local authorities on the tracing and return of Nazi-confiscated art, especially Jewish property, of December 1999 of February 2001 as revised in November 2007. <p>Video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlene von Saher (granddaughter of Jacques Goudstikker)
<p>Session 6</p>	<p>MIDTERM EXAM</p>
<p>Session 7</p>	<p>Topic: "The Word in Stone" — Official architecture in the Third Reich; Planning for Berlin as "Capital Germania"; Olympic Stadium, Tempelhof Airport.</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam, Peter: "The Nordic Myth" (pp. 22-39). • "Hitler and the Architects" (pp. 206-227). • "Hitlers Building Sites" (pp. 228-275). <p>in: Adam, Peter: Art of the Third Reich, New York 1992.</p> <p>Video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The last Nazi": Interview with Albert Speer.

<p>Session 8</p>	<p>Topic: Official art under the Nazi-Regime — Painting, Sculpture; Art and Propaganda (Films of Leni Riefenstahl).</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fischer-Defoy, Christine and Crossley, Paul: Artists and Art Institutions in Germany 1933-1945, in: Oxford Art Journal, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1986), pp. 16-29. Adam, Peter: "The Visualization of the National Socialist Ideology", in: Adam, Peter: Art of the Third Reich, New York 1992, pp. 128-173. <p>Video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leni Riefenstahl's "Olympia"
<p>Session 9</p>	<p>Topic: The concept of "Degenerate Art" — Expressionism, Dadaism, Surrealism; The Exhibition "Degenerate Art" in Munich 1937; Persecution of artists and architects in the Third Reich.</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adam, Peter: The Exhibition "Entartete Kunst", in: Adam, Peter: Art of the Third Reich, New York 1992, pp. 120-127. Barron, Stephanie: 1937 - Modern Art and Politics in Prewar Germany (pp. 8-22). Mosse, George L.: "Beauty without Sensuality. The Exhibition 'Entartete Kunst'" (pp. 25-31). "Facsimile of the 'Entartete Kunst' Exhibition Brochure" (pp. 356-365). all in: Barron, Stephanie (ed.): "Degenerate Art" The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany, Los Angeles 1991. <p>Video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Art and power— 1937"
<p>Session 10</p>	<p>Topic: Memorials in Berlin — Visit to the Holocaust Memorial, Memorial for Gypsies, "T4-Memorial", Bendlerblock, Memorial to the Burning of Books and other memorials.</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ahr, Johan: "Memory and Mourning in Berlin." On Peter Eisenman's Holocaust-Mahnmal (2005)," in: Modern Judaism, Volume 28, Number 3, October 2008, pp. 283-305. Young, James E.: Germany's Holocaust Memorial Problem – and Mine, in: The Public Historian, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Autumn, 2002), pp. 65-80. Ritchie, J. M.: The Nazi Book-Burning, in: The Modern Language Review, Vol. 83, No. 3 (Jul., 1988), pp. 627-643. Broder, Henryk M.: "We Invented the Holocaust!", in: Transition, No. 89 (2001), pp. 74-87.

<p>Session 11</p>	<p>Topic: A Walk through Jewish History in Berlin-Mitte — From the “New Synagogue” to the former Jewish Cemetery; Moses Mendelssohn’s tomb, former location of the oldest Synagogue in Berlin; Workshop of Otto Weidt, Berlins “Oskar Schindler”.</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koss, Juliet: “Coming to Terms with the Present,” in: Grey Room, No. 16, Memory/History/Democracy (Summer, 2004), pp. 116-131. • Solomon-Godeau, Abigail: “Mourning or Melancholia: Christian Boltanski’s ‘Missing House’,” in: Oxford Art Journal, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1998), pp. 3-20. • Czaplicka, John: History, Aesthetics and Contemporary Commemorative Practice in Berlin, in: New German Critique, No. 65, Cultural History/Cultural Studies (Spring - Summer, 1995), pp. 155-187. • Deutschkron, Inge: We survived - Berlin Jews Underground, Berlin 2008.
<p>Session 12</p>	<p>Topic: Commemorating the dictatorship — Holocaust memorials (Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen); International memorials: US Holocaust Museum in Washington, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem; Walter Benjamin Memorial in Spain.</p> <p>Final Discussion</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmer, Sarah: “Symbols that Face Two Ways: Commemorating the Victims of Nazism and Stalinism at Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen,” in: Representations, No. 49, Special Issue: Identifying Histories: Eastern Europe Before and After 1989 (Winter, 1995), pp. 97-119. • Goldman, Natasha: Israeli Holocaust Memorial Strategies at Yad Vashem.” From Silence to Recognition. in: Art Journal, Vol. 65, No. 2 (Summer, 2006), pp. 102-122. • Marcuse, Harold: Architecture and Auschwitz, in: Journal of Architectural Education, Vol. 49, No. 2 (Nov., 1995), pp. 123-128. • Hoffmann-Curtius, Kathrin and Nurmi-Schomers, Susan: Memorials for the Dachau Concentration Camp, in: Oxford Art Journal, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1998), pp. 23-44. <p>Video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary: Buchenwald or Sachsenhausen Concentration Camps
<p>Session 13</p>	<p>FINAL EXAM</p>