

Deutschland-Die Weimarer Republik bis zum Ende des Dritten Reiches: A 20th century multi-cultural dilemma

Required texts:

Metamorphosis, Kafka

Die Welle

Damals war es Friedrich, Hans Richter

Selections from Stimme eines Jahrhunderts

Poems: "Die andere Möglichkeit", Erich Kästner

"Auf einem kühlen Grunde", Eichendorff

"Irgendwo auf der Welt,"

Films:

"Comedian Harmonists"

"Jakob der Lügner"

"The Great Dictator" OR "To be or not to be"

"Die weiße Rose"

Supplemental texts:

Die weiße Rose, (graded reader)

Selections from Diktatur

Supplemental films:

"Rosenstraße"

"Nirgendwo in Afrika"

"Das Boot ist voll"

Im toten Winkel"

Students are expected to have seen (in previous levels)

"M",

"Lola rennt",

"Das Wunder von Bern"

The three versions of "Emil und die Detektive"

Upon completion of German 3 I expect the students to recognize that historical events have a tremendous effect on a culture or cultures. The viewing of the above films and

the corresponding assignments will have illustrated to the student that life is a cultural and physical construction site. I hope they have become eager investigators, because through language acquisition one goes beyond stereotypes and becomes an aware member of the world community.

I devote the 4th year of German to the above topic. I have developed materials and assignments which meet the National Standards for Foreign Language. This remains a very popular course with students, and has led them and me to continue searching for how to illuminate the construction site. The constant availability of new and diverse materials and the wonderful constant curiosity of my students keep this course viable.

I begin German 4 with the introduction of Franz Kafka . It is a fascinating way not only to introduce Kafka, but to the worlds from whence he came-the ultimate “draussen vor der Tür” Mensch. A Jew , born in Prague,, who is caught up in countless webs of family matters, his Frauenheldentum, and the cultural and political bureaucracies of the times. The students become captured by these worlds and cultures. I have found at all levels(2-AP) the student becomes “gefesselt”, which is the ultimate goal. We have viewed the film “The Trial” after school. The students find the film noir most recognizably kafka-esque.

This is a scavenger hunt we put together when we did a “community read” of The Trial, therefore the hunt is in English .The students are assigned to read Metamorphosis. We go to the computer lab for 2-3 days. The students have the Kafka website and many primary sources . The students use the Kafka website and primary resources to answer “scavenger hunt” type questions. We return to the classroom and brainstorm on the board. I try to keep this in the target language as much as possible. The Vokabeln oder Ausdrücke are then put on cards by me. Over the next 2 to 3 days we discuss Metamorphosis and a each student draws a card and must speak at least 40 seconds on the topic. If another student desires to continue speaking she or he stands up and continues. The students like this activity. We do this through out the project in different formats.

WEBSITES:

1. <http://www.kafka-franz.com/>

The scavenger hunt is collected and then yet another contest begins. The class is divided into teams and may request to answer a certain question. I assign points to each question depending on the difficulty, and then they also can battle for more points depending on how much more relevant material they can offer.

Kafka Quest:

Scavenger Hunt questions – DRAFT

In teams of two, respond to each question in writing. This assignment is due no later than _____. The first team to turn in a complete and accurate set of responses will win the Kafka T-shirts in the library display case. You may use both the Cornell University and Tompkins County Public Library websites for reference

1. What does 'kafka-esque' mean?
2. Into how many languages has Kafka's work been translated?
3. What is 'existentialism'?
4. What makes our translation of *The Trial* different from the original publication arranged by Max Brod and translated by the Muirs?
5. *The Trial* may be understood on three levels. List each.
6. List the women and men Josef K. encounters.
7. Kafka's first translator, Edwin Muir, claims that *The Trial*, *Amerika*, and *The Castle* are parallel to Dante's *Divine Comedy*. If *The Castle* is *Paradisio*, and *Amerika* is *Purgatorio*, what is *The Trial*?
8. In what unexpected location are the court offices located?
9. Where is the sentence carried out, and what religious meaning is implied by this?
10. Name the painter "who offers a lucid but despairing picture of the Court":
11. Name the Kafka work where the main character is changed into vermin, like a cockroach.
12. Name the Kafka work where the main character tries to reach and then gain entry to an inaccessible place.
13. When was Franz Kafka born, and what are his origins?

14. To what religious denomination did Kafka belong?
15. What was Kafka's native language?
16. In what language did Kafka write?
17. How old was Kafka when he wrote *The Trial*?
18. What is the Austro-Hungarian Empire?
19. What is the Patriot Act?
20. How many siblings did Kafka have, and what happened to each of them?
21. What are the origins of Kafka's parents?
22. How are his siblings and parents' problems reflected in themes of Kafka's novels?
23. Where is Prague?
24. What universities are located in Prague?
25. What important languages were spoken in Prague at the turn of the 20th century?
26. Define and give an example of slapstick humor found in the text.
27. When did Franz Kafka participate in Yiddish theater?
28. When did the Industrial Revolution occur in Prague?
29. Who is Felice Bauer, in relation to Kafka?
30. Where did Felice Bauer live?
31. What happened to the relationship between Felice Bauer and Kafka?
32. What novels did Kafka write that were published during his lifetime?

33. Where is Guantanamo Bay and why is it in the news?

34. Find the photo gallery on the Cornell University Kafka website. It is dedicated to:

37. Examine the photo of the statue and describe or identify the two individuals depicted.

35. Access the literary walking tour of Prague from the Cornell website. Name two places in the Old Town that are linked to Kafka.

We then begin with *Damals war es Friedrich*.

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/germ/courses/german201/friedrich/friedrich.html>

■ This website is an amazing resource, because it is an automatic teaching tool. The teacher and the student cannot help but become a literary and cultural detective. *Damals war es Friedrich*, by Hans Richter is the story of 2 boys born days apart in 1925 in an apartment house in Berlin. Friedrich is a Jew, and the narrator (whom we named Hans) is Aryan. As the story unfolds one comes to understand the choice of “damals”, and cannot help but know this is a tragic tale. How far one chooses to delve into the symbolism, cultures, etc, often depends on the class.

An example of the thoroughness of this website is below. The Gartenzwerg (das allerheilige Symbol des Biedermeierbürgers) stands in the middle of the Vorgarten. When one goes to the website and clicks on the name of the dwarf Polykarp, this is what one learns. This is also translated. The fear of reading an actual novel is therefore lessened.

Polykarp, in der ersten Hälfte des 2. Jahrhunderts Bischof von Smyrna, gilt als Schüler des Apostels Johannes. Er stand in Verbindung mit bekannten Leuten wie Ignatius von Antiochien, mit dem er 116 zusammentraf und von dem er Briefe

empfang. Irenäus von Lyon war sein Schüler. Er vertrat die Kirchen Kleinasiens auf Zusammenkünften mit dem römischen Bischof Anicetus, wobei ergebnislos über den Zeitpunkt des Osterfestes verhandelt wurde.

Zeitgenossen sahen in Polykarp "einen Fels in der Brandung", einen glaubensfesten Mann, wie er in den damals unruhigen Zeiten gebraucht wurde. Deshalb zählt er zu den Apostolischen Vätern, den Säulen der Kirchengeschichte. Sein Hauptanliegen war, die junge Gemeinde mit all ihren suchenden, auch auseinander strebenden Tendenzen zusammenzuhalten und zu einen. Er ermutigte seine Gemeinde, am Glauben festzuhalten auch um den Preis eines Martyriums.

Diesen Preis musste Polykarp selbst zahlen: er wurde verhaftet, wobei er - wie == Eusebios von Caesarea berichtet - die Gelegenheit zu fliehen verstreichen ließ, um Gottes Willen zu gehorchen und den Häschern in seinem Haus sogar ein Gastmahl bereitete. Auf Verlangen der Menge wurde er dann im Circus vorgeführt und ihm der Prozess gemacht. Der Proconsul weigerte sich, Polycarp von Tieren zerfleischen zu lassen, weil dieser Programmpunkt bereits beendet sei, aber er erlaubte, Polycarp zu verbrennen. Das Volk nahm dies umgehend in die Hand; inmitten der johlenden Menge wurde er auf einem Scheiterhaufen verbrannt. Der Legende nach konnten die Flammen ihm nichts anhaben, ein Wohlgeruch stieg vom Scheiterhaufen auf. Schließlich musste man Polykarp mit einem Dolch erstechen..

Christen bestatteten Polykarp und begingen von da an den Gedenktag an seinem Grab.

Bild: Griechische Ikone

Attribute: als Greis, auf Scheiterhaufen, Flamme, Dolch
Patron gegen Ohrenleiden

The Research and Presentation Project :

Please note that the students work on this project during the reading , etc of Damals. We usually get to around chapter 10 or 12 before we begin this project. The kids have been exposed to quite a bit of background by now through the texts, films, assignments, guest speakers, and various community offerings. The community is always a wonderful resource. I remind my students to think globally act locally. We usually spend 1 week in the computer lab. I introduce as much material as I can. The students may work alone, but I encourage them to work in groups. Due to the difficulty of the materials some of the research, etc is done in English, but the presentations are written and given in the target language. Once the topics are decided the students again each make a card that has to do with their project. Everyday 5 to 6 kids speak about their card for up to a minute auf Deutsch. I require that everyone takes notes so that they also can speak about the topics. Before the students present their projects I correct them. They must be typed up double spaced before the presentations. Depending on the depth of presentations, etc I allow cards and/or a shortened version. I remind them on a daily basis that in spite of the topic humor must be incorporated within our day- as in the the film "To be or not to be"-

To Be Or Not To Be (1942)

Colonel Ehrhardt (Sig Ruman): Oh, yes, I saw him in "Hamlet" in London. What he did to Shakespeare we are doing to Poland.

Professor Alexander Siletsky (Stanley Ridges): Shall we drink to a blitzkrieg?
Maria Tura (Carole Lombard): I prefer a slow encirclement.

So this is the song and dance they get from me:

A. This project is an in depth investigation into one of the most fascinating, tragic moments in European history. Where to begin and when to end one's research will perhaps always be the looming question , BUT have no fears-I will hopefully guide you through this tumultuous ,infamous ,thrilling time in history. I have put a list together which you can choose from , or use as a springboard to explore ideas of your own, which relate to these topics. You and your group(approximately 2-4 people-more if you feel your topic demands larger numbers) will research a topic, and write and present or perform auf Deutsch natürlich! This "presentation" can be in many forms-interview, skit, reporter style,dvd, powerpoint(but don't bore me!!!)s etc. etc. etc. For example: your topic is Die Cabaret Szene während der Weimarer Reubublik-you could set up a cabaret, with singing, dancing, etc-there also could be a narrator ,or a roving reporter, who explains the what ,where, when, whys, and hows, or you could research the Jewish Underground during this time, and act out two or three true episodes. There again could be the roving style reporter-"Ms. , Mr, Omniscient",who tells us all what is going on. You may use film footage, taped interviews, guest speakers-der Himmel ist hier die Grenze!

B. Another possibility is to do the whole project as a CABARET, with the episodes reflecting on what is happening in the outside world of Germany during this time period. There could be M.C.S, and the different topics could be the acts. We can decide upon this as a class.

C.Die Liste:(these are just suggestions, if you have your own ideas, please check with me, and then go forward)

- 1.Women in the 3rd Reich and/ or the Arts
- 2.Underground organizations(there are all sorts of possibilities here-Jewish, student(Sophie Scholl, die weisse Rose, etc.)the church, the Berlin Underground,etc.
- 3.Swing Kids versus the Nazi Youth Organizations
4. Jugend Literatur-I have many Romane that the students may borrow and write their own version or skit.
5. Was nicht in der Geschichte steht-or interview relatives or members of our community, or interview the Exchange Students/Teachers from Tuttlingen and the other German Exchange Students in IHS
- 6.Film-this is a gigantic list, I will try to give you a number of names, ideas, etc. Remember you can follow the evolvment of the actor or director during this time.

A.

1. M, directed by Fritz Lang
2. Cabaret(Berlin Stories)
3. Comedian Harmonists, directed by Joseph Vilsmeier
4. The Great Dictator, directed by Charlie Chaplin(think about Ms
5. Nirgendwo in Afrika (Nowhere in Africa), directed by Caroline Link
6. The Producers, directed by Mel Brooks
7. Das Boot (The Boat), directed by Wolfgang Petersen
8. Das Boot ist Voll (The Boat is Full)
9. Die Weiße Rose (The White Rose) , directed by Michael Verhoven
10. Rosenstraße, directed by Margarethe Von Trotta
11. Schindler's List, directed by Steven Spielberg
12. Der Untergang (The Downfall)
13. Judgement at Nurnberg
14. Aimee und Jaquar

Other possibilities: Im Toten Winkel (Blind Spot) Bonhoefer, Der Blaue Engel, other Fritz Lang films, Europa Europa, Stalingrad, etc.

B. East German Unit- some of these are available through netflix

1. Der Fall Gleiwitz, VHS

This is considered to be one of the most beautiful and chilling films about the Nazi period. It is about the staged attack on a Polish radio station by the Nazis, giving Hitler justification for starting WWII.

2. Jakob der Lügner,

This film, nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Film, represents the period of German history near the end of the Third Reich, and is an apt example of the GDR's antifascist legacy-making policy.

.C.Jews and expatriots to Hollywood or to comics- the ultimate escape artist! The websites listed are just for starters.

1. Wolfgang Korngold (from Vienna to Hollywood)

. Two films to consider are A Midsummer Night's Dream or The Seahawk.

2.Max Steiner: He was nominated for Academy [Award](#)s for his scores 18 times and won three times. Years after his death in 1971, he remains one of the giants of motion picture history, and his music continues to thrive. Casablanca would prove fascinating not only because of its fame, but because of the significant themes. The students will first encounter the actor Peter Lorre in the film M; it will be interesting to view him in both film worlds. Also all of the German "immigrants" in the film were actual immigrants - a first in the film industry.

3. Ernst Lubitsch- <http://www.lubitsch.com/biography.html>
4. Fritz Lang- <http://www.jscheuer.com/lang.htm>
5. Peter Lorre- <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000048/bio>

6. Lotte Lenya- <http://www.sonyclassical.com/artists/lenya/bio.html>
7. Kurt Weill- <http://www.mtr.org/exhibit/weill/weill.html>
8. Marlene Dietrich
9. Billy Wilder- a quote to invite you in...To a cameraman on one of his pictures
"Shoot a few scenes out of focus. I want to win the foreign film [award](#)."
10. The comic book kings-<http://www.sugarbombs.com/kavalier/realkavaliers.html>
<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Atlantis/2671/>
Kavalier and Clay, Charles Biro-Dared Devil Battles Hitler, Spiegelmans's Maus

7. Theater-Bertolt Brecht-die Verfremdungseffekt, Ich bin meine eigene Frau-
http://www.bol.de/shop/home/artikeldetails/ich_bin_meine_eigene_frau/charlotte_von_mahlsd/ISBN3-423-20748-5/ID5609684.html

8. Music-Weill, Mahler, Hindemith ,Schönberg, Orff, Comedian Harmonists, etc.

9.Literature-Mann, Kafka, Kästner, Hesse, Brecht, Böll, Tucholsky, Grass, Hegi.
Wolf, Brückner, Schlink,

Some ideas come to mind here that I really want to encourage you to do- select just a section, a chapter,etc and deliver the message with an entertaining albeit clever flair

10. Addressee Unknown- this is a short book, but a wonderful springboard
In 1938, Kathrine Kressman Taylor wrote Address Unknown, which brought worldwide attention to the Nazi threat long before the start of WWII. She was known as "the woman who jolted America." The novel tells the story of two German business partners living in the United States, one of whom returns to Germany, while the other, who is Jewish, remains behind. Through their correspondence we watch the one gradually fall under the Nazi's spell, with frightening consequences for both of them. Re-published in 1995, the story remains chilling today. From 1947-66, Taylor was a professor of English at Gettysburg College, where she was the first woman to earn tenure.

12. Literature of the Holocaust

13.. Literature of the common man/woman-(Diktatur)

14.Expressionism, Dadaism, Bauhaus, Surrealism, acceptable "art" of the 3rd Reich

15.The role of religion during the 3rd Reich(two names come to mind here-Niemoeller and Bonhoeffer)

16.Blitzkrieg versus the War of Retaliation

17.The Firebombing of Dresden

18.The chain of command-how the Nazi machine functioned

19. The role of the military

20. Nürenberger Gesetze- this is a huge topic, I will work with you as to how to narrow it down

21. Book Burning-

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bookburning/bookburning.htm>

- A short summary of the Holocaust book burning:

<http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/Holocaust/bookburn.html>

- Holocaust Museum:

<http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/bookburning/>

- Simon Wiesenthal Center:

<http://motlc.wiesenthal.com/resources/books/annual2/chap05.html>

- Rose, Jonathan, ed. The Holocaust and the Book: Destruction and Preservation. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.

Musselman call # Z658.G3 H65 2001

22. Holocaust Museums

23. Hey... this is my newest and hopefully interesting idea... contact the people who have completed yet another interpretation of this time frame, and see where the research leads you... garden paths are not always a maze but an amazement! Here is an example:

Professors explore Holocaust imagery

By Samira Chandwani

Cornell Daily Sun (Cornell U.)

03/07/2005

(U-WIRE) ITHACA, N.Y. — "Visualizing the Holocaust: Taboos and Potentialities," a conference held to discuss how to understand and interpret visual representations of the Holocaust, was held at the Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts last Thursday and Friday. Seventeen scholars from a variety of colleges attended the conference. Many of the papers discussed at this conference were based on work done at the German Academic Exchange Service summer seminar held at Cornell University in 2003, according to David Bathrick, J.G. Schurman Professor of Theatre Film and Dance and professor of German studies.

Visual representations of the Holocaust have been ingrained in American culture. Movies such as "Schindler's List" and "Life is Beautiful," both of which dealt with the Holocaust, have enjoyed long box office runs and have gone on to win Academy Awards. Similarly, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum opened to the public

in 1993, and traveling exhibitions are held across the country. All of these representations are designed to make sure that the atrocity of the Holocaust will never be forgotten and to serve as tribute to those who lost their lives, as well as those who survived.

Prof. Lisa J. Nicoletti, art, Centenary College of Louisiana, spoke of the cultural significance of Anne Frank.

"Elvis-like, [Anne Frank] haunts American Culture," Nicoletti said. "Americans regularly celebrate her birthday. Her favorite thirteenth birthday gift [her diary] first led to our relationship with her."

Nicoletti theorized that representations of Anne Frank, whether through her book or through the many museum exhibits around the world, resonate with Americans because they bring to the fore some of our worst fears and anxieties, especially the fear of a missing, kidnapped child.

Nicoletti also mentioned several artists who have created their own representations of Frank. Rachel Schreiber's 1999 series "Anne in New York" consisted of a series of photographs depicting photographs of Frank stenciled onto buildings and vehicles in contemporary New York City. According to Nicoletti, "Schreiber was interested in exposing the 'cult of Anne Frank' and questioning how she has come to symbolize the suffering of millions of people."

Prof. David Brenner, German, Kent State University, spoke of movies that have come to represent the Holocaust. Brenner mentioned movies such as "Life is Beautiful" and "Train de vie" (Train of Life). Brenner said these movies are unique because they are "more or less comic films about the Holocaust," in contrast to somber dramas such as Steven Spielberg's "Schindler's List."

"This representation causes anxieties that these traumas will be trivialized," he explained. But Brenner also argued that perhaps these comedic representations "can afford to show or say what more serious modes of representation dare not to."

Other themes explored at the conference included the use of photographs and narratives as ways of representing the Holocaust.

The conference was sponsored by the Institute for German Cultural Studies, the Jewish Studies Program Society for the Humanities, the Department of German Studies, the Department of Theatre, Film and Dance and the New German Critique, a

journal of German studies published by Cornell.

A good link for topics:

<http://www.gettysburg.edu/library/onebook/explore/resources.html>

There are still many possibilities which I did not mention, but these should be a start.

"Today there are once more saints and villains. Instead of the uniform grayness of the rainy day, we have the black storm cloud and brilliant lightning flash. Outlines stand out with exaggerated sharpness. Shakespeare's characters walk among us. The villain and the saint emerge from primeval depths and by their appearance they tear open the infernal or the divine abyss from which they come and enable us to see for a moment into mysteries of which we had never dreamed."

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Es hat noch nie einen guten Krieg oder einen schlechten Frieden gegeben.

-Ben Franklin