

The University of Toronto

TRANSNATIONAL LITERATURES

German 423 / Fall 2014

Instructor:	ANGELICA FENNER	Dept:	German
Office:	Odette Hall 325	Email:	Angelica.Fenner@utoronto.ca
Hours:	Wed 1 – 2 p.m.	Tel.:	416-926-2326

Class meets on **WED 2 – 4 in Northrup Frey 235**



Kartographie der Welt, Martin Waldseemüller (1507)

DESCRIPTION

Our understanding of the defining parameters of German cultural production has dramatically transformed in the course of the latter 20th-century and beyond. Both literary and filmic output are now defined by an unprecedented heterogeneity in form, thematics, and language. This is attributable not only to the dramatic changes in national self-understanding to which Germany has been subject since 1945 through the respective founding of the Federal and Democratic Republics, the ensuing construction of the Wall, and its demise 50 years later amidst unification. The recruitment of foreign labour to both Germanies beginning in the 1950s also infused new cultural perspectives; today, authors of extraordinarily diverse background - both recent arrivals to Germany and those of the second and third generation – continue to vitalize the parameters of what constitutes German cultural production. This seminar takes stock of a cross-section of literary, and to a limited extent, also filmic texts that provoke us to rethink the linguistic and cultural bounds of German culture. The thematics of crossing boundaries, or indeed, of their dissolution will surface across a swath of texts now identified as transnational in scope and thrust.

COURSE GOALS

The language of the course will be predominantly German, including the literary texts to be read; some of the secondary scholarly readings will be in English. The course affords students an opportunity to deepen and refine their facility in spoken and written German, as well as to read and listen in the language with increasing efficiency. Students will be exposed to authors publishing in German whose cultural background encompasses Eastern and Southern Europe and

Asia, and will develop an understanding of contemporary debates around multilingualism, travel and mobility, border traffic and boundary crossing, subalterity and hegemony, and cosmopolitanism. There will be opportunities for both casual online discussion in German as well as more formal written assignments.

As an upper-level seminar, our weekly meetings will be primarily organized as discussion, including group work and structured presentations.

REQUIREMENTS / EVALUATION

Participation and Attendance / 15%

Guided Class Discussion of a Text (pairwork) x 2 / 30%

Participation in Blackboard Discussion / 15%

Two 7-page papers / 40 %