



LUDWIG-
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AMERIKANISCHE KULTURGESCHICHTE
DEPARTMENT FÜR ANGLISTIK UND AMERIKANISTIK



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Summer Semester 2024

How Green are the Germans?

Culture, History, and the Environment in Transatlantic Perspective

Prof. Dr. Christof Mauch (mauch@lmu.de)

Stephen Milder, PhD (stephen.milder@rcc.lmu.de)

3-6 ECTS credits

Credit Requirements

- regular and active class participation

reading of texts

- oral presentation

- research essay (ca. 25,000 characters plus additional work for 6 credits)

Course Description

Germany is globally seen as a successful environmental leader because of its renewable energy transition, environmental and climate protection, the nuclear power phase-out in the wake of the Chernobyl disaster, and the rise of the Green Party. The US, on the other hand, has been criticized for its lax environmental regulations, high CO2 emissions and a "culture of waste". Where do the cultural imaginaries of the two countries come from? How valid are they?

This class examines the interaction between humans and the natural world in Germany in historical perspective; and it draws select comparisons with developments in the United States. We will study local and regional developments - through excursions and place-based workshops in Munich and Bavaria.

This seminar is part of a new Munich summer program offered by the Amerika-Institut during the summer term. It is open to LMU students and to students from US partner universities. The seminar is organized as a multiple-block seminar.

Course Schedule

Friday, June 7, 1:00-5:00 pm

Friday, June 14, 1:00-5:00 pm

Friday, June 21, 1:00-5:00

Friday, June 28 – Sunday June 30, excursion to Tutzing

Monday, July 5, excursion to Bavarian Forest National Park

Recommended Reading

Ault, Julia. *Saving Nature Under Socialism: Transnational Environmentalism in East Germany, 1968 – 1990*. Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Blackbourn, David. *The Conquest of Nature: Water, Landscape, and the Making of Modern Germany*. Norton & Company, 2007.

Bruggemeier, Franz-Josef, Mark Cioc, Thomas Zeller, and Franz-Josef Brüggemeier. *How Green Were the Nazis?: Nature, Environment, and Nation in the Third Reich*. Ohio University Press, 2005.

Duerbeck, Gabriele, Urte Stobbe, Hubert Zapf, Evi Zemanek, Aaron Allen, Martin Bemmann, Hannes Bergthaller, et al. *Ecological Thought in German Literature and Culture*. Lexington Books, 2019.

Kalb, Martin. *Environing Empire: Nature, Infrastructure and the Making of German Southwest Africa*. Berghahn Books, 2022.

Mauch, Christof. *Nature in German History*. Berghahn Books, 2004.

Mauch, Christof, and Thomas Zeller. *The World beyond the Windshield: Roads and Landscapes in the United States and Europe*. Ohio University Press, 2008.

Mauch, Christof, and Thomas Zeller. *Rivers in History. Perspectives on Waterways in Europe and North America*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008.

McNeill, J., and Peter Engelke. *The Great Acceleration: An Environmental History of the Anthropocene since 1945*. Harvard University Press, 2016.

Milder, Stephen. *Greening Democracy: The Anti-Nuclear Movement and Political Environmentalism in West Germany and Beyond, 1968–1983*. Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Uekotter, Frank. *The Greenest Nation?: A New History of German Environmentalism*. The MIT Press, 2014.

Detailed Overview

Friday, June 7, 1:00-5:00 pm

Nature and Industrialization

Assigned Readings

Mauch, Christof, and Kiran Patel. "Environment: Conservation vs. Exploitation." In *The United States and Germany During the Twentieth Century: Competition and Convergence*, edited by Christof Mauch and Kiran Patel, 180-193, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

White, Richard. "Are you an Environmentalist, or do you work for a living?" in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, edited by William Cronon, 171-185, New York: Norton, 1996.

Friday, June 14, 1:00-5:00 pm

Environment and Dictatorship: Nazi Germany and the GDR

Assigned Readings

Brüggemeier, Franz-Josef, Mark Cioc and Thomas Zeller. "Introduction." In *How Green Were the Nazis? Nature, Environment, and Nation in the Third Reich*, edited by Franz-Josef Brüggemeier, Mark Cioc, and Thomas Zeller, 1-17, Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005.

Fleischman, Thomas. "Animal Farms: A porcine history of East Germany's rise and fall." In *Cabinet* (6 August 2020).
https://www.cabinetmagazine.org/kiosk/fleischman_thomas_6_august_2020.php

Zeller, Thomas. "Building and Rebuilding the Landscape of the Autobahn, 1930-1970." In *The World Beyond the Windshield: Roads and Landscapes in the United States and Europe*, edited by Christof Mauch and Thomas Zeller. Franz Steiner Verlag, 2008.

Friday, June 21

National Parks

Assigned Readings

Gissibl, Bernhard. "A Laboratory for the Implementation of "Wilderness" in Central Europe—The Bavarian Forest National Park." *Environment & Society Portal, Arcadia* (2014), no. 4.

Jones, Karen. "Unpacking Yellowstone: The American National Park in Global Perspective." In *Civilizing Nature: National Parks in Global Historical Perspective*, edited by Bernhard Gissibl, Sabine Höhler and Patrick Kupper, 31–49, New York: Berghahn Books, 2013.

Mauch, Christof. "Walt Disney World, Florida. At Least Two Natures." In *Paradise Blues: Travels Through American Environmental History* by Christof Mauch, 173-206. Winwick: White Horse Press, 2024.

Friday, June 28 – Sunday June 30, Excursion to Tutzing

Friday June 28

From the Conservation Movement to Political Ecology

Assigned Readings

Milder, Stephen, Andreas Jünger, Katharina Scharf, Amanda M. Nichols, Friederike Bruehoefener, and Adam Stone. "Petra Kelly: Life and Legacy of a Transnational Green Activist." *Environment & Society Portal, Virtual Exhibitions 2024*, no. 1. Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society. doi.org/10.5282/rcc/9772.

Uekötter, Frank. "Getting in Motion: German Environmentalism, 1945 to 1980." In *The Greenest Nation? A New History of German Environmentalism*, edited by Frank Uekötter, 59-100, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2014.

Zelko, Frank. "The Umweltmulti Arrives: Greenpeace and Grass Roots Environmentalism in West Germany." *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 61 (2015): 397-413.

Saturday, June 28

Reading the Landscape

Sunday June 30

Fossil Fuels, Nuclear Power and Renewables: Germany's Contested Energy Mix in the 20th and 21st Centuries

Assigned Readings

Blackbourn, David. "The Culture and Politics of Energy in Germany: A Historical Perspective." *RCC Perspectives*, no. 4 (2013): 1–31.

Morris, Craig, and Arne Jungjohann. "Energiewende: The Solution to More Problems Than Climate Change." In *Energy Democracy. Germany's ENERGIEWENDE to Renewables*, edited by Craig Morris and Arne Jungjohann, 1-14, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Monday July 5, 8 am-8pm, excursion (Bavarian Forest National Park)