

Cold War Culture

– Eastern, Western, and Global Perspectives –

#WueOnline | #WueGlobal

WED 10-12 (German time)

= India Standard time: WED 1.30 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. (until the end of October) and
WED 2.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. (from the beginning of November)



World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace and Friendship (1957)

I hope the Russians love their children too. (Sting, "Russians," 1985.)

This transdisciplinary research seminar re-investigates the so-called 'Cold War,' i.e. the period from the end of the Second World War to the late 1980s which was dominated by the political, economic and ideological antagonism between a Western bloc (led by the USA and organised in the NATO) and an Eastern bloc (led by the USSR and organised in the Warsaw Pact). As part of our series of Cultural Studies Colloquia, the seminar will be primarily interested in how the major powers mobilized culture as a medium of geopolitical confrontation. At the same time, we will analyse the concrete cultural effects of such a transnational cultural politics in countries and regions across the globe.

How did Cold-War cultural politics and cultural diplomacy shape national and transnational cultures not only in Russia and the USA, but also in India, the UK and other European countries? How did specific ideologies, figurations, genres or clichés operate within the Cold War as a matrix of political tensions and ideological formations which continues to shape our very present? How did Soviet and Western Cold War cultures differ not only in their 'official,' state-sponsored aspects, but also in terms of 'unofficial' cultural practices? In which modes and moments did the two geopolitically opposed formations actually converge? The last question involves considering responses to key historical events anchored in one geopolitical bloc, but inevitably impacting also the opposed bloc as well as reverberating across larger global contexts (e.g. the American Civil Rights Movement or the accomplishment of the Sputnik launch followed by 'Sputnik Shock')?

THE FRAMEWORK OF THE COURSE

The Cultural Studies Colloquia

This course on 'Cold War Culture – Eastern, Western, and Global Perspectives' is an instalment of our CULTURAL STUDIES COLLOQUIA. This semester's colloquium brings together the perspectives of American, British, and Slavic Cultural Studies at JMU Würzburg.

The format of the colloquia is discussion-based. While the course is particularly geared to advanced students and students with theoretical interests, our project profits from a range of insights and experiences. We would love to integrate perspectives from students with backgrounds in ethnological and performance disciplines as well as in political science, philosophy, and history, for example.

The transnational format of the course

Forcing us to hold our colloquia online, the lock-down phases of the pandemic have had the positive effect of allowing us to invite students from our Indian partner universities to participate. We have done so within the framework of the WUEGLOBAL initiative (funded by the International Virtual Academic Collaboration Programme of the German Academic Exchange Service from 2020-2022).

We wish to continue this practice with the current colloquium. Following the WueGlobal model, we can provide certificates of participation for all students. We will also be making participants aware of further international opportunities and asking for your feedback in shaping effective international collaboration for the semesters to come.

Enrolling

This is a research seminar. To help create a committed and cohesive thinking community for our CSC courses, we ask students to compose a brief STATEMENT OF PURPOSE in which they (1) introduce themselves and (2) outline their interest/s in this semester's topic. Please mail your statement (c. 1,5 pages) to the CSC Teaching Assistant Sophie Schönfeld (sophie.schoenfeld@stud-mail.uni-wuerzburg.de) by the 9th of October.

After submission of your statement of interest, we will get in touch with you and register you for the course. *Please note that there is no self-registration for this course.*

Contributions / Assessment

Participants are required to write FOUR RESPONSE ESSAYS dealing with texts from the seminar's reading list as well as a CONCLUDING REFLECTION or PROJECT REPORT at the end of the seminar.

Response essays are prepared during the study & writing weeks regularly integrated into the programme. We ask that essays always be submitted on the Friday before our shared seminar session, so that seminar participants have time to read each other's responses (along with core assigned readings) as part of their preparation for our meetings.

The length of writing contributions can be freely allocated by individual participants as long as the combined length of all texts (including the statement of interest) will finally constitute a PORTFOLIO of approximately 20 pages.

INTRODUCTORY READING

- A good text to start out from as a concise introduction to the Cold War as a historical period is ODD ARNE WESTAD, **“The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century,”** *Origins*, vol 1 of *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010) 1-19 [accessible online through Universitätsbibliothek Würzburg (UBW) for JMU students *and* on the learning platform WueCampus for all seminar participants]. // For a more detailed, yet still concise outline of the political history of the Cold War, participants may also want to read ROBERT J. MCMAHON, ***The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction***, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2021) [UBW 450/HD 470 M167(2); book or e-book for purchase c. € 6,- to 10,-].
- The following texts offer introductions to the specific perspective of the seminar. We recommend reading them in advance of the course or during the first weeks of the semester:
 - PATRICK MAJOR and RANA MITTER, **“East Is East and West Is West? – Towards a Comparative Socio-Cultural History of the Cold War,”** *Across the Blocs: Cultural and Social History*, ed. Major and Mitter (London, Frank Cass, 2004) 1–22 [accessible online through UBW and on WueCampus].
 - MATTHEW GRANT and BENJAMIN ZIEMANN, **“Introduction: The Cold War as an Imaginary War,”** *Understanding the Imaginary War: Culture, Thought and Nuclear Conflict, 1945–90*, ed. Grant and Ziemann (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2016) 1-29 [accessible only on WueCampus].
- The four-part TV series ***Love, Hate and Propaganda: The Cold War*** (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2011) [available online at [LINK](#)] can add to the introductory texts.

PROGRAMME

There will be an introductory Zoom meeting on the 19th of October. After our second meeting (in the following week, i.e. on the 26th of October), new texts will usually be scheduled for reading and discussion EVERY OTHER WEEK. The time in-between (‘STUDY & WRITING WEEKS’) enables coordinated study, writing, and exchange. Zoom meetings are regularly scheduled for two full hours. The seminar will end with a STUDY DAY to be held on WED, the first of February.

Please make sure to have read and studied at least the ‘KEY TEXTS’ by the time indicated. The ‘ADDITIONAL READINGS’ and ‘ADDITIONAL VIEWINGS’ constitute recommended but optional additional preparation. Unless otherwise specified, all ‘KEY TEXTS’ and ‘ADDITIONAL READINGS’ will be made available on the WueCampus platform.

19/10 Opening meeting:

The Cold War – Individual Perspectives and Transdisciplinary Cultural Approaches

Individual perspectives and questions | Exemplary specimens of Cold-War history and discourses | Gauging the scholarly discourse on the Cold War and on Cold-War cultures | Clarifying the approach of the seminar

Specimens:

- Diverse spotlights on the Cold War & Cold-War culture & selected quotations from the scholarly discourse.

Key texts:

- Participants’ statements of interest.

26/10 From the Second World War to the Cold War

Specimens:

- Spotlights on the transition from the Second World War to the Cold War.

Key texts:

- GEORGE ORWELL, "You and the Atomic Bomb," *Tribune*, Oct. 19, 1945. [Accessible online: [LINK.](#)]
- GEORGE F. KENNAN, "Long Telegram" (1946). [Accessible online: [LINK.](#)]
- Cold War Texts, Seventeen Moments in Soviet History (1946/47) [accessible online: [LINK](#)]:
 - IOSIF STALIN, Speech Delivered at a Meeting of Voters of the Stalin Electoral District, Moscow, Feb. 9, 1946.
 - WINSTON CHURCHILL, The Sinews of Peace Address at Westminster College, Mar. 5, 1946.
 - IOSIF STALIN, Interview on Churchill's Iron Curtain Speech, Mar. 14, 1946
 - ANDREI ZHDANOV, New Aspects of World Conflict: The International Situation, Sept. 22, 1947.

02/11 Study and writing week – Please submit response essays by 04/11. These essays should refer to the materials listed below for 09/11.

08/11 18:00: Film screening (on site at JMU):
 BILLY WILDER, dir., *One, Two, Three* (USA: UA, 1961).
 (Participation non-mandatory.)

09/11 Popular Media and the Early Cold War

Specimen:

- BILLY WILDER, dir., *One, Two, Three* (USA: UA, 1961).

Key texts:

- NICHOLAS J. CULL, "Reading, Viewing, and Tuning in to the Cold War," *Crises and Détente*, vol. 2 of *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010) 438-459. [UBW online.]
- DAVID BATHRICK, "Billy Wilder's Cold War Berlin," *Cold War Culture*, ed. David Bathrick and Anson Rabinbach, special Issue of *New German Critique* 110 (2010): 31-47. [UBW online.]

Additional reading:

- ROBERT GENTER, "'With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility': Cold War Culture and the Birth of Marvel Comics," *The Journal of Popular Culture* 40.6 (2007): 953-978. [UBW online.]

Additional viewing:

- Selected film excerpts, including Soviet examples with English-language translation, accessible online at [LINK.](#)

16/11: Study and writing week – Please submit response essays by 18/11.

23/11 **Third Spaces? Decolonization and The Cultural Cold War
(Focus on India)**

Specimens:

- Specimens mentioned in the readings and/or suggested by our Indian participants.

Key texts:

- MARK PHILIP BRADLEY, “Decolonization, the Global South, and the Cold War, 1919–1962,” *Origins*, vol. 1 of *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010) 464-485. [UBW online.]
- GAUTAM CHAKRABARTI, “From Moscow with Love: Soviet Cultural Politics across India in the Cold War,” *Safundi* 20:2 (2019): 239-257. [UBW online.]

Additional reading:

- VIKRANT DADAWALA, “War, Famine, and Newsprint: The Making of Soviet India, 1942–1945,” *The Cultural Cold War and the Global South: Sites of Contest and Communitas*, ed. Kerry Bystrom, Monica Popescu and Katherine Zien (New York, London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2021) 201-219. [UBW online.]

30/11 Study and writing week – Please submit your response essays by 02/12.

06/12 18:00: Film screening (on site at JMU):

ALEKSEI SPESHNEV, dir., *Cherno solnce [Black Sun]* (USSR: Belarus’fil’m, 1970).

[Accessible without subtitles at [LINK](#)] We hope to have a English-language translation of key film dialogues available in time for the screening.

(Participation non-mandatory.)

07/12 **“Race” Politics and the New Scramble for Africa**

Specimens:

- ALEKSEI SPESHNEV, dir., *Cherno solnce [Black Sun]* (USSR: Belarus’fil’m, 1970)
- Spotlight on Africa and African Americans Between East and West

Key texts:

- “Index of Selected Images from the Wayland Rudd Collection,” *The Wayland Rudd Collection: Exploring Racial Imaginaries in Soviet Visual Culture*, ed. Yevgeniy Fiks, Denise Milstein, and Matvei Yankelevich (Brooklyn: Ugly Duckling Press, 2021) 170-215.
- MAXIM MATUSEVICH, “Soviet Anti-racism and Its Discontents: The Cold War Years,” *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World*, ed. James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2020) 229-250. [UBW online.]

Additional reading:

- MARY L. DUDZIAK, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton UP); esp. chapter 2.

- YEVGENIY FIKS, "Sorting Through the Wayland Rudd Collection" *The Wayland Rudd Collection: Exploring Racial Imaginaries in Soviet Visual Culture*, ed. Yevgeniy Fiks, Denise Milstein, and Matvei Yankelevich (Brooklyn: Ugly Duckling Press, 2021) 64-73.
- MARY LOUISE PATTERSON, "A Black American at Lumumba University: Interview by Yevgeniy Fiks & Denise Milstein," *The Wayland Rudd Collection: Exploring Racial Imaginaries in Soviet Visual Culture*, ed. Yevgeniy Fiks, Denise Milstein and Matvei Yankelevich (Brooklyn: Ugly Duckling Press, 2021) 22-36.
- RACHEL LEE RUBIN, "'Peoples' Friendship' in the Cold War: the Patrice Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University," *The Red and the Black: The Russian Revolution and the Black Atlantic*, ed. David Featherstone and Christian Høgsbjerg (Manchester UP, 2021) xx-xx.

Additional viewing / listening:

- *Love, Hate and Propaganda: The Cold War* (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2011), Episode 2: Turning Up the Heat [accessible online at [LINK](#)]

14/12 Study and writing week – Please submit your response essays by 16/12.

21/12 **Cold-War Ideologies, Domesticity, and Consumption
(Focus on the 1959 'Kitchen Debate')**

Specimens:

- Various specimens concerning domesticity, design and consumption (focus on the space and idea of the domestic kitchen).
- Historical material documenting the 1959 'Kitchen Debate' between Khrushchev and Nixon.
 - Nixon vs. Khrushchev - The Kitchen Debate (1959) [accessible online at [LINK](#).]
 - John W. Larner, "Judging the Kitchen Debate" (lesson plan / materials), *OAH Magazine of History* 2.1 (1986): 25-27. [UBW online.]

Key texts:

- [From:] Ruth OLDENZIEL and Karin Zachmann, eds., *Cold War Kitchen: Americanization, Technology, and European Users* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009):
 - RUTH OLDENZIEL and KARIN ZACHMANN, "Kitchens as Technology and Politics: An Introduction" (1-32).
 - SUSAN E. REID, "'Our Kitchen Is just as Good': Soviet Responses to the American Kitchen" (83-112).

Additional reading:

- PAUL BETTS and DAVID CROWLEY, eds., *Domestic Dreamworlds: Notions of Home in Post-1945 Europe*, special Issue of *Journal of Contemporary History* 40.2 (2005).
- Rosenberg, Emily S. "Consumer Capitalism and the End of the Cold War." *Endings*. Vol 3 of *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*. Ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010. 489-512.

Christmas break – Please announce possible contributions to the STUDY DAY by Mon., 08/01.

10/01 18:00: Film screening (on site at JMU):
Nicholas Meyer, dir., *The Day After* (USA/ABC, 1983).

(Participation non-mandatory.)

11/01 **Nuclear Discourses & Cultures**
(focus on the 1980s)

Specimens:

- Material (clips, booklet) from the “Protect and Survive” campaign (UK, c. 1974-1980); see esp. the collected film clips available on the website of the Imperial War Museum: [LINK](#).
- NICHOLAS MEYER, dir., *The Day After* (USA/ABC, 1983; broadcast in USSR in 1987). [The full film can be watched on *You Tube*: [LINK](#).]

Key texts:

- DANIEL CORDLE, “Protect–Protest: Introducing the Nuclear 1980s,” *Late Cold War Literature and Culture: The Nuclear 1980s* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017) 1-24.
- MIRIAM DOBSON, “Building Peace, Fearing the Apocalypse? Nuclear Danger in Soviet Cold War Culture,” *Understanding the Imaginary War: Culture, Thought and Nuclear Conflict, 1945–90*, ed. Matthew Grant and Benjamin Ziemann (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2016) 51-74.

Additional reading:

- MATTHEW GRANT, “The Imaginative Landscape of Nuclear War in Britain, 1945–65,” *Understanding the Imaginary War: Culture, Thought and Nuclear Conflict, 1945–90*, ed. Matthew Grant and Benjamin Ziemann (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2016) 92-115
- [Extract from:] JONATHAN SCHELL, *The Fate of the Earth* (New York: Knopf, 1982).
- [Extract from] SVETLANA ALEXIEVICH: *Voices from Chernobyl: The Oral History of a Nuclear Disaster* (Normal: Dalkey Archive Press, 2005) [*Chernobyl’skaya molitva*, 1997]. [Accessible online at [LINK](#).]

Additional viewing:

- *Ochagi massogo porazheniia* [*Sources of Mass Destruction*] (USSR: Soyuzvuzfil’ m, 1975); esp. 0:40-6:15. [Available online at [LINK](#); no subtitles.]
- Konstantin Lopushanskii, dir., *Pis’ma mertvogo cheloveka* [*Dead Man’s Letter*] (USSR: Lenfil’ m, 1986) [Available online at [LINK](#), with subtitles.]

18/01 Study and writing week – Please hand in response essays by 20/01.

25/01 **Counter-Culture/s**

Specimens:

- Spotlights on various ‘counter-cultures.’
- [Extract from:] Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (Boston: Beacon, 1969). [Full text of the book online at www.marxists.org.]

Key texts:

- Jeremi Suri, “Counter-Cultures: The Rebellions against the Cold War Order, 1965–1975,” *Crises and Détente*, vol 2 of *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010) 460-481.

Additional reading:

- Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition* (1969 / Berkeley: U of California P, 1995).
- Leerom Medovoi, “Conclusion: The Rise and Fall of Identity,” *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2005) 317-330.
- Robert Gildea, “The Global 1968 and International Communism,” *The Cambridge History of Communism*, ed. Juliane Fürst et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP) 23-49. [UBW online.]
- Alexej Yurchak: *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More. The Last Soviet Generation*. (Princeton: Princeton UP 2006) 158-206 (chapter: “Imaginary West”).

01/02, 10-16: **STUDY DAY**

Participants are free to set their own agendas and topics. Concrete case studies may perhaps work better than more general approaches. – The following brainstorming gathers some topics or fields that have not been (sufficiently) covered in the seminar (it is absolutely fine, however, to revisit fields that *have* been covered):

- The Cold War and Memory (Fascism, National Socialism, the Holocaust etc.)
- Spies among Us (James Bond, *Seventeen Moments of Spring*, but also Rosenberg Trials, McCarthyism, etc.)
- Print Cultures (including projects openly or secretly funded as cultural diplomatic/propaganda efforts)
- Cold War & (Higher) Education
- The arts & the Cold War
- Comics & graphic novels in/on the Cold War
- Dance & the Cold War
- Shakespeare & the Cold War
- Science Fiction & the Cold War
- Zombies & the Cold War
- Automobile Culture / Petroleum Culture & the Cold War
- Consumer Culture & the Cold War
- Material Culture & the Cold War
- The CND and the Counter-Culture in the UK
- Soviet Underground Culture
- World Exhibitions; e.g., Expo 58 (self-representation, colonialism and nuclear discourses at the Brussel’ World Fair, etc.)
- Representations of Cuba
- The Vietnam War – Representation & Resonance
- The ‘Space Race’ – Representation & Resonance
- Chernobyl – Representation & Resonance
- The Tiananmen Square Massacre – Representation & Resonance
- ‘Nuclear Criticism’
- Globalization (and the ‘End’ of the Cold War)
- Cold War Nostalgia? (series such as *Deutschland 83*, *Deutschland 86*)
- Etc., etc.