

21.F056 Visual Histories: German Cinema 1945 - Present

Meeting: September 11, 2003

Film: Wolfgang Staudte (1906-1984) *The Murderers are Among Us*, 1946

1. Brief history of German Cinema 1933-1945

- the restructuring of the film industry
- the Third Reich cinema as popular cinema
- the Third Reich as political cinema

2. Discussion of *Murderers are Among Us*

3. The heritage of Expressionist cinema: A Sequence analysis

Group 1: Structure and Organization

What is the central (chronological) story of the film?

How is the story presented (emplotment)?

Are there sub-plots that comment on the main plot?

Is there a dramatic tension in the film?

Are there key scenes or turning points in the film?

Group 2: Characters

Can the characters be grouped together/

Who opposes whom?

To what social stratum do they belong?

How is their character revealed to us? By action, speech, or what others say about him/her?

Which are the sympathetic, non-sympathetic, and ambivalent characters?

What role does gender play in the film?

Group 3: Problematics

What are the ruling thematic oppositions on the film?

Which key discourses are discussed?

What is the image of society in the film?

Is the outcome/message of the film ambiguous?

Group 4: Sociological Aspects

What was the question to which the film is an answer?

What are the themes that are being discussed in the film as well as in the culture in which the film originated?

Does the film resonate different now after many years?

