

## Richard Hronek

Mellon Foundation Area and International Studies Fellowships for Incoming Graduate Students

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My experience in Germany in July and August of 2016 cannot be reduced down to one single type of benefit. The first time I visited Germany, I was 19 years old and could barely speak the language and knew few of the customs. My arrival this summer was not accompanied by the shock of the new and foreign but rather of nostalgia and anticipation. That being said, I experienced new frustrations and for the most part was enriched by my travels.

One of the primary goals for my time in Germany was to read the series of *noir* crime-novels written by Jakob Arjouni about his Turkish-German private detective, Kemal Kayankaya. Not only did I accomplish this goal, but, thanks to this grant, I also was able to do so partially in the city where these novels take place, Frankfurt. This luxury gave me a deeper understanding of the novels, as I could visit the various neighborhoods and try the regional delicacy *Ebbelwoi*, as the Frankfurters call it (standard German: *Apfelwein*, English: apple wine) mentioned in the books. Furthermore, I was able to read two other novels that I hoped would bolster my perspective on this crime series: one written by a Turkish immigrant to Germany *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserai* by Emine Özdamar and another by the godfather of the *noir* genre, Raymond Chandler, *The Long Goodbye*. I read *Karawanserai* to see how a Turkish-born, German author treated the topic of alcohol and found that her attitude was much more ambivalent than Arjouni's. I read *Goodbye* to establish a type of literary lineage and found that both Chandler and Arjouni created male-coded worlds in which violence appears to be an acceptable substitute for intimacy.

Another goal of mine was to gather secondary sources, especially those unavailable to me at UW-Madison, to help contextualize some of the topics within the Kayankaya-series and help me formulate my thesis. Towards this end, I bought a membership to both the national library in Frankfurt and in Berlin. This process alone was a cultural experience that testified to the bureaucracy that so many people accuse the Germans of; one has to register for membership online, pay at an automated machine, and receive the identification card from a librarian at the check-out desk. Bureaucracy aside, I was able to identify several sources for later research into my topic including books and articles about German national identity, the intersection of masculinity and alcohol, various histories of Germany and Germany's relationship with alcohol, and finally masculinity in both the *noir* genre as well as post-WWII Europe. I was also able to visit the *Gesellschaft für Geschichte des Brauwesens* (i.e., the society for the history of brewing) and their library, which had pamphlets and histories written by or about breweries in Frankfurt whose beer Kayankaya often consumes.

My learning and growth as a student was not bound by the above experiences, but also included absorbing culture, getting to know two important cities in Germany, and improvement of my language capabilities overall. The privilege of being able to spend six weeks in Germany, as enabled by the Mellon Foundation, has made me a stronger student and will make me a better teacher.