**DEPARTMENT OF**

**ART HISTORY & ART CONSERVATION**

ARTH 306 / 3.0

Modern Architecture in Germany: A Social History

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CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

This course examines German architecture, 1815 to 1945, as an important part of social practice. Buildings and monuments of modern Germany will be understood according to the values they expressed and perpetuated, through their aesthetics, their materials, and their spaces.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This survey examines key German architectural projects, both built and unbuilt, from the German Confederation (1815) to the end of the Third Reich (1945). This period in architecture displays particularly strong cohesion for many reasons. It was in the early nineteenth century that Germany first began to show clear signs of industrialization, whose technological innovations contributed to enormous changes in the built environment. Industry’s impact can be found in the late nineteenth century in the iron trussed structures hidden behind the first railway station facades, in the skylights atop department stores from the early twentieth century, and in the concrete bridges and roads of the Nazi’s autobahn. The decades from Confederation to the Third Reich are also characterized by concerted attempts to define the character of the German people. Karl Friedrich Schinkel gave expression to a romantic, cultivated people in his refined civic architecture for Imperial Berlin; Bauhaus artists designed concrete houses and apartment buildings to house efficient and cosmopolitan urban populations; and Albert Speer’s monumental architecture represented the implacable empire of a strong, healthy German race.

Architecture can be studied in a variety of ways—through its style, its technology, its use, and its relationship to other aspects of culture. In this course we will focus on understanding the architecture of Germany in its social and cultural context, through its connection to social class, gender, family, politics, urbanization, nationalization, and industrialization. The lectures, readings, and our own discussions will provide these connections. Over the course of the semester, we will deepen our understanding of these connections as well as exercise some of our own historical analysis, insight, and imagination.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Reading Summaries 30%

Participation 10%

Take-home Midterm Exam 30%

Take-home Final Exam 30%