

DEPARTMENT OF ART ART HISTORY & ART CONSERVATION

ARTH 306/3.0
Modern Architecture in Germany:
A Social History



CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

This survey examines key German buildings and monuments from the beginning of German Confederation to the end of the Third Reich. Emphasis will be placed on situating this architecture in its broader cultural and social context.

Prerequisites: Level 3 or above.

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 iron trussed structures hidden behind the first railway station facades, in the skylights atop department stores, 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 cultural context, through its connection to social class, gender, family, politics, urbanization, nationalization, and industrialization. The lectures and readings provide these connections. In addition to studying German architecture as other historians have presented it, we will also offer together our own interpretations of this architecture. Through in-class discussion and research projects, we will exercise our own historical analysis, insight, and imagination.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Weekly Quizzes	35%
Midterm exam	30%
Project (research paper, exhibition, or manifesto)	35%