

## ***Die Gegenwart der Vergangenheit***

GERM 370A (HAL), Summer 2023

9:00am – 12:15pm

Amerika-Institut, Operngasse 4, 1010 Vienna

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### **Description**

This upper-level course conducted in German will examine the presence, relevance, representation, and influence of the past (“die Vergangenheit”) in contemporary Austrian society (“die Gegenwart”). Specifically, the course will progress through four topical units, each focusing on a different historical period that continues to resonate today:

- The Roman occupation of current day Vienna and eastern Austria;
- The Middle Ages;
- The Habsburg monarchy of Austria in the 17<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century;
- National Socialism;

The exploration of each of the four historical periods will commence with a historical overview of the time period and then turn to current events, literary and filmic portrayals, and physical representations and sites that thematize the time period. The course content will be delivered through a range of texts (e.g., newspaper reports, editorials, reviews, films, literary passages, monuments, memorials, promotional materials, tour guides) that will also serve as sources for vocabulary and grammar development.

In addition to examining how Austria’s past continues to reverberate in today’s society, you will also discuss how the past lives on in American society and even in your own lives.

### **Approach**

One of the great advantages of teaching and learning German in Vienna is that the city offers an endless array of sites to visit, analyze, and discuss. As such, the city becomes our de facto classroom. Such is particularly the case with this course. Indeed, it is hard to walk down a street in Vienna without finding some contemporary reference to a period, person, or event from the past. For that reason, there will not be a day this semester when we do not leave the classroom and venture out into the city. On some days, we will not even spend time in the classroom, opting instead for meeting at a relevant site and choosing a nearby location to sit and discuss further. Particularly on such days, it is possible that class meetings will occur outside of the standard 9:00-12:15 time slot. For example, some days will begin before 9:00am, and some days we will have a second session in the afternoon to hear a guest speaker or in the evening to see a theater performance. Because of this variable schedule, your flexibility and punctuality are requested and appreciated! Regardless of the time and length of each class meeting, great effort will be made to respect the parameters of a course that carries four credits.

In addition to the many sites that we will visit in the city, the texts and particular themes of the course have been specifically selected to take advantage of current or recent happenings in Vienna. Examples include reading Stefan Zweig’s 1942 novella *Die Schachnovelle* and then seeing the 2021 film version; reading Arthur Schnitzler’s 1912 play *Professor Bernhardt* and then seeing a current rendition at the Burgtheater; viewing Charlie Chaplin’s 1940 film *The Great Dictator* and then seeing a theatrical version of it at the Wiener Kammerspiele.

Although Austria’s history will play a central role in the course, this is not a history course. In fact, the focus will be very contemporary; that is, we will need to understand the past to identify which aspects of

the past are being thematized (and which are being ignored) in its contemporary representation, but our primary focus will be on how the past is being remembered nowadays and what that current memorialization and representation indicates about Austrian society today. For example, a central component of our discussion of Stefan Zweig's *Schachnovelle* will be to analyze why this story from 80 years ago was made into a film in 2021. In many cases, the current commemorations of past events have not been without controversy, so we will also want to inform ourselves about the history of the commemoration and the relevant contested issues.

Guiding our examination and analysis of contemporary representations of the past will be central questions that form the basis of the "culture of memory" ("Erinnerungskultur"), which has been a central theme in post-1945 German Studies:

- *Was?* Which past event is being represented and thematized? What do we need to know about it? Which aspects of the past are foregrounded and which are sidelined?
- *Wer?* Who is being represented and who is responsible for the representation?
- *Wo?* Where is the representation taking place?
- *Wann?* When did the past event occur and when was its contemporary representation realized?
- *Wie?* How is the past represented?
- *Warum?* Why is the past being thematized and represented in this way? What does this current representation say about contemporary Austrian society and culture?

Answering these questions will require knowledge of history, geography, urban planning, politics, culture, and even architectural design. In addition to daily discussions about these questions, you will also respond to the course material in a series of written assignments, ranging from personal narratives about your own interactions with the past to analytical essays about texts or performances. Despite the range of assignments, the overarching focus of the written assignments encompasses the type of response genres targeted at 300-level instruction in the German Studies curriculum (e.g., summary, comparison, review, analysis). Oral assignments will also play a role in the course because twice during the semester you will give a formal presentation (*Referat*) on a monument or memorial in the city. You will also write up a description for each of your assigned monuments and include that description in an online walking tour the class will construct together using the [OpenTour Builder](#) app developed by Emory's Center for Digital Scholarship (ECDS). Throughout the course, efforts will be made to provide appropriate models of the type of writing and speaking that is expected of students.

In addition to the extensive speaking and writing for the course, you will also do plenty of reading and listening through different activities, such as in-class discussions, attending theater performances, film viewings, and nightly readings.

One final note about the intensive nature of this course. Because each class meeting lasts 3.25 hours, one day during this intensive summer semester is equivalent to one week during a normal, long semester. While the semi-immersive learning environment this summer has real benefits for language learning, readings and assignments have to be adjusted to this intensive format. For example, what would normally be assigned over the course of a week during a normal semester is not necessarily an appropriate assignment from one day to the next this summer, and in some cases, in place of additional homework, a class meeting will extend beyond the standard 3.25 hours.

### Goals:

By the end of the semester, students in this course will be able to

- locate and report on culturally significant issues or problems in the contemporary representation of a past event and contextualize this representation in terms of their larger socio-historical dimensions;
- summarize the views of others expressed in discussions and primary sources;
- analyze the cultural significance of contemporary memorializations;

- describe and present contemporary memorializations to a general audience in German;
- glean and use lexico-grammatical items from source texts to conduct this process of summary-response;
- reflect about your own language use in different contexts and demonstrate familiarity with the next steps in their language learning.

### Prerequisites:

- German 202 or the equivalent, or permission of instructor;

### Course materials:

- Texts:
  - o Stefan Zweig (1942). *Schachnovelle*.
  - o Arthur Schnitzler (1912). *Professor Bernhardt*
  - o Excerpts from Martin Pollack's (2016) *Topographie der Erinnerung*
  - o Excerpts from Eva Menasse's (2013) *Quasikristalle*
- Films:
  - o *Schachnovelle* (2021; Philipp Stölzl, dir.)
  - o *The Great Dictator* (1940; Charlie Chaplin, dir.)
  - o *Waldheims Walzer* (2018; Ruth Beckermann, dir.)
- Theatrical performances:
  - o *Die Ärztin* (Robert Icke, dir.) at the Burgtheater, June 21
  - o *Der große Diktator* (Dominic Oley, dir.) at the Wiener Kammerspiele, June 26
- a good reference grammar book (e.g., Rankin & Wells or Dreyer & Schmitt).

### Assessment

1. Participation (20%). As an upper-level seminar, this course expects active and engaged participation by all class members.

Grade	Criteria
A	always well-prepared always on time for class outings always is attentive and eager to volunteer always tries to use German with classmates and instructor for entire class always makes the most of each exercise shows real resourcefulness and imagination when using the language always responds to and engages classmates in a respectful manner remains critical and open-minded toward target and native culture
B	usually well-prepared usually on time for class outings usually is attentive and volunteers occasionally usually tries to use German with classmates and instructor for entire class usually makes the most of each exercise completes exercises with some imagination and resourcefulness makes some effort to engage fellow students shows some development of cultural sensitivity
C	adequately prepared and attentive rarely on time for class outings occasionally needs to be reminded to use German with instructor and classmates responds and completes exercises with minimal imagination does not engage classmates beyond the minimum requirements for an assignment

D	usually unprepared makes little effort to participate or complete exercises rarely tries to use German with instructor or classmates
F	makes no contribution to class whatsoever

Note that half of your participation grade will be consist of your participation on the group excursions as outlined in the “10% Gruppenarbeit” document.

You are allowed a maximum of 1 absence during the semester without penalty for any reason (e.g., doctor, wedding). Beginning with the 2nd absence, a **penalty of -1%** will be levied on the final semester grade for each hour missed.

2. Homework (20%). Completing homework thoroughly, regularly, and on time is extremely important. Homework will be graded according to the following criteria:
  - “√+” (100%): Homework handed in on time and indicating a very thorough effort, including a conscious attempt to use language features emphasized in class;
  - “√” (80%): Homework handed in on time and indicating a satisfactory effort;
  - “√-” (60%): Homework handed in on time but indicating an unsatisfactory effort.

*Note:* Homework that receives a check or check minus can be corrected, turned back in, and, assuming the issues have been addressed, receive a mark of 90%. Late homework will not be accepted and will receive no credit. Students are encouraged to use the homework exercises to experiment with the language and become resourceful users of German. At the same time, they are expected to use online resources to check their work for any unnecessary errors. Specifically, in 300-level courses in the German Studies Department it is expected that on take-home assignments students will use resources available to them (e.g., spellcheck in MS Word or Google Doc; websites with verb conjugations; online dictionaries with gender and plural forms) to avoid committing the following errors: gender (G), punctuation (I), case after prepositions (K), plural form of nouns (Pl), spelling and capitalization (R), and subject-verb agreement (SV) = GIKPRS! Random errors in these categories are unavoidable but consistent inattention to these avoidable errors will negatively affect the final grade.

Regular homework assignments could consist any of the following activities: (re)reading an assigned text, creating a semantic field, attending a presentation, interviewing someone, gathering background information, completing a worksheet or grammar exercise, working with a classmate on an assignment, writing an essay, preparing for an in-class speaking event, or building the online walking tour for the course.

3. Writing assignments (35%). Over the course of the semester you will complete a range of written assignments of varying length, each consisting of multiple drafts:
  - a. Short responses to topics raised in the course readings (1 page each)
  - b. Summary of interview with native speaker about Austrian history (2-3 pages)
  - c. Comparison of film/play and original text (2-3 pages)
  - d. Description of two monuments for class-generated walking tour (2 pages each)
4. 2 oral presentations (*Referate*) (20%). Each student will give formal presentations on two different monuments in the city that thematize the past. Each presentation will consist of two takes, the first one given individually to Prof. Maxim for feedback and then the second one to the group as a whole.
5. Walking tour (5%). Students will use the Emory-generated app OpenTour Builder to create a walking tour of the monuments that were featured in their presentations.

### Academic Honor:

The Honor Code of Emory College is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on quizzes and exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the instructor’s instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information

to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You agree that the instructor is entitled to move you to another seat during examinations, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council.

The central issue is that any work submitted to an instructor for evaluation should be one's own. Within the German Studies Department assistance is possible and even encouraged in two limited situations: online or in person. Online resources can be used for grammatical explanations (e.g., verb conjugations) or the translation of words, expressions, and phrases. **However, use of online resources to translate entire sentences or paragraphs is not permitted.** Seeking assistance in person should be limited to receiving suggestions, reviewing certain topics, and addressing revisions, but the ultimate production of the work to be turned in will rest with you.

- The Honor Code, a list of offenses and the Honor Council process may be found; <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>

## SEMESTERÜBERBLICK:

Woche 1: Einführung, Römerzeit, Mittelalter

1. 05.06. Einführung; Fremdenverkehrsamt; Römische Ausgrabung
2. 06.06. Carnuntum
3. 07.06. das [Mittelalter](#); der Stephansdom; die Stadtmauer
4. 08.06. Schneeberg

Woche 2: Neuzeit bis zur Jahrhundertwende

5. 09.06. Schloss Schönbrunn
6. 12.06. Türkenbelagerung; Heldenplatz
7. 13.06. Sisi Museum
8. 14.06. Fin-de-siècle Wien: Kaffeehauskultur (Cafe Central);
9. 15.06. Fin-de-siècle Wien: Secession; Gustav Klimt; Oberes Belvedere Belvedere
10. 16.06. Melk

Woche 3: das 20. Jahrhundert

11. 19.06. Haus der Geschichte
12. 20.06. Gemeindebauten
13. 21.06. Steine der Erinnerung; *Die Ärztin* im Burgtheater
14. 22.06. Mauthausen
15. 23.06. Opfermythos und alternative Fakten
16. 26.06. Zentralfriedhof; *Der große Diktator* in den Wiener Kammerspielen
17. 27.06. MUMOK
18. 28.06. Abschlussdiskussion