

German Studies

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Message from the Chair

Dear Friends of German Studies at Emory:

Now that I am no longer chair, a position in which I served for eight years, I would like to take the liberty to reflect in this brief column on the overall state of the department, and less on last year's achievements and highlights, many of which you will find on the following pages. This is made easier by the fact that in fall 2014 the German Studies department



Peter Höyng

underwent its second external review during my time as chair, the first since spring 2007. The seven years between the two appraisals conducted by colleagues at peer institutions provide an appropriate moment to look back at the paths the department has taken and the milestones it has achieved.

Without a doubt, the department has changed dramatically, most visibly in terms of personnel, curricular design, and level of interest among Emory's students. After two retirements and the untimely death of our dear colleague, Maximilian Aue, today only five permanent faculty members cover the entire range of our undergraduate program, including Yiddish culture, literature, and language. Due to the increase in student enrollment, including an upsurge in the number of students who have chosen German as their major or minor in the past few years, the department has had to rely on temporary faculty to cover this increased demand for German Studies. But we can count ourselves lucky, because we are able to hire highly engaged and qualified teachers of German including two of our recent

graduates who, along with the assistance of a Fulbright Teaching Assistant from Austria, ensure a welcoming, vibrant, and exceptionally engaged department.

The increasing number of Emory students interested in German Studies can be in great part attributed to our innovative, topic-based curriculum, which the entire department redeveloped under the guidance of Professor Maxim and his nationally recognized expertise in foreign language pedagogy. Our collective attempt to link the study of language and content at all levels of instruction was also largely why our department was recognized as one of the first two Centers of Excellence nationwide by the American Association of Teachers in German (AATG) in spring 2012. Subsequently, a collectively written essay on our curricular reform has been also nationally recognized.

Within this curricular context the faculty have integrated their various and far-ranging research interests into classes such as eco-criticism, Yiddish literature and culture, discourse analysis of contemporary German society, interaction of literature with classical music, and transnational studies. Our faculty's excitement for and expertise in research—for which a number of us have secured prestigious funding from sources within and outside of Emory—is, I believe, the reason why the department has, despite many challenges, brightly prospered in the past years.

I would like to thank, above all, my colleagues, current and past, for their help and support in proudly and collectively achieving these many milestones.

With warm gratitude,

Peter Höyng

Newsletter of
the Department
of German Studies
at Emory University

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Help sustain our
Vienna Program by
giving to the Westbrook
Scholarship Fund.

Faculty News



Nick Block is in the third year of his postdoctoral position at the rank of Visiting Assistant Professor. He is the winner of the 2015 Leo Baeck Essay Prize for German-Jewish studies for his article, "On Nathan Birnbaum's Mes-

sianism and Translating the Jewish Other." This article was published in the *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*. He had a second article on exile literature published in *Nexus: Essays in German Jewish Studies*. He is working on a book detailing the transnational influences on Jewish culture in the half century between the 1880s and 1930s, when the mass westward migration of Eastern European Jews radically reconfigured the way in which Western and Eastern Jews constructed their Jewish sense of self. In spring 2015 he taught an advanced German-language course on Turks, Germans, and Jews, which engaged students in his research. He also taught an exploratory linguistics course, Yiddish for German Speakers, and he advised two students on their honors theses in studies related to German literature and art.



Peter Höyng attended and presented papers at five national and international conferences over the past year, and completed two essays for publication

and a translation with a former colleague. These scholarly activities reflect his varied research interests: he presented twice on the Jewish playwright George Tabori and his satirical play, *Mein Kampf*, and started a new project on the Nobel laureate and Austrian writer Elfriede Jelinek and her interest and affection for the composer Schubert. Last but not least, as an offshoot from his long-term Beethoven project, Höyng finished an essay on Eulogius Schneider, a Franciscan monk who became a professor of aesthetics and literature in Bonn, where the young Beethoven adopted some of his arguments for expanding one's intellectual horizon by reading literature.



Marianne Lancaster coordinated and supervised our five first-year German sections and organized our peer tutors. She also served as faculty liaison to the German House and worked closely with Anna Berger,

our Fulbright Teaching Assistant living in the house. She represented the department at the state German Convention, making contact with Georgia high school students of German, and she served once again as the departmental representative on the executive committee of the Emory College Language Center. In this role, she collected German online material for self-study. Furthermore, she served as our departmental PACE coordinator and worked as the internship faculty contact with Violetta Noor. She was invited by the Chicago Goethe Institute to author teaching guidelines and material for a new website project on teaching German to students of math, engineering, natural sciences, and technology.



Hiram Maxim spent the last academic year on a much-appreciated sabbatical. During his time away from the department he continued his research into collegiate foreign language curriculum construction by focusing on the

writing development of three students who completed three consecutive levels in the curriculum. The preliminary findings from this case study highlight the dynamism and variability of language learning and also suggest ways to tighten the pedagogical approach to writing within the curriculum, particularly at the upper levels. The nationwide attention that the department's undergraduate curriculum has received resulted in invited lectures this past year at Cornell, Penn, and the University of Tennessee, and he had an article appear on the faculty development that arises out of curricular reform. He also used his time to delve deeper into the research on linguistic landscapes, a relatively new field

that investigates the public use of language (e.g., on signs, billboards, shop windows). He engaged his students this summer in Vienna in linguistic landscape-based projects as part of his course on multicultural Austria. A highlight of his sabbatical was receiving the 2015 Excellence in Teaching Award from the Emory College Language Center.



Caroline Schaumann served as director of undergraduate studies in fall 2014 and taught a new freshman seminar, *The Rise and Fall of Nature*, which also counts toward the sustainability minor. She presented aspects of

that course at the Annual Convention of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in San Antonio, Texas, in November 2014, and gave another presentation at the Thinking Mountains conference in Jasper, Canada, in May. Her publications focused on the environmental humanities and cultural representations of mountains in particular. Schaumann co-authored the article "Human and Non-human Agencies in the Anthropocene," which appeared in summer 2015 in the journal *Ecozon@*, and published "The Return of the Bergfilm: Nordwand (2008) and Nanga Parbat (2010)" in *German Quarterly* (fall 2014). Together with colleague Heather Sullivan of Trinity University, she continued to work on the forthcoming anthology *German Ecocriticism: Ecology, Materiality, Catastrophe, and Genre in the Anthropocene*. In spring 2015, Schaumann was a visiting professor at Deep Springs College in California. This summer she worked on her monograph in collaboration with a research group on Alexander von Humboldt at the University of Potsdam in Germany.

Vienna 2015



Miriam Udel was promoted to associate professor with tenure in June 2015. Her study on the emergence of Yiddish literary modernism, *Never Better!: The Modern Jewish Picaresque*, will appear in early 2016, published by the University of

Michigan Press in its new series on Comparative Jewish Cultures. She is now working on a two-part project on Yiddish children's literature and culture, comprising an anthology and a critical study. She was named the Dr. Emanuel Patt Visiting Professor in Eastern European Cultures at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York; she spent the summer accessing archival and library materials at YIVO, home to the world's largest collection of Yiddish children's literature. Recent articles on Yiddish Sabbath tales and on the relation between folkloric and "high art" tales for children are forthcoming in 2016. Udel also will begin an appointment as one of the initial cohort of Emory's Interdisciplinary Faculty Fellows. Working together with professors Marshall Duke (psychology) and Melvin Konner (anthropology), she will spearhead a three-year research project on Yiddish children's literature as a window onto the culture of Jewish childhood between the wars.

As Emory College's longest-standing summer study abroad program, the Emory in Vienna summer program successfully balanced tradition with innovation for its 42nd incarnation in 2015. While students continued to enroll in two German courses at the intermediate or advanced level and live with host families for seven weeks in Austria's impressive capital, they also participated for the first time in a one-credit course during the spring semester to better prepare themselves academically and practically for their experiences abroad. Another change was that only students with prior knowledge of German could take part in the program, so that the 16 students would maximize the opportunity to improve their language proficiency. Last but not least, instead of offering an additional course in music, the program offered instead multiple opportunities for attending concerts and operas. Limiting the study to the two German courses not only provided greater liberty for programming such as afternoon tours but also for more focus on advancing the students' language skills. Based on early feedback, these curricular and programmatic changes were greatly welcomed and appreciated by the students.

Help sustain our Vienna Program by giving to the Westbrook Scholarship Fund.



Vienna 2015 captured with selfies and other photos

Yiddish at Emory

The 2014–2015 academic year was a lively year for Yiddish studies at Emory. During the fall term, a broad cross-section of undergraduates enrolled in Miriam Udel's course *Nature and the Jewish Imagination*. Originally developed under the auspices of the Piedmont Project, which seeks to foster teaching and learning about sustainability across the curriculum, this iteration of the course saw enrollment double over its 2012 debut. Highlights of the semester included a reflective nature walk through Baker Woodland with Oxford College biology professor Eloise Carter and the presentation of final projects, which ranged from a children's book to a board game, to original poetry and an original painting.

Yiddish 101/102 were offered to a small but highly dedicated group of students. The tradition of Thursday Yiddish sing-alongs continued in full force. During the



Students display a game in Yiddish during one of their combined class events.

spring, students in Yiddish 102 completed a monthlong unit about Passover, culminating in a visit to Pitts Theology Library's collection of haggadot/hagodes, where they were able to examine specimens of Passover prayer books ranging from the 17th century until the present

day. The Yiddish program was greatly enriched last spring when Nick Block offered a course in Yiddish for German Speakers. The two classes met together on three occasions: to hear a talk comparing Yiddish to African American vernacular English, to play games in Yiddish, and for the Yiddish 102 students to perform a short play they wrote based on a Passover folktale.

Finally, a group of undergraduate and graduate students met weekly throughout the year with Udel to read Yiddish children's literature. They moved from folkloric material published in Poland to ultramodern stories written in New York (the stories of the socialist puppy, Labzik) and the Soviet Union. Both graduate enrollees spent summer 2015 at intensive Yiddish-language programs: Matthew Brittingham at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Mass., and Anastasiia Strakhova at Tel Aviv University.

On the "US-German" Internship Program 2015

For the sixth year in a row, the department was able to offer internships to qualified undergraduates through the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany. Growing each year in popularity, the "AmCham" Internship Program is getting more and more competitive among the colleges and universities in the Southeast. This summer, seven of the 22 undergraduates selected to participate in the program were from Emory. In the end, six accepted attractive, paid three-month internships in a range of industries such as trucking, aviation and aerospace, insurance, food, agriculture, financial and industrial products, consulting, and technical certification service. In addition to the internship, the American

Chamber of Commerce invited the participants to weekend excursions to Berlin and Munich. The German Studies department is extremely grateful for the efforts of the Advisory Council, particularly the work of former council president Dr. Christoph Rückel, to make this wonderful opportunity available to Emory undergraduates. This year's efforts were coordinated by Violetta Noor, the new coordinator of the internship program. Her office is in the German Studies department, but she works with all participating universities—this year from Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia—as well as with the AmCham office in Frankfurt and her counterpart there, Katrin Utzinger, to facilitate the program. We expect this year's interns



Six Emory students joined peers from around the Southeast in paid AmCham internships in Germany.

to return with as much enthusiasm as our former participants and can proudly add that we had very positive feedback from the employers too.

Intellectual Exchanges

Departmental Events throughout the Year

As part of Peter Höyng's course on World Music Literature (GER 470), Kerry Candaele presented to the general public his moving documentary, *Following the Ninth: In the Footsteps of Beethoven's Final Symphony*, on October 21, 2014. In addition, Candaele had a lively discussion with students from Höyng's class.

The German Studies Advisory Council continued its series of public lectures by inviting Andreas Stoch, Minister for Schools and Sports for the state of Baden-Württemberg. In his well-attended and well-received presentation, he focused on the aftermath and meaning of the fall of the Berlin Wall 25 years ago.

For the second Maximilian Aue Memorial Lecture on February 5, Professor David B. Suchhoff of Colby College, and an expert on Franz Kafka's works, gave a presentation on how Kafka's writings had an impact on Samuel Beckett.

On January 27, Mary Zeigler, professor at Georgia State University, gave a talk with Nick Block on the topic "Is Ebonics the New Yiddish? Language Politics in Historical Perspective." This lecture and discussion was part of Block's new course, Yiddish for German Speakers (GER 380)

As part of Nick Block's course on Turks, Germans, and Jews (GER 408), in April Agnes C. Mueller from the University of South Carolina talked with students about her recently published study, *The Inability to Love: Jews, Gender, and America in Recent German Literature* (Northwestern UP, 2015).

Nick Block coordinated the German Studies Roundtable last year by organizing a scholarly discussion of ongoing research for each semester, including a respondent from affiliated departments. On November 13, 2014, Emory Professor of Art History Todd Cronan gave a talk, "When the Medium Became the Message," on which Peter Höyng commented, thereby opening a lively discussion.

In the spring semester Nick Block shared ongoing research from a chapter of his forthcoming book, titled "The Shifting Locale of Jewish Orients in German-Jewish Thought." Kevin Karnes, Winship Professor of Music History, responded as an expert in Eastern European Jewish musicology to Block's interest in Jewish orientalism.



(from top, clockwise) Andreas Stoch lecture; Mary Zeigler of Georgia State; and David Suchhoff of Colby College

Student and Alumni News



Huang

Xiqiao (Shirley) Huang Shirley has taken German courses since her freshman year at Emory, which included GER 101, 102, 201, 202, 301W (German Literature), 320 and 321 (Business German), 380 (Yiddish), and 408 (Transnational Studies, Turks, Germans, and Jews).

She also took German-related courses including MUS 210 (music course in Vienna) and HIST 185 (German History). She attended our Summer Vienna German Studies Program in 2013. The following summer she did an internship in Munich with ROFIN-BAASEL Lasertech GmbH & Co. KG. Returning from Germany, she became a resident of our German House, only to return to Munich in the summer, this time to participate in the US-German Internship Program. She is an excellent student who recognizes the many opportunities that the department offers, and made the most of them. The department recognized her work in April 2015 by selecting her as its recipient for the "Excellence in Language Studies Award," with which the Emory College Language Center honors one student per language annually. *Herzlichen Glückwunsch, Shirley!*



Donovan

Katie Donovan The department was delighted this year to award the German Studies Award for Excellence to graduating German Studies major Kathleen Donovan. Katie began her study of German at Oxford College, spent the summer after her sophomore year on

the Emory Vienna Summer Program, and spent last summer as an US-German intern for the consulting firm Roland Berger in Munich. A member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society since her junior year, Katie has done outstanding work in all of her German classes and also has been an exemplary departmental citizen, volunteering often to lead the weekly *Mittagstisch* and serving this past year as the chief organizer of the department's new German Club. Katie also distinguished herself in her other major field of study, economics, by writing an honor's thesis on the effects of government education policies and economic openness on the English proficiency of citizens of the European Union, for which she received highest honors.



Weisberger

Abigail Weisberger Abby ('14) was accepted in fall 2015 into the PhD program in Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan. She enters the program as the recipient of the Endelman/Gitelman doctoral fellowship from the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies to expand the research in

her honors thesis, which she wrote under the direction of Nick Block. "In exploring German-Jewish studies at Michigan," she says, "I'm following very closely in Professor Block's footsteps, since that's where he completed his doctorate!" This past year, post graduation, she was a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Offenbach am Main, Germany. "Writing the thesis senior year didn't just teach me how to research and prepare for grad school; it sparked my interest in topics I've been able to pursue firsthand here in Germany, such as Weimar Jewish culture,

autobiographical writing, and memory studies." While expanding her teaching repertoire at the Haupt- und Realschule, where she worked, she has enjoyed the freedom to travel. In fall 2014 she attended an academic conference on Franz Rosenzweig at Goethe University Frankfurt and networked with future colleagues. She also attended the summer program at the Amherst Yiddish Book Center. She is especially excited to further her knowledge of Yiddish in the Frankel Center's popular *leyenkrayz* (reading group).



Hertz

Sydney ("Bine") Hertz Sydney received the Yiddish Language Acquisition Prize in 2015 after completing two semesters of Yiddish with distinction as well as two Yiddish culture courses during her undergraduate career. As a freshman, she excelled in Yiddish Culture: Parents, Children, and

Generational Change, consistently posting the highest scores in the class. In her sophomore year she took Nature and the Jewish Imagination, where she not only put forward her own strong and creative academic performance but served as a peer tutor who helped others master the material. An English major with a strong focus on Yiddish literature and culture, Sydney is spending fall 2015 studying in London. Upon her return to Emory, she looks forward to reading more Yiddish texts in the original with Miriam Udel.

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Course Innovations

Small Gems

The German Studies department took full advantage of recent changes in Emory College that allow for greater variety in credit hours by offering three new one-credit courses, each of them “small gems.”

Yiddish for German Speakers (GER 380, spring 2015)

Nick Block introduced students to the linguistic similarities of German and Yiddish as two English cognate languages. Students with German 201 equivalency rapidly learned Yiddish—the biggest challenge they faced was learning the Hebrew alphabet. One focus of the course was discussing linguistic evolution and politics. Comparisons were made with English dialects, and African American vernacular (“Ebonics”) in particular. Mary Zeigler, a Georgia State professor and an expert on the politics of Ebonics, spoke to the class within the context of Yiddish’s fight for linguistic recognition. Students learned to read Yiddish through the songs of the Barry Sisters and short stories by Sholem Aleichem and Y. L. Peretz.

The German Genius (GER 375, fall 2014)

Peter Höyng designed this course for beginning to advanced students to explore Germany’s rich and complex cultural, economic, and political history from the 18th to the 20th centuries. It not only helped the students understand the German mind-set but also why German studies remains a central key to unlock the country’s legacy and mentality. Students read and discussed one chapter per week selected from Peter Watson’s book, *The German Genius*, and learned different ways to approach and interact with a given chapter, ranging from a summary, to an analysis of its methodology, to a critique of it. In addition, students wrote nine one-page responses, each of them with a different thematic focus.

Vienna Awaits You (GER 375, spring 2015)

This one-credit course prepared students for our 42nd Summer Study Abroad Program in Austria’s capital, Vienna, by providing them with a broad historical and cultural context and crucial predeparture information. In addition, they began to learn how to interpret urban space and architecture. Each class began with a hands-on approach to information crucial for travel to Austria, and how to make the most of their seven-week stay in Vienna. This practical segment was followed by weekly discussion of a chapter from Steven Beller’s *A Concise History of Austria*.

Innovations for Advanced Students

In addition to these classes, the department continued to offer advanced classes that integrate the research of faculty into the classroom.

Turks, Germans, and Jews (GER 408, spring 2015)

Nick Block’s *Turks, Germans, and Jews* was the first course under the redesigned curriculum number German 408: Transnational Studies. As part of his research, the course allowed the students to work through contemporary, 21st-century German literature and cultural products. Through the analysis of two plays, an opera libretto, a TV show, a web comic, documentary films, and political cartoons, students explored the vacillating alliances between German Muslim and Jewish communities against a historically burdened backdrop of cultural inclusion and exclusion. Included were recent debates on circumcision (2012), the *Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund* murder trial (2013), and the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict (2014).

World Music Literature: Three Paradigms of Musical ‘Translations’ of German Literature (GER 470, fall 2014)

In this course, Peter Höyng introduced his recently coined concept of “world music literature,” from which classi-

cal music helped to propel German literature otherwise considered to be of minor importance and/or quality onto the world stage. Three of these examples all emanated from Vienna: Schikaneder’s/ Mozart’s *Zauberflöte* (1791), Schiller’s/ Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony (1824), and Müller’s/Schubert’s *Die Winterreise* (1827). These three canonical compositions happen to represent three different musical genres: an opera, a (choral) symphony, and a *Liederzyklus*. Each of these works allowed integrating the film medium, which was particularly rewarding when students could discuss with film director Kerry Candaele his documentary, *Following the Ninth: In the Footsteps of Beethoven’s Final Symphony*.

Memory Politics in German Culture Today (GER 380, spring 2015)

In this new interdisciplinary German Studies course, visiting instructor Anna Zimmer introduced students to the rich memorial culture of late 20th- and early 21st-century Germany through a variety of media, including a novel by Nobel Prize laureate Günter Grass; texts by Croatian-German author Nicol Ljubic; film; and political speeches by Germany’s former foreign minister, Joschka Fischer. The course also explored how the past is remembered or forgotten in the architecture of Berlin. In collaboration with Digital Humanities colleague Brian Croxall, Zimmer incorporated a brief unit on the Battle of Atlanta Project (battleATL.org) into the course to broaden students’ understanding of the role of memory in the present by exposing them not only to the rich memorial culture of Germany but by localizing the themes of the course through an exploration of memorial efforts on campus and in the city of Atlanta. With the assistance of a mobile app developed here at Emory, a Q&A session with Croxall and historian Daniel Pollock, and a field trip funded by a CFDE mini-grant to the Cyclorama in Grant Park, the course compared how the United States and Germany grapple with the past in the present.

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