

At the Gates of Vienna

with Victor Davis Hanson, May 21 - 31, 2010



*From the Islamic Jihad
to the Nazi Holocaust*

Dear Friend and Traveler,
 Professors Bruce Thornton and Tom Conner are distinguished students of Europe, modern and ancient, Western and Eastern, and accomplished public lecturers and published scholars. I have asked them both to help provide us with an intellectually stimulating tour of the great cities on the Danube and its environs, characterized by both onsite and evening lectures about the culture, literature, and military history of Eastern Europe, especially the great battles of the continent that have changed the course of Western Civilization - from the end of the Roman Empire and the often horrific efforts to repulse the advance of the Ottoman Empire, to the carnage of World Wars I and II and the most recent struggle against the Soviet Empire.

As was true of our past scholarly tours, our trip organizer, Al Philipp, has ensured that our visit will be balanced by stays at the finest European hotels, before embarking on a week-long cruise down the Danube to Vienna and Budapest, replete with luxury accommodations and carefully planned shore excursions. Once more, the four of us invite you to join us, and-in the manner of our previous visits to the battlefields of Western Europe, and the vanquished civilizations of Italy, Crete, and Greece-we look forward to conversations with you all during meals and our joint talks about the great moments - and daily visits to the great scenes - of European history in the East.

Sincerely,

Victor Davis Hanson

Senior Fellow, Classics and Military History
 The Hoover Institution, Stanford University



Speakers

Dr. Victor Davis Hanson

Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow in Military History/Classics at The Hoover Institution, Stanford University, and Professor Emeritus of Classics, California State University, Fresno. Hanson (B.A. Classics, UC Santa Cruz; Ph.D. Classics, Stanford University; member, the American School of Classical Studies, Athens) is the author of *A War Like No Other*, *Carnage and Culture*; *Ripples of Battle*; *The Western Way of War*; and thirteen additional books on ancient, agrarian, and military history. He is a past recipient of the National Humanities Medal, the Bradley Prize, the Weston Lectureship, the Eric Breindel Award, and currently writes weekly syndicated columns for Tribune Media Services, the National Review, and Pajamas Media.com

Dr. Bruce Thornton

Professor of Classics, Director of the Humanities Program California State University, Fresno. Thornton (B.A. Latin, UCLA; Ph.D. Classics and Comparative Literature, UCLA) is the author of *The Decline and Fall. Europe's Slow Motion Suicide.*; *Plagues of the Mind*; and the forthcoming *The Anatomy of Appeasement*. From Ancient Greece to the War on Terror.

Dr. Tom Conner

William P. Harris Professor of Military History at Hillsdale College. Conner (B.A. Elizabethtown College, M.A. Ph.D., University of North Carolina) has taught Western heritage and European history at Hillsdale College for 26 years. He has lectured throughout Europe on the sites of the World Wars since 1979. He currently teaches Nineteenth Century Europe, Europe in the 20th Century, and The Two World Wars.



Itinerary

MAY 21, FRIDAY

Depart the U.S. on individual flights for Munich, Germany

MAY 22, SATURDAY

Arrive Munich international airport and transfer to our luxury hotel downtown Munich close to the Rathausplatz. Meet your traveling companions and hosts at the welcoming reception. Dinner included.

MAY 23, SUNDAY

Morning lecture and Munich sightseeing. The rise of Adolf Hitler. The German state of Bavaria where the Nazis were based was a hotbed of groups opposed to the democratic government in Berlin. By November 1923, the Nazis, with 55,000 followers, were the biggest and best organized. Hitler and the Nazis hatched a plot in which they would kidnap the leaders of the Bavarian government and force them at gunpoint to accept Hitler as their leader. Then, according to their plan, with the aid of famous World War One General, Erich Ludendorff, they would win over the German Army, proclaim a nationwide revolt and bring down the German democratic government in Berlin. On November 8, 1923, SA troops under the direction of Hermann Göring surrounded the place. Hitler and his storm troopers burst into the beer hall causing instant panic. Hitler and Göring forced their way to the podium: "The National Revolution has begun!" Hitler shouted.

MAY 24, MONDAY

Morning visit to Dachau. It was the first Nazi concentration camp opened in Germany, located on the grounds of an abandoned munitions factory near the medieval town of Dachau, about 10 miles northwest of Munich. Opened in March 1933, it was the first regular concentration camp established by the coalition government of National Socialist Party (Nazi Party) and the German Nationalist People's Party (dissolved on 6 July 1933). Heinrich Himmler, Chief of Police of Munich, officially described the camp as "the first concentration camp for political prisoners." Dachau served as a prototype and model for the other Nazi concentration camps that followed.

Afternoon drive to the beautiful city of Nurnberg and board our ship for a seven night river cruise on the luxurious MS Amacello.

MAY 25, TUESDAY

Enjoy a guided morning tour of Nurnberg with its fabulous Gothic churches and elegantly impressive walls. See the storybook 900-year-old ramparts that surround the city, the Imperial Castle and the Justice Palace where the War Crimes Tribunal sat in 1946. At lunchtime, rejoin the ship further along the Main-Danube Canal and continue to the highest point of your cruise - 1,332 feet above sea level before descending through stair-step locks to the charming Bavarian town of Dietfurt.

MAY 26, WEDNESDAY

This morning's scenic cruising takes you through the final stretch of the Main-Danube Canal to arrive in magnificent Regensburg, one of Germany's best preserved medieval cities. A guided tour will show you the city's architectural highlights, including the Old Town Hall and the Porta Praetoria - gates to an ancient Roman fort which was built in 179 AD. Marvel at beautiful churches and one of the oldest bridges crossing the Danube. In the evening enjoy a musical performance onboard.

MAY 27, THURSDAY

Visit to the Kehlsteinhaus also known as the Eagle's Nest, a chalet-style building, which when built was an extension of the Obersalzberg complex constructed by the Nazis in the German Alps near Berchtesgaden. The Kehlsteinhaus was an official 50th birthday present for Adolf Hitler. Nicknamed Eagle's Nest by a French diplomat, it was meant to be a retreat for Hitler and a place for him to entertain visiting dignitaries.

MAY 28, FRIDAY

A morning stop in Melk, Austria. Melk Abbey, one of the world's most famous Benedictine monastic sites, was founded in 1089 when Leopold II, Margrave of Austria gave one of his castles to Benedictine monks from Lambach Abbey. A school was founded in the 12th century, and the monastic library soon became renowned for its extensive manuscript collection. The monastery's scriptorium was also a major site for the production of manuscripts.

Today's impressive Baroque abbey was built between 1702 and 1736 to designs by Jakob Prandtauer. Particularly noteworthy is the abbey church with frescos by Johann Michael Rottmayr and the impressive library with countless



medieval manuscripts, including a famed collection of musical manuscripts and frescos by Paul Troger. Due to its fame and academic stature, Melk managed to escape dissolution under Emperor Joseph II when many other abbeys were seized and dissolved between 1780 and 1790. The abbey managed to survive other threats to its existence during the Napoleonic Wars, and also in the period following the Nazi Anschluss that took control of Austria in 1938, when the school and the abbey were confiscated by the state.

Evening arrival in Vienna. Sightseeing tour and classical music concert with works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Johann Strauss

MAY 29, SATURDAY

Morning lecture and Vienna sightseeing. The Turks besieged the city twice. The Ottoman Empire was at the zenith of its power, and Vienna was defended by only a small garrison under Count Salm. Having shelled the city and killed some 1500 of its citizens, the Turks withdrew. During the 1683 siege, the city garrison of 10,000 men faced an Ottoman army of over 200,000. This time the Turks' defeat was assured by a combination of the sultan's greed - he tried to force the city to surrender by besieging it for over two months, rather than storming it and sharing the booty with his soldiers - and the arrival of a relief force under Polish King Jan Sobieski.

It was only after the Turks had been beaten back from the gates of Vienna a second time that the city finally established itself as the Habsburgs' permanent Residenzstadt. Over the next hundred years, an outpouring of Baroque art and architecture transformed the city.

There are few European cities whose history is as closely connected with Jewish history as Vienna. Until 1938, Vienna had a flourishing Jewish community with numerous synagogues and prayer houses. The prevalent anti-Semitism of the time provided fertile grounds for the racism and terror of the Nazis, which started immediately after the occupation of Austria by the German Wehrmacht in March of 1938. Coming to terms with the largest crimes in the history of Vienna and Austria is a process that has lasted decades.

MAY 30, SUNDAY

Early morning arrival in Budapest. In 1686, two years after the unsuccessful siege of Buda, a renewed campaign was started to enter the Hungarian capital and liberate it from the Turks. This time, the Holy League's army was twice as large, containing over 74,000 men, including German, Croat, Dutch, Hungarian, English, Spanish, Czech, Italian, French, Burgundian, Danish and Swedish soldiers, along with other Europeans as volunteers, artilleryman, and officers. The Christian forces recaptured Buda, and in the next few years, all of the former Hungarian lands, except areas near Timișoara

(Temesvár), were taken from the Turks. In the 1699 Treaty of Karlowitz, these territorial changes were officially recognized, and in 1718 the entire Kingdom of Hungary was removed from Ottoman rule and incorporated into the Habsburg Empire.

In 1949, Hungary was declared a communist People's Republic. The new Communist government considered the buildings like the Buda Castle symbols of the former regime, and during the 1950s the palace was gutted and all the interiors were destroyed.

The Hungarian revolution: On October 23, 1956, there were riots of students, workers and soldiers. On October 29, the Hungarian government introduced democracy, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion. At dawn on November 4, 1000 Russian tanks rolled into Budapest. By 8:10 am, they had destroyed the Hungarian army and captured Hungarian Radio – its last words broadcast were “Help! Help! Help!” Some 4000 Hungarians were killed fighting the Russians. Over 200,000 Hungarian refugees fled into Austria. Khrushchev was correct; the West would not help Hungary. We are quiet, not afraid. Send the news to the world and say it should condemn the Russians. The fighting is very close now and we haven't enough guns. What is the United Nations doing? Give us help. We will hold out to our last drop of blood. The tanks are firing now...This was the last message – a telex from a newspaper journalist – from Hungary.

MAY 31, MONDAY

Disembark and transfer to Budapest airport for individual flights back to the United States

Daily breakfast, eight lunches and eight dinners included as well as all excursions as listed in the itinerary.

***For more information and
reservations, please contact:***

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