

## CROWN, CHURCH AND ESTATES IN CENTRAL EUROPE 1500-1700

By the end of the fifteenth century, the estate of nobility had accumulated substantial political power in Central Europe. Through the institutions of the local diets and counties, the nobilities had encroached upon the reserved rights of the crown and reinforced their legal jurisdiction over the peasantry. The powers of the estates increased in the sixteenth century as they were able to use confession as a bargaining counter in their negotiations with the ruler. Moreover, much of the nobility in Central Europe was won over to the Reformation, a circumstance that accentuated the constitutional dualism of crown and estates.

This course will examine how the newly-installed Habsburg rulers began the slow process of recovering the authority of the crown, which by the seventeenth century had not only obtained a high degree of confessional uniformity within its territories but had also completed the expulsion of the Turks from Central Europe. In this process, the Habsburgs utilized the Catholic Church as a partner and as a force for ideological unity.

Although this course concentrates on kingship, confession and noble estates in Central Europe (defined as the Austrian hereditary provinces and the lands of the Bohemian and Hungarian crowns, including Transylvania and Croatia), there will be some comparative study of relevant developments in surrounding territories. Attention will also be paid to the 'economic estates' of peasants and townsmen, to alchemical and mystical concepts of government, to cultural artifacts (most notably libraries and museums) and the Central European Renaissance, to the Turkish wars and to forms of government within the area of Turkish occupation.

### PRELIMINARY READING

#### **Recommended Textbook**

R.J.W. Evans *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy 1550-1700*  
(Oxford 1979 etc)

#### **Other Recommended Reading**

R.J.W. Evans *Rudolph II and His World: A Study in Intellectual History 1576-1612* (Oxford, 1973 etc)

(eds) R.J.W. Evans and T.V. Thomas *Crown, Church and Estate: Central European Politics in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Macmillan, 1991)

Paula Sutter Fichtner, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1490-1848* (Palgrave, 2003)

**Title: Crown, Church and Estates in Central Europe, 1500-1700**

**Course Code: SEHI2002**

**Course-unit value: 1.0**

**Level: Advanced**

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**Availability: 2009-10**

**Open to: All second and final year undergraduates**

**Prerequisites: All participants should normally have passed a full Intermediate Level course in History**

**Course leader: Martyn Rady, Rm 507, SSEES Taviton Street**

**Other participants:**

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**Aims:**

1. To acquire a body of historical knowledge relating to the political, institutional, confessional and cultural history of Central Europe in the early modern period. This knowledge will relate not only to the facts of history but also to broader concepts and explanatory tools.

**Objectives: By the end of the course, you will have acquired:**

1. Enhanced ability to understand and to appreciate how people have existed, acted and thought in the past in the context of the complexity and diversity of historical situations, events and intellectual outlooks.

2. Enhanced ability to use and evaluate texts and other source materials both critically and empathetically, as well as appreciating the limits and challenges of the extant record. The critical evaluation of texts should include an understanding of the questions which historians ask and why they do so. By the end of the course students will have read and mastered a wide selection of historical works drawn from the historiography on this period.

3. Enhanced ability to frame an argument in a sustained manner both orally and in writing. Arguments should be structured, coherent, relevant, and concise, and should take into account all aspects of a given problem.

4. Enhanced generic skills: these may be defined as –

(i) self-direction and self-discipline

(ii) independence of mind, and initiative

(iii) the ability to work with others and to have respect for the reasoned views of others

(iv) the ability to identify, gather, deploy and organize evidence, data and information; and familiarity with

appropriate means of achieving this

(v) analytical ability and the capacity to consider and solve problems, including complex problems

(vi) structure, clarity and fluency of expression, both written and oral

(vii) intellectual maturity and integrity

(viii) empathy and imaginative insight

(ix) ability to organize time, work and personal resources to optimal effect.

**Teaching & Learning Methods:**

**Number of Hours:**

Classes

40 hours

Private Study

Approximately 260 hours (although this will vary according to individual needs)

**Assessment:**

**Coursework:** One essay of 2000 words, with full bibliography and footnotes, to be submitted according to a fixed deadline.

One website or poster, containing illustrations and relevant text up to 1000 words, on a topic to be agreed with the tutor.

Coursework constitutes 25% of the aggregate mark for this course. The essay is worth 20% and the website/poster is worth 5%.

**Examination:** A three-hour written examination of twelve questions, of which three must be answered. All questions carry equal weight and the aggregate mark counts for 75% of the total mark for the course.

**AFFILIATE STUDENTS:**

See regulations posted elsewhere.

100% fulfillment of coursework is required for the successful completion of this course. If this requirement is not met by the final departmental deadline, it will normally lead to you being debarred from the examination and the course being marked as incomplete on your final degree transcript.