

**URBAN CULTURE AND MODERNITY: VIENNA – PRAGUE – BUDAPEST,
1857-1938**

This course examines the history of major cities in the Habsburg monarchy and its successor states during the period of classical modernity. It will focus on the emergence of a particularly modern urban culture in Central Europe around the turn of the century, and study some of its proponents in detail. Taking turn-of-the-century Vienna as a starting point, the seminar will discuss the emergence of leading modernist movements and ideas in the 'backward' Habsburg empire. We will look at aspects of Vienna's, Prague's, and Budapest's urban landscape and culture, and study these in a comparative way. Students will examine the development of capital cities as centres for the arts and popular culture, science and technology, industry and commerce; and analyse their architecture as well as features of every-day urban life. We will study some of the main ideas that constituted 'modernity', and look at intellectual circles and networks of avant-garde artists that promoted these ideas. The different forms of nationalism and antisemitism that emerged within Central European cities will be another focus of the seminar. The course will make students familiar both with urban history and cultural and intellectual history. To this end, a wide range of sources will be used, from specialised academic literature to diaries, memoirs, and novels; from maps and photographs to reproductions of modernist art and architecture

PRELIMINARY READING

- Steven Beller, *A Concise History of Austria*. Cambridge 2006.
Leonardo Benevolo, *The European City*, Oxford-Cambridge/Mass 1993.
Peter Demetz, *Prague in Black and Gold: Scenes from the Life of a European City*. Houndsmills 1997
Jacques Le Rider, *Modernity and Crisis of Identity: Culture and Society in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*. Cambridge 1993.
Robert Nemes, *Budapest. The Once and Future*. DeKalb 2005.
Derek Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History*. Princeton: Princeton UP 1998.
Schorske, Carl E., *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1981.
Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918*. 2nd ed., Harlow 2001.

Course title: Urban Culture and Modernity: Vienna – Prague – Budapest, 1857-1938
Course code: SEHI3007/9007
Course-unit value: 2.0
Level: Advanced
Availability 2009/10: Yes
Open to: All third-year undergraduates
Prerequisites: Students should normally have passed at least one full History course-unit at Advanced Level

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Aims:

1. To acquire a body of historical knowledge relating to urban, intellectual and cultural history of Central Europe. 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. an 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, 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. an 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.
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<u>Teaching & Learning Methods:</u>	<u>Number of Hours:</u>
Lectures	n/a
Classes	60
Private Study	540

ASSESSMENT:

Coursework: two short essays, of approx. 2,000 words, with full bibliography and footnotes, to be completed and submitted by the end of Reading Week.

Exam: One unseen, written exam paper.

The mark for the short essay will count for 25%, the long essay will count for 75% of the total mark of one unit of the course.

Written coursework is moderated by an internal examiner, and may be submitted for scrutiny to the external examiner.

Dissertation: A 10,000 word dissertation, worth one unit of the course.

AFFILIATE STUDENTS: See regulations posted elsewhere

100% fulfilment 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 exam and the course unit being marked as incomplete on your final degree transcript.