



HS 452 ADVANCED TOPICS IN HISTORY IN MODERN AUSTRIA IN CENTRAL EUROPE

IES Abroad Vienna

DESCRIPTION:

The course attempts to analyze the development of present-day Austria from the multi-national Habsburg Empire at the beginning of the 20th century to a new multi-national "Empire", the European Union at the beginning of the 21st century. It will start with a look at the political system and ethnic tensions within the Habsburg Empire and discuss the way these tensions contributed to the decision to start a war in 1914 that effectively killed the cozy liberal middle-class world of the 19th century. German-speaking Austrians who had dominated the Habsburg Empire regarded themselves as the real losers of that war: they had lost great power-status; their claims to self-determination went largely unheeded; inflation had done away with their savings; war-time controls had effectively converted the economy into a socialist one; defeat in 1918 was followed by outbreaks of revolutionary violence.

The brief period of stabilization from 1922 to 1929 was shattered by the Great Depression that exacerbated social tensions between rival political camps ("Lager") that were armed to the teeth. During the 1930's Austria was caught between rival authoritarian and totalitarian movements, became a dictatorship in 1933, suffered two civil wars in 1934 and was finally taken over by Adolf Hitler in 1938. Austrians formed a more or less normal part of Hitler's Third Reich but were encouraged to set up shop again as an independent state by the victorious allies in 1945.

Post-war Austria was able to avoid partition along German lines, received generous help under the Marshall-Plan and was established as a neutral buffer state between East and West in 1955. In contrast to the divisive politics of the "First Republic," the "Second Republic" was characterized by an unusual, almost suffocating system of consensus between the two biggest parties and a "shadow government" of organized interest groups ("Social Partnership") that presided over an economy with a large element of state control. Fairly successful during the "Reconstruction" years, this "neo-corporatist" system showed signs of strain from the 1980's onwards when faced with the challenges of uneven growth, immigration and "globalization." Internationally, the collapse of the Soviet Empire allowed Austria to join the EU in 1994; domestically, the growth of new political movements (from the Greens to Jörg Haider's version of the Freedom Party) challenged the old-established duopoly of power and helped to bring Austria into line with European developments. (4 credits)

Note: This course is taught in conjunction with HS352 Modern Austria in Central Europe. Only HS452 students will have additional sessions and work, as detailed below.

CREDITS: 4 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 60 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES:

- History major or permission of the instructor.
- For some research topics, an advanced knowledge of German is highly desirable.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Lecture
- Discussions
- Presentations
- Excursions

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Written midterm - 30%
- Final exam - 20%

- Term Paper- 20%
- presentation -10%
- Participation- 10%

The midterm examination will consist of several short questions. You will have to combine the information you read, heard in class and saw on the excursions. The questions need to be answered in the form of short, essay-like paragraphs. Time: 60 minutes.

The final examination will consist of three statements about the course content, of which you can choose one. You will have to write an essay (introduction, three arguments, conclusion) about one of these statements agreeing, partly agreeing or disagreeing with it. Time: 60 minutes.

Furthermore, you are required to write a short paper and give a short presentation about one aspect of the course (e.g. Austrian Jews and the Shoa, Nationalities of Austria-Hungary, Austria in the European Union, ...). Length: 15-20 minutes/1500 words.

Students choose between two research projects:

- “Austria Debated”: Many aspects of the contemporary history of Austria are still subject to heated debate. Issues such as World War One, “Austro-Fascism”, World War Two and the Holocaust as well as the Kreisky Era can produce heated discussions among scholars on both sides of the ocean. Together with the professor the students will identify a topic and relevant readings (in addition to the book all 400-level students are required to read: Johnson, Lonnie. *Introducing Austria. A Guide of Sorts*. 1987. and both volumes of Steininger, Rolf, Gehler, Michael (Eds.), *Österreich im 20. Jahrhundert. Ein Studienbuch in zwei Bänden*. 1997) of about 400-500 pages, e.g. from the prestigious “Austrian History Yearbook” or the numerous publications about Austria in English (see below). Then, the students will have to identify the main contrasting opinions of the debate as well as weak points in the arguments of both sides that would need more research. The findings are to be presented in class (presentation length: 15-20 minutes) and to be laid down in a paper of about 8000-10000 words.
- “Deep inside the Archives”: Students with an advanced level of German will have the opportunity to do short, punctual guided research about one topic of interest. This can include, for example, the personal life of a victim of National Socialism, the history of one’s own family or the reconstruction of single key events in history as they are reflected in a set of documents of the many holdings preserved in Austrian archives such as the State Archives or the Archives of Austrian Resistance. The students will get to know the archival landscape of Vienna, one of the most important research sites for Central European history. After identifying a topic and assigning additional reading (100-200 pages per student), the professor will guide the student during their archival research. The additional reading will consist of one book all 400-level students are required to read (Johnson, Lonnie. *Introducing Austria. A Guide of Sorts*. 1987. and both volumes of Steininger, Rolf, Gehler, Michael (Eds.), *Österreich im 20. Jahrhundert. Ein Studienbuch in zwei Bänden*. 1997) and further readings tailored to the chosen topic, for example one monograph and two peer-reviewed articles. Since the readings are different for each topic and the topic is determined together with the student, they are to be determined by the end of the second week of class. After finishing the work, the student will have to present their findings in class and write a paper about it (presentation: 15-20 minutes, paper length: 8000-10000 words).

Possible primary sources to be examined by the students include, but are not limited to, military documents from World War One ranging from diaries to official reports (Austrian War Archive), reports on the social situation during the interwar period (General Administrative Archives), documents relating to expropriation and extinction of the Austrian Jews such as Police reports, diaries (Documentation Archive of the Austrian Resistance) and also various sources regarding the Second Austrian Republic (Archive of the Republic).

Both assignments include 90 minutes extra in class and/or two hours in the archives each week. The extra readings in this syllabus will be discussed separately with the students.



Participation

In class discussions and short quizzes or homework are part of the grade. Please read and prepare the required readings for every session as indicated below in the section about content.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Name and assess the principal historical developments of Austria's history in the 20th century, including the historical foundations of present-day Austria,
- Articulate the main points of the scholarly debate about certain aspects of Austria's contemporary history,
- Identify areas in this history worthy of further consideration and, within this, identify a specific topic of sufficient weight yet manageable size,
- Engage in an investigation of primary sources, including navigating research facilities as well as identifying and acquiring the materials necessary for historical analysis,
- Formulate the right questions in the face of a wide range of evidence and to marshal this information into cogent, defensible conclusions,
- Articulate these key issues, provide full documentation, formulate arguments, and reach insightful conclusions in written form (for instance, in a history term paper),
- Lay out the background and details of these historical findings in an aural presentation.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Only justified absence from a course unit (actual illness, emergencies) is tolerated; unjustified absences affect the grade negatively. In case of a justified absence you need to write an e-mail your instructor with a CC to the Registrar and to the Head of Student Services in order to be excused.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Readings
Session 1	• The Old Empire: "Historic Nations" • "Well-tempered Discontent"? • Checks and Balances: Authoritarian liberals and anti-liberal Democrats • Fin-de-siecle Vienna: "The Conditions of excellence".	• Hausmaninger 1-18; Kuprian in Bischof 11-35; Anderson 140-191; Höbelt 47-74.
Session 2	• World War I, the Seminal Catastrophe: "To Die Honourably" • 1914 and the Frightened Aggressor; • "Tyranny plus Sloth": The war-time economy • 1918: Neither German Unity nor Proletarian Revolution	• Cornwall 167-196; Kann 468-520; Rauchensteiner 36-44
Session 3	• The First Republic: The Parties and the State • Territorial Losses from the Sudeten lands to South Tyrol • Ignaz Seipel, the Machiavellian Healer: Foreign Controls and Domestic Virtue.	• Jelavich 144-191

Session 4	• The Crisis Years: The After-Effects of the War and the Crisis of Capitalism • The Totalitarian Temptation: Fascism as a post-democratic Phenomenon • The End of the Bourgeois Cabinets and the Slide into Dictatorship	• Jelavich 192-224 • Maderthaner in Bischof 45-71 • Binder in Bischof 72-84 • Steininger in Bischof 85-114
Session 5	• The Third Reich: The Nazi Version of Fascism • “Anschluss”: Elation and Employment • Totalitarianism in Practice: Party, Police and Persecution • Holocaust and Heroics: Austrians in WW II. Before the Midterm Week: • Mandatory excursion to the Austrian Army Museum	• Jelavich 224-244
Session 6	• The Second Republic: Stalin, Renner and the Usurpation of the old Elites • The Four Powers, Reconstruction and De-Nazification • Barrier between North and South: The State Treaty of 1955 • Midterm	• Jelavich 245-268 • Rathkolb 168-189 • Eisterer in Bischof 190-211
Session 7	• Neo-Corporatism: Great Coalition and Social Partnership • Bruno Kreisky and the “Austrian Way” • Inverted Fronts: The Elitist Left and the Populist Right	• Sully 3-12 • Rathkolb in Bischof 263-293 • Bischof 78-130 • Mathis in Bischof 212-234
Session 8	• Far from the End of History: Waldheim and the Passing of the War Generation: Coming to Terms with World War Two • Possible mandatory excursion to the Labour Day Parade and the Public Housing Blocks of the “Red Vienna”, dependig on weather and class progress.	• Sully 77-95 • Rathkolb 237-266
Session 9	• The End of the post-war World and the reunification of Europe • The Politics of Immigration and Identity • Austria in the European Union • 21st Century: From Consensus to Competition?	• Johnson 249-275 • Rathkolb 1-29 • Gehler and Kaiser in Bischof 294-320
Session 10	• Austria as it is Today: Current Issues and their Roots	• Rathkolb 267-282 • Pelinka in Bischof 321-341

	• Society, Politics and Economy • Future Trends.	
--	---	--

REQUIRED READINGS:

A selection of readings from:

- Anderson, M.C. The Ascendancy of Europe. Aspects of European History 1815-1914. 1972.
- Bischof, Günther (Ed.). Austria in the Twentieth Century. 2002.
- Bischof, Günther (Ed.). The Kreisky Era in Austria. 1994.
- Cornwall, Marc (Ed.). The Last Years of Austria-Hungary. 2002.
- Hausmanninger, Herbert. The Austrian Legal System. 2000.
- Jelavich, Barbara. Modern Austria. Empire and Republic, 1815-1986. 1987.
- Johnson, Lonnie. Central Europe. Enemies, Neighbours, Friends. 1996.
- Kann, Robert. A History of the Habsburg Empire 1526-1918. (2nd ed.) 1977.
- Rathkolb, Oliver. The Paradoxical Republic. Austria 1945-2005. 2010.
- Sully, Melanie. A Contemporary History of Austria. 1990.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Carsten, Francis. The First Austrian Republic, 1918-1938. 1986.
- Cronin, Audrey. Great Power Politics and the Struggle over Austria. 1986.
- Duggan, Christopher. The Force of Destiny. A History of Italy since 1796. 2007.
- Johnson, Lonnie. Introducing Austria. A Guide of Sorts. 1987.
- Von Klemperer, Klemens. Ignaz Seipel. Christian Statesman in a Time of Crisis. 1972.
- Luza, Radomir. Austro-German Relations in the Anschluss Era. 1975.
- Pauley, Bruce. From Prejudice to Persecution. A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism. 1992.
- Thaler, Peter. The Ambivalence of Identity. The Austrian Experience of Nation-Building in a Modern Society. 2001.
- Valiani, Leo. The End of Austria-Hungary. 1973.