TOPICS IN EUROPEAN HISTORY:
FIN DE SIÈCLE: THE CULTURE OF MODERNITY AND MODERNISM

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will focus on the social and cultural experience of modernity and the history of early Modernism in Europe between 1880 and 1914. It will explore the roots and emergence of Modernism in the arts and social thought in the context of the rapid urbanization of European cities, in particular Paris, Vienna, Berlin, and Budapest.

COURSE ORGANIZATION: The course is organized around weekly topics, indicated in the course outline below. Readings for each week should be completed by the beginning of the corresponding class. Most of the topics will be introduced in a short lecture, followed by class discussion and student presentations. Please check myCourses on a regular basis for announcements, links, news items, and short articles of interest.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
READINGS:
The following two books should be purchased at Paragraphe Bookstore (2220 McGill College, ph: 514-845-5811): Carl E. Schorske, Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture (New York: Vintage, 1981); Eugen Weber, France, Fin de Siècle (Belknap Press of Cambridge University Press, 1986). These books are also placed on 3-hour reserve at the Humanities and Social Sciences Library. Additional, mandatory readings are posted on myCourses or, in case of journal articles, are accessible through the McGill Library. The weekly readings are listed in the course outline below and are to be completed by the date indicated. Please always bring the readings to class – in the format of your choice - in order to facilitate class discussions. Recommended readings will be posted on myCourses – please check the course web site frequently for new postings.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:
Book review or 2 reading responses (for due dates, see below) 15%
Participation:
(Includes 5% for questionnaires of Sept 18 and Nov. 13) 25%
Final essay (due Dec 11): 35%
Outline and annotated bibliography (due Nov 6): 15%
Oral presentation of essay topic (includes copies of handout) 10%

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS:
Reading response on TWO full sets of weekly readings, of weeks 1 and 3 through 10. In approx. 1,000 words, the assignment should provide a brief summary, comments, and 2-4
discussion questions of the weekly readings, for a total of 15% for the two assignments. Due at the beginning of the corresponding class.

OR:

**Book review** – 15% - of one of the mandatory course books, an entire book represented by a chapter in the course reader, or any other relevant, scholarly book (if not chosen from the readings, please indicate your choice well in advance). In approximately 2,000 words, briefly describe the book’s scope and subject but mainly focus on the author’s arguments, sources, and methodology, as well as its contribution to historical scholarship. For guidance and ideas on writing book reviews, you can consult the web site h-net at [www.h-net.org](http://www.h-net.org) under Reviews. Due Nov 6.

**Participation** - 25% - will reflect attendance as well as demonstrated completion of the weekly readings and participation in class discussions. Please note that attendance of the Museum field trip is mandatory. The questionnaires handed out for the Sept. 18 class and the Museum field trip on Nov. 13 will count towards 5% of the participation mark.

**Research essay** - 35% - 4,200 words or approx. 12 double-typed pages (not counting notes and bibliography), due Dec. 11. We will discuss possible essay topics and formats throughout the semester.

**Proposal and annotated bibliography of essay** - 15%, due at the beginning of the class of Nov 20. In a paragraph provide a brief outline of your topic and a research question or thesis argument. Provide at least 8 scholarly sources, some of which should be journal articles. In a couple of sentences for each, explain the usefulness and relevance of the sources to the topic.

**Oral presentation of essay** - 10%, during the classes of Nov 6 through 27. In 10 minutes, introduce your topic and present your sources and preliminary thesis argument. This assignment should provide an opportunity for an ongoing discussion of the joys and pitfalls of researching and writing a research essay. Please provide copies of a page-long handout with a brief outline and a list of your sources (this can be a short version of your proposal and bibliography, due on Nov. 6) for the class; feel free to bring some of your sources or provide a visual illustration if applicable. No PowerPoint presentation is necessary, unless pictures are essential to describe your research.

**Policies regarding written assignments:** Please submit all written assignments in hard copy, typed double space, following the Chicago Manual of Style notes/bibliography format. Late submission of assignments will be penalized with 5% for each weekday missed.

_In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded._

_McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences._
under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information)."

L’Université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l’on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l’étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/integrity).

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS:

Week 1: Sept 11
INTRODUCTION
MODERNITY AND MODERNISM: DEFINITIONS

Note: If you need to refresh your memory of European history between 1880 and 1914 you can find multiple copies of recent textbooks in the library, such as John Merriman, A history of Modern Europe (third edition, Norton, 2010) and Robin Winks and Joan Neuberger, Europe and the Making of Modernity, 1815-1914 (Oxford University Press, 2005).

Week 2: Sept 18
SCENES OF MODERNITY
Screening: The Lumière Brothers’ first films

Complete questionnaire and submit it on Sept 25th!

Week 3: Sept 25
MODERNITY AND POPULAR CULTURE
Week 4: Oct 2
URBANIZATION AND THE MIDDLE CLASS

Week 5: Oct 9
FIN-DE-SIECLE ANXIETIES: CRIMINALITY, RACISM, AND ANTI-SEMITISM

URBANIZATION AND THE MIDDLE CLASS

Week 6: Oct 16
MODERNIST SCENES 1: PARIS AND THE VISUAL REVOLUTION

Week 7: Oct 23
THE CRISIS OF POSITIVISM AND THE FOREFATHERS OF MODERNISM

Week 8: Oct 30
MODERNIST SCENES 2: VIENNA (AND BUDAPEST)
Week 9: Nov 6

**EROS AND CIVILIZATION: FREUD AND HIS LEGACY**


**Oral presentation of research essay (max. 6 students)**

**Book review due**

Week 10: Nov 13

**Outline and annotated bibliography due**

**Oral presentation of research essay (max. 4 students)**

**Field trip to Musée des Beaux-Arts: remember to fill out questionnaire, to be submitted next week!**

Week 11: Nov 20

**“ANNUS MIRABILIS:” 1913 IN PARIS AND BERLIN**


**Oral presentation of research essay (max. 6 students)**

Week 12: Nov 27

**THE FUTURE OF MODERNISM: TO THE BAUHAUS AND BEYOND**


Browse the web site of the Museum of Modern Art: [http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/exhibitions/303](http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/exhibitions/303)

**Oral presentation of research essay (max. 4 students)**

Week 13: Dec 4

**CONCLUSION**


**Final essay due: Dec 11**