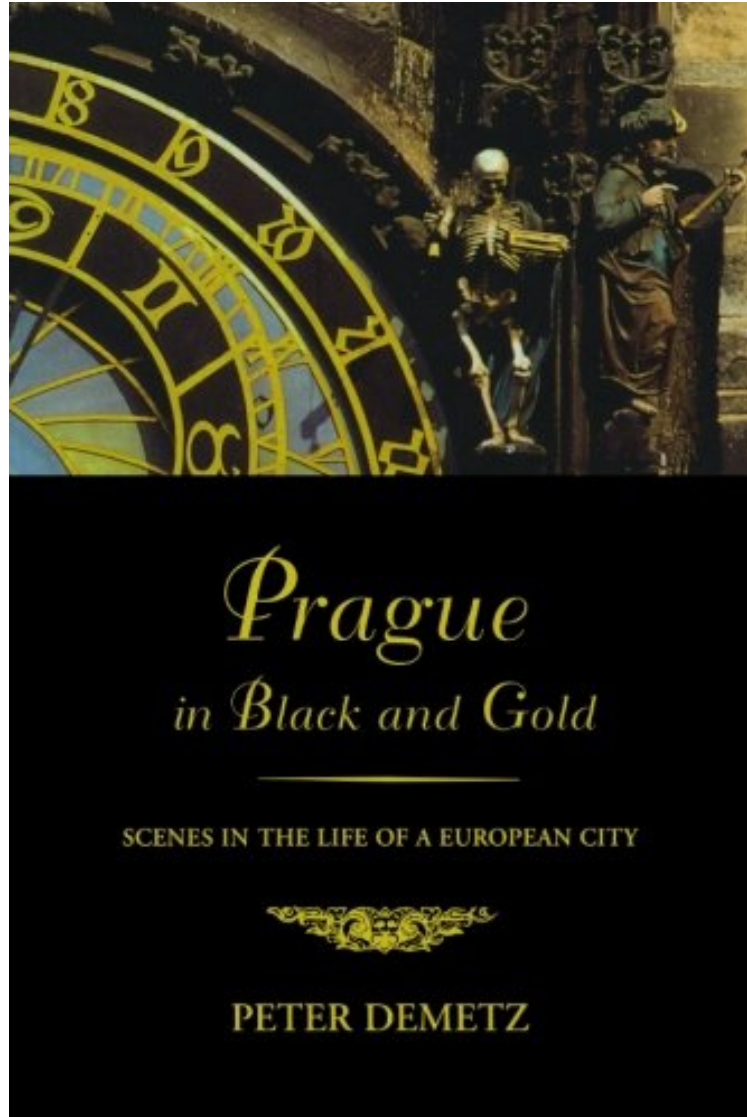


(Download) Prague in Black and Gold: Scenes from the Life of a European City

Prague in Black and Gold: Scenes from the Life of a European City

Peter Demetz

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#676220 in Books Peter Demetz 1998-03-18 1998-03-18 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.50 x .96 x 5.50l, .90 #File Name: 0809016095432 pages Prague in Black and Gold Scenes from the Life of a European City | File size: 70.Mb

Peter Demetz : Prague in Black and Gold: Scenes from the Life of a European City before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Prague in Black and Gold: Scenes from the Life of a European City:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A brilliant political and intellectual history of one of Europe's great cities By Phil Dolliff This is an outstanding political and intellectual history of Prague. I read many books about Prague

before, during, and after my visit and this was by far the most engrossing -- it does a brilliant job of telling the history of Prague. It is probably strongest on the intellectual, artistic, and literary history of the city and is unparalleled in its ability to tell the story of all three communities -- Czech, German, and Jewish -- that made Prague such an important European cultural center. The book also does an excellent job of telling the political history of Prague and its accounts of the Hussites and the 30 Years War were the best I read. There are a couple areas that get short shrift including the economic history of the city, the areas outside center city and the narrative peters out before WWII. That said, this is a brilliant book that I strongly recommend to visitors to Prague that seek to understand its key cultural role within Europe. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Dry in places, but astute and comprehensive social history

By Michael C. Walker
A very good history of Prague, especially with focus to the various ethnic groups that composed the population of this great city throughout its history; to understand how Prague evolved in terms of polity and culture, this book is essential, though in places dry. There is no doubt the author--a professor of German literature who was born and grew up in Prague--knows his stuff, but in places it can come across as dry while in other instances, the author does assume the reader already knows a wealth about Czech history. To be fair, Dr. Demetz warns of us this trajectory somewhat: he states his reasoning in writing this encompassing history is to cover the sociocultural nuances of Prague's evolution, which would seem to portend that the reader comes with some grounding in the city's history already. For those who don't have this background, I'd recommend the book *A History of the Czech Lands*, though be warned: anyone who thinks Demetz's book is stuffy or obtuse will probably be put off even more by the "Czech Lands" book. Together, the two books will provide a wealth of background though in key portions of Czech history. For the Slavic scholar in contrast, Demetz's book will just scratch the surface of Prague's lengthy history but will offer unique insight into the cultural atmosphere that many crucial political events transpired within. In any case, it's overall a well-written, very well-researched volume. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great History from the perspective of a Central European City

By Geoffrey Frank
This was an excellent read in preparation for a trip to Prague. I learned a lot about Central European history and the role that Prague played as a center of Czech, German, and Jewish life. However, at least the e-version of this book was poorly edited with sentences that went on for an entire paragraph. The hardcopy may be a better investment.

Prague is at the core of everything both wonderful and terrible in Western history, but few people truly understand this city's unique culture. In *Prague in Black and Gold*, Peter Demetz strips away sentimentalities and distortions and shows how Czechs, Germans, Italians, and Jews have lived and worked together for over a thousand years. .

From Booklist
Readers who have visited Prague, one of the most gorgeous cities in Europe, may wish now, after having combed travel guides before their trip, to follow up with some reading on Prague's history; but unless they are serious about learning the subject, this book is best left alone. On the other hand, readers other than casual ones will find the development of Prague absorbingly chronicled here. This "history of a European city built over many centuries by Czechs, Germans, Jews, and Italians" presents both essential and colorful detail of the evolution of the kingdom of Bohemia, from mythical origins to Austrian domination to the post-World War I flowering of independence and democracy. Demetz writes of such interesting personalities as King Charles IV, who put Prague on the map; Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II, odd and fascinating; Jan Hus, religious reformer; and Thomas Masaryk, internationally esteemed president of the first Czech republic. Of course, history buffs who have never been to Prague will still relish what is offered here. Brad Hooper
From Kirkus
A very interesting overview of key periods in the four-millennia-old history of central Europe's great "gateway" city (one of the meanings of the Czech Praha), which has also served as a bridge between the Slavic region to the east and the Germanic and Latin areas to the west. A Prague-born and -raised literary and intellectual historian, Demetz traces the enormous changes the city underwent between the Middle Ages and the eve of WW II. (Strangely, he does not extend his story to encompass either the brief "Prague Spring" of 1968 or the "velvet revolution" of 1989 that, with amazing swiftness, brought about communism's collapse.) Demetz is particularly interesting on the revolt led by followers of the martyred Jan Hus, a precursor to Luther, in the early 15th century, and on how the city affected, and sometimes dazzled, the host of literary and other creative figures who lived there or passed through, from Goethe to Andr  Breton. He also captures repeated moments of tension, and rather more uncommon ones of harmony, between the city's two large ethnic communities: Germans and Czechs. Both groups periodically turned violently against the city's third great community, the Jews, who also provided a disproportionate share of cultural and scientific leadership. Demetz's style is both richly anecdotal and well grounded in a wide range of secondary sources, and he does an excellent job of balancing political and cultural history. (As a city "insider," Demetz seems particularly knowledgeable about Prague's neighborhoods and architecture.) However, he does have a propensity to overwhelm the reader with myriad names and, on occasion, to become bogged down in narrative details. In general, however, this is a fine introduction to a city that, like Rome or Jerusalem, has equally compelling legendary and actual histories. (maps) -- Copyright  1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. "Demetz focuses on the dark and disturbing aspects of the city's history, as well as on its golden glories...With great erudition and profound engagement, [he] has made it possible for us to come closer to

understanding Prague.” ?Larry Wolff, The New York Times Book “Demetz seems to reveal in the multifariousness of his native ground...[and] gives the flowering of that diversity its full due...A fluid chronicle.” ?Frederic Morton, Los Angeles Times Book