

Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Prague

Course Code / Title: PR/CEST 354 - Berlin, Vienna, Prague, and Budapest. A political and cultural history, 1848-1939

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Central European Studies / History, Philosophy

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites / Requirements: Open to all students

Description

This course discusses the major movements and ideas which characterized the culture of Central Europe from the 19th century to the beginning of World War II by studying them in the political context which birthed them.

The course is based on the assumption that culture and ideas are born at times of crisis, are defined by a looming sense of threat, and are created by the “uneasiness in civilization” (Freud). It is this interaction between political and social circumstances and cultural movements which will be at the core of the analyses developed in class.

In the course, particular emphasis is placed on the main cultural movements and political ideas which originated in the two German capitals, Berlin and Vienna, as the products of specific political circumstances. This course studies their interaction, from imitation to outright hostility and rejection, and the relationship between this German culture and the non-German elements of the Habsburg empire, as manifested in Budapest and especially in Prague.

This class analyses the ways in which European literature, philosophy, music, visual arts of the 20th century were in fact largely shaped in and by the specific context of Central Europe in the long 19th century and are a still-present legacy. It therefore complements the travelling seminars and the travels that the students can do on their own (for example to Berlin, which is highly recommended).

Objectives

The aim of this course is to familiarize students with the major political and cultural movements which originated in Germanic and Danubian Europe (Mitteleuropa), with the way they materialized in art (works of fiction, philosophical texts, paintings, architecture...) and with their consequences. Through actual and virtual field trips, they will experience the legacy of this specific culture. Moreover, this class will prepare them to better understand the history and culture of the Central European countries they will visit during their time in Europe.

Syllabus of Record

Course Requirements

Students are required to attend all classes as well as field trips and guest lectures.

Attendance requirements are outlined in the CET Attendance Policy.

The course will be divided between lectures by the instructor to clarify the historical context and in-class presentation and discussion of primary sources (which will require that the students fully familiarize themselves with the sources before each class). Secondary sources as well as documentaries will be made available: while they won't usually be discussed in class, they are a constitutive part of the course as they further the understanding of the subject.

The use of cell phones is not permitted in class. Computers are permitted for note-taking only and if they become a distraction, the instructor reserves the right to forbid their use. Soft drinks are permitted in class, as well as eating (provided that it does not disturb the class and the students leave the classroom clean).

There are two short tests consisting of 5 short-answer questions each.

Each student will be assigned a short presentation on one of the primary readings. The presentation should include a short powerpoint (5-10 slides) which will outline the main biographical elements relative to the author, a presentation of the work and a precise analysis of the text (structure, main ideas and, eventually, consequences).

The exams include essay questions related to the readings and the material discussed in class.

The students will choose a research topic according to their interests and to their major/minor, in consultation with the instructor who is always available via email for advice. The research paper assignment will be divided into three specific assignments:

- **Topic and bibliography:** this assignment should include a proposed title, a paragraph describing the content of the paper and a bibliography presented in the Chicago format. It should include a minimum of 7 references for a total length of about 200 pages of reading. The bibliography can of course be revised after the students have received feedback on this assignment.
- **Outline:** this assignment should include the definitive title of the paper, a written introduction, a presentation of the structure of the paper divided in paragraphs and sub-paragraphs. It will outline the progression of the argument and mention the sources used for each paragraph. A revised bibliography can be included, but this is optional.
- **Final paper:** it should have a length of 3000 words (+/- 10%), including the footnotes but not including the bibliography. It should be formatted as follows: Chicago style, Times New Roman 12 (Times New Roman 10 for the footnotes), spacing 1.5 (single spacing for the footnotes), margins: 2.5 cms (or 1 inch).

Syllabus of Record

Grading

Two short tests on the major concepts and ideas	5% each
Preparation and participation in class	10%
Presentation on a reading and its author	10%
Mid-term exam	15%
Final exam	15%
Research paper	40%
(divided as follows: Topic and bibliography 5%, outline 10% final paper 25%)	

Readings

Primary texts

Anderson, Benedict: "Introduction", in: *Imagined Communities*. London and New York, Verso: 1991, 1-7.

Arendt, Hannah: "Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government", in: *Totalitarianism* (part 3 of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*). San Diego & London: Harcourt Brace, 1979, 158-177.

Canetti, Elias: "The Crowd in History", in: *Crowds and Power*. New York: Farrar Straus, 1984, 167-190.

Celan, Paul: "Death Fugue", in: Sundquist, Eric J. (ed.) *Writing in Witness: A Holocaust Reader*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2018, 242-244.

Fichte, Johann Gottlieb: *Addresses to the German Nation* (Eight Address: "What is a People?") https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Addresses_to_the_German_Nation

Gellner, Ernest: "Definitions", in: *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1983, 1-7.

Frederick II: *Political Testament* https://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/docpage.cfm?docpage_id=3771

Frenssen, Gustav: "Brothers or Slaves?" and "The Limit of Endurance", in: *Peter Moor's Journey to Southwest Africa*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1908, 66-80 and 198-235.

Freud, Sigmund: "The Method of Interpreting Dreams", "The Dream is a Wish-Fulfilment", "Dream-Distorsion", in: *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, 78-125.

Goebbels, Joseph: "The Storm is Coming" (9 July 1932), in: *Landmark Speeches of National Socialism*, edited by Randall L. Bytwerk. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008, 32-39.

Herder, Johann Gottfried: "On Slav Nations" in: Bažant, Bažantová, Starn (eds.), *The Czech Reader*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2010, 123-125.

Joseph II: "Edict of Tolerance", in: Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 36-40.

Haffner, Sebastian: *Defying Hitler* (chapters 4-13). London: Phoenix, 2003, 15-70.

Syllabus of Record

Hašek, Jaroslav: "The Good Soldier Švejk Intervenes in the Great War" and "The Good Soldier Švejk at Police Headquarters", in: *The Good Soldier Švejk*. London: Penguin, 2000, 1-23.

Herzl, Theodor: "A Solution to the Jewish Question", in: Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, *The Jews in the Modern World*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 533-538.

Hirschfeld, Magnus: "What People Should Know About the Third Sex", in: *Berlin's Third Sex*. Berlin: Rixdorf, 2017, 101-126.

Hitler, Adolf: "Nation and Race" (from *Mein Kampf*), in: Ball, Terence, et al. *Ideals and Ideologies : A Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2019, 353-368.

Horvath, Ödön von: *Youth Without God* (Chapters 1-5). New York: Melville House, 2012, 13-30.

Isherwood, Christopher: "A Berlin Diary (Winter 1923-3)", in: *The Berlin Stories. Goodbye to Berlin*. London: Vintage, 1998, 226-252.

Jaszi, Oskar: "Dismembered Hungary and Peace in Central Europe", in: *Foreign Affairs*, (December 1923), 270-281.

Kafka, Franz: "A Report to an Academy", in: Bažant, Bažantová, Stern (eds.): *The Czech Reader*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2010, 223-230.

Kant, Immanuel: "What is Enlightenment?"
<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/kant-what-is.asp>

Kisch, Egon Erwin: „Germans and Czechs“, in: *Sensation Fair*. New York: Modern Age Books, 1941, 73-82.

Kundera, Milan: "The Tragedy of Central Europe." *New York Review of Books*, 26 April 1984, 33 – 38.

Lessing, Theodor: "Jewish Self-Hatred" (from: *Jewish Self-Hatred*, 1930), in: Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz (ed.): *The Jews in the Modern World*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 272.

Loos, Adolf: "Ornament and Crime", in: *Programs and Manifestos on 20th-century architecture*, edited by Ulrich Conrad. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971, 19-24.

Mach, Ernst: "Introduction", in: *The Science of Mechanics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, 1-7.

Mann, Thomas: *Reflections of a Non-Political Man* (excerpts)
http://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=946

Margolius Kovaly, Heda: *Under a Cruel Star*. Cambridge: Plunkett Lake, 1986, 5-51.

Syllabus of Record

Masaryk, Tomáš Guarrigue: "The Case for the Successor States" (from: *The Making of a State*), in: I.J. Lederer (ed.), *The Versailles Settlement. Was It Foredoomed to Failure?* London: Heath, 1960, 99-105.

Masaryk, Tomáš Guarrigue and Karel Čapek: "The Child and His World" and "The Nineties", in: *Talks with Masaryk*. North Haven: Catbird Press, 1995, 47-53 and 160-168.

Mendelssohn, Moses: "The Right to be Different", in: Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz (eds.): *The Jews in the Modern World*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 68-69.

Nietzsche, Friedrich: "What the Germans Are Missing", in: *Twilight of the Idols*. Cambridge: Hackett, 1997, 43-49.

Novalis: *Hymns to the Night* <https://logopoeia.com/novalis/hymns.html#two>

Palacký, František: "Letter to the Frankfurt Parliament", in: Hans Kohn, *Pan-Slavism. Its History and Ideology*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1953, 65-69.

Petőfi, Sándor: "National Song" and "Twelve Points"
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nemzeti_dal

Roth, Joseph: "Chapter 1", in: *Radetzky March*. London: Penguin, 2000, 1-18.

Sombart, Werner: "Merchants and Heroes"
http://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/docpage.cfm?docpage_id=1742

Teige, Karel: "Constructivism and the Liquidation of Art", in: *Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia and Other Essays*. Santa Monica: Getty Foundation, 2000, 331-340.

Trotha, Lothar von: "Vernichtungsbefehl" (Extermination order)
<https://historyhub.abc-clip.com/Support/Display/2144717>

Wagner, Richard: "The Jewish Danger" and "German Art" in: Hans Kohn, *Nationalism. Its Meaning and History*. Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1955, 164-169.

Weil, Jiří: *Life with a Star*, in: Bažant, Bažantová, Starn (eds.): *The Czech Reader*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2010, 312-320.

Weininger, Otto: "The Jews Must Free Himself from Jewishness" (from: *Sex and Character*, 1903), in: Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz (eds.): *The Jews in the Modern World*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 269.

Werfel, Franz: "Glosse zu einer Wedekind-Feier [Commentary on a Wedekind celebration]", in: *Prager Tagblatt*, 18 April 1914.

Syllabus of Record

Werfel, Franz: "Strangers Are We All Upon the Earth", in: *Poems*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1945, 42-43.

William II: "Hunenrede" (Hun-Speech)

http://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=755

Zweig, Stefan: "The World of Security" and "Eros Matutinus", in: *The World of Yesterday*. London: Pushkin, 2010, 23-49 and 89-113.

Secondary Readings

Adorno, Theodor W.: "Cultural Criticism and Society", in: *Prisms*. London: Spearman, 1967, 17-34.

Agnew, Hugh LeCaine: "The Springtime of Nation", in: *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2004, 102-123.

Agnew, Hugh LeCaine: "An Island of Democracy?", in: *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2004, 175-202.

Bartal, Israel: "My Heart is in the West: The Haskalah movement in Eastern Europe", in: *The Jews of Eastern Europe 1772-1881*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005, 90-101.

Blom, Philipp: "The Changing of the Guard", "Oedipus Rex" and "His Majesty and Mister Morel", in: *The Vertigo Years: Europe, 1900-1914*. London: Basic Books, 2008, 23-70 and 92-121.

Blom, Philipp: "Metropolis", "A Palace in Flames" and "Lili and the Blue Angel", in: *Fracture. Life and Culture in the West 1918-1938*. London: Atlantic, 2017, 173-214 and 249-266.

Brenner, Michael: "The Early History of Political Zionism", in: *Zionism. A Brief History*. Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2003, 1-22.

Browning, Christopher: „Ordinary Men“, in: *Ordinary Men. Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*. London: Penguin, 2001, 159-189.

Clark, Christopher: "Dare to Know!", in: *Iron Kingdom. The rise and fall of Prussia*. London: Penguin, 2007, 247-283.

Cohen, Gary B.: "Jews in German Society: Prague, 1860-1914", in: *Central European History* 10:1 (March 1977), 28-54.

Conrad, Sebastian: "Introduction", in *German Colonialism. A Short History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, 1-14.

Craig, Gordon A.: "The Nazi Dictatorship: The instruments of power", in: *Germany 1866-1945*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, 569-601.

Syllabus of Record

Fulbrook, Mary: "The Collapse of Democracy and the Rise of Hitler", in: *History of Germany 1918-1990*. New York: Fontana, 1991, 44-65.

Gay, Peter: "The Hunger for Wholeness", in: *Weimar Culture. The Outsider as Insider*. New York: Harper & Row, 1968, 70-101.

Johnson, Lonnie: "The Demise of Imperial Austria and the Rise of Imperial Germany" and "Sphere of Influence I: Germany and the Soviet Union", in: *Central Europe. Enemies, Neighbors, Friends*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, 141 – 161 and 187-210.

Judson, Pieter: "Whose Empire? The Revolutions of 1848-1849", in: *The Habsburg Empire. A New History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016, 155-216.

MacMillan, Margaret: "Czechs and Slovaks", "Austria", "Hungary", in: *Paris 1919. Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2002, 229-269.

Mancini, Elena: "Politics, War, and Activism", in: *Magnus Hirschfeld and the Quest for Sexual Freedom*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, 87-132.

Meyer, Henry Cord: "The Slender Threads", in: *Mitteleuropa in German Thought and Action, 1815-1945*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoof, 1955, 30-56.

Molnár, Miklós: „Between the Wars“, in: *A Concise History of Hungary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 250-294.

Mosse, George: "From Romanticism to the Volk", in: *The Crisis of German Ideology. Intellectual origins of the Third Reich*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964, 13-30.

Pulzer, Peter: "Austria 1867-1900", in: *The Rise of Political Antisemitism in Germany and Austria*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1988, 121-183.

Roseman, Mark: "Mein Kampf to Mass Murder, 1919-1941", in: *The Villa, the Lake, the Meeting. Wannsee and the Final Solution*. London: Penguin, 2002, 7-33.

Sayer, Derek: "Modernism in the Plural", in: *Prague, capital of the Twentieth Century. A Surrealist History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013, 144-220.

Schorske, Carl E.: "The Ringstrasse, Its Critics, and the Birth of Urban Modernism", in: *Fin-de-Siecle Vienna. Politics and Culture*. London: Vintage, 1981, 24-115.

Stackelberg, Roderick: "The Weimar Republic and the Weakness of Liberal Democracy", in: *Hitler's Germany. Origins, Interpretations, Legacies*. London: Routledge, 1999, 63-81.

Syllabus of Record

Watson, Peter: “Money, the Masses, the Metropolis” and “The Great War between Heroes and Traders”, in: *The German Genius*. London: Simon & Schuster, 2011, 439-458 and 531-546.

Wiskemann, Elizabeth: “‘Aufklärung’ und Romantik Revival”, in: *Czechs and Germans. A study of the Struggle in the historic provinces of Bohemia and Moravia*. London: Macmillan, 1967, 11-18.

Outline of Course Content

Topic 1 Introduction and definitions

- What is a crisis? The relation between crisis and creation
- Heraclitus: “Fragment 53”
- What is “Mitteleuropa”? The influence of German politics and culture on Central Europe

Topic 2 The Enlightenment and Its Consequences

- The German Aufklärung
- Enlightened absolutism
- German romanticism and the rejection of reason: the notion of Volk
- German nationalism

Topic 3 “Gott erhalte?” – Nationalism in Central Europe

- The influence of the philosophy of the Volksgeist: What is a Volk? What is a nation?
- Nationalist movements in Central Europe and the reaction of the Habsburg empire
- Are Hungarian and Czech nationalism anti-German?
- The revolution of 1848 and its consequences
- Slav vs. Germans

Topic 4 Vienna fin-de-siècle

- Politics in Vienna and the culture of hypocrisy: the official and the hidden
- Birth of psychoanalysis
- Official and secession art

Topic 5 Nationalism and Politics in the German world: the Coming of WWI

- The unification of Germany under Bismarck: a nationalist achievement?
- The creation of a new society based on military values (the Wilhelmine society and its impact on Austria-Hungary)
- Balance power vs. Weltpolitik

Topic 6 The White Man’s Burden?

- Threat to the “superiority of the White Man”
- Colonialism and the Congress of Berlin, echoes of the Congo
- Preserving the race and the Volksgemeinschaft: Eugenics and antisemitism
- Austrian antisemitism and the adoption of a German identity (“Away-from-Rome” movement)

Syllabus of Record

Topic 7 Jewish reaction to antisemitism: assimilation, Jewish self-hatred or nationalism?

- Assimilation at the turn of the century
- Jewish population and literature in Prague
- The birth of Jewish nationalism
- The phenomenon of Jewish self-hatred

Topic 8 Finis Austriae

- World War I and the end of the Habsburg empire
- The post-WWI European order: Prague and Budapest as capitals
- Austria, “the state that nobody wanted”

Topic 9 Weimar Germany

- Complicated birth of the Republic
- Constitutional and political issues
- Early crises and anti-republicanism
- War and the broken bodies
- Man vs. the metropolis
- Expressionism in literature and art
- Berlin: Art, addictions and sexuality

Topic 10 The rise of fascism: Central Europe in the 1930s

- Ideology of fascism
- The end of Weimar
- Austro-fascism and Hungary in the 1930s
- Was there a Czechoslovak exception?
- The role of propaganda

Topic 11 The totalitarian state

- The creation of a totalitarian state
- The ideology of living space and National Socialist Foreign Policy until 1939

Topic 12 World War II and Its Consequences

- A brief overview of World War II
- The Holocaust: a consequence of the culture of crisis?
- Bearing Witness

Topic 13 A summary - Politics, ideas, and culture in Prague.

- Field trip: How did the ideas studied in class materialize in the Prague urban landscape?