Central Europe: Shaping a Modern Culture

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Course Description:
This course will discuss the emergence of major modernist movements and ideas in the three Central European cities: Prague, Vienna and Budapest. In the period between the late 19th century and the beginning of the WW2, these cities were the main centers of the then disintegrating Austrian-Hungarian Empire and, later, the capitals of three independent states—Czechoslovakia, Austria and Hungary, respectively. Despite the political turmoil, all the three cities became a watershed of the ideas that remain to be the sources of the Western culture even today, including the dominant trends in the current North American culture. Thus, we shall see how the dominant ideas in the fields as diverse as religion, philosophy, science, psychology, art and architecture that have shaped the 20th century culture in the West can all be traced back to the works of the Austrian, Czech or Hungarian intellectuals such as Franz Brentano, Sigmund Freud, Adolf Loos and Georg Lukács. We shall have the extraordinary opportunity to study the fermentation of these ideas “on site,” in the very places in which these ideas originated.

Course Objectives:
To provide the students with a good grasp of the ideas that originated in the Central European region in the era of modernism, and an understanding of their historical as well as contemporary relevance. This is not an art history course, but a course on the history of ideas.

Structure:
The course will consist of lectures, seminar discussions of readings, and city walks and trips.

Requirements:
Students are required to attend all classes as well as out-of-class activities. The course is primarily structured around class discussions of readings, so that everybody is expected to follow those in order to be able to actively participate in discussions. There are both required readings and optional readings, the former are usually primary sources, while the latter are mostly secondary sources. Whatever lecturing about history and context of the ideas from the primary sources there is, it will be anchored in the optional readings. Thus, if students don’t catch everything from lectures, they are strongly encouraged to go to the relevant optional readings as well as the required readings. Ahead of each class, study questions for the upcoming required reading will be sent out to students by email. Occasionally, questions that we shall have no time to tackle in class will be assigned as homework to be turned in in writing. The main work for the class will consist of a paper on a topic chosen from a list of suggested topics. The paper should not exceed 10 typed pages (excluding any documentation). The style of formatting is optional, but should be followed consistently. Finally, there will also be two multiple-choice in-class exams based on readings and lectures. Make-up exams will be allowed only in the case of medical or family emergencies. The same applies to late papers.
**Academic Honesty:**
Although the students are encouraged to exchange ideas in and outside class, everybody is required to submit their own work. That means that copying the work of other students or published materials is strictly prohibited.

**Grading System:**
- Class participation/attendance: 10%
- Homeworks: 10%
- Mid-term exam: 20%
- Final exam: 20%
- Final paper: 40%

**Course Schedule:**
- R1 Course Reader 1 (Required Readings)
- R2 Course Reader 2 (Optional Readings)
- L Library

**UPCES Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy**
The UPCES program in Prague promotes a diverse learning environment where the dignity, worth, and differences of each individual are valued and respected. Discrimination and harassment, whether based on a person's race, gender, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or other legally protected characteristic, are repugnant and completely inconsistent with our objectives. Retaliation against individuals for raising good faith claims of harassment and/or discrimination is prohibited.

**UPCES Diversity Policy**
UPCES fully embraces diversity and strives to create a safe and welcoming environment for students from all backgrounds. Prague is a wonderfully diverse community and UPCES is no different. All students should feel at home while studying abroad and UPCES will do its utmost to make sure that becomes a reality. Although unique challenges may arise, we believe that students from all walks of life will encounter wonderful opportunities for enrichment as they explore a new culture while studying abroad.
Weekly Schedule

Week 1

UPCES Orientation Week

Week 2

Introduction.
Modernization and modernity in East Central Europe.
Modernization of Vienna, Prague and Budapest – architectural, cultural and social aspects.

HAVE READ:
Hanák, “Urbanization and Civilization: Vienna and Budapest in the Nineteenth Century”, from Hanák (1998, 3-43) (R1)
Švácha, “Modern Style in the Streets of Prague”, from Švácha (1995, 18-97) (R1)

OPTIONAL READING:
Janik and Toulmin, “Habsburg Vienna: City of Paradoxes”, from Janik and Toulmin (1973, 33-66) (R2)
Hanák, “The Garden and the Workshop: Reflections on Fin-de-Siecle Culture in Vienna and Budapest”, from Hanák (1998, 63-97) (R2)
Sayer, “Mirrors of Identity”, from Sayer (2000, 82-153) (R2)

Week 3

Franz Brentano and the Austrian tradition in philosophy.
Brentano and Franz Kafka.

Class trip to Café Louvre, the favorite hangout of the Prague Brentanists.

HAVE READ:
Brentano, “The Concept and Purpose of Psychology”, from Brentano (1973 [1874], 3-27) (R1)
Brentano, “The Distinction Between Mental and Physical Phenomena”, from Brentano (1973 [1874], 77-100) (R1)
Kafka, “The Metamorphosis” (1995 [1915], 76-126) (R1)

OPTIONAL READING:
Smith, “Austrian Philosophy and the Brentano School”, from Smith (1994, 7-34) (R2)
Smith, “Kafka and Brentano: A Study in Descriptive Psychology”, from Smith (1981, 113-144) (R2)
Week 4

Ernst Mach on theory of science and T. G. Masaryk on modernity and suicide.

HAVE READ:

Mach, “Introductory Remarks: Antimetaphysical”, from Mach (1959 [1886], 1-37) (R1)
Masaryk, “Civilization and the Tendency to Suicide”, from Masaryk (1970 [1881], 140-220) (R1)
Masaryk, “Toward a Remedy for the Modern Suicide Tendency”, from Masaryk (1970 [1881], 221-231) (R1)

OPTIONAL READING:

Janik and Toulmin, “Language, Ethics and Representation”, from Janik and Toulmin (1973, 120-166, esp. 133-142) (R2)

Week 5

Sigmund Freud’s new science of the mind.

HAVE READ:

Freud, “The Method of Interpreting Dreams”, from Freud (1999 [1900], 78-97) (R1)
Freud, “The Dream is a Wish-Fulfilment”, from Freud (1999 [1900], 98-105) (R1)
Freud, “Dream-Distortion”, from Freud (1999 [1900], 106-125) (R1)

OPTIONAL READING:

Schorske, “Politics and Patricide in Freud’s Interpretation of Dreams”, from Schorske (1981, 181-207) (R2)
Hopkins, “The Interpretation of Dreams”, from Neu (1991, 86-135) (R2)

Week 6

Otto Weininger on women and the Jews.

HAVE READ:

Weininger, “The Nature of Woman and Her Purpose in the Universe”, from Weininger (2005 [1903]), (R1)
Weininger, “Judaism”, from Weininger (2005 [1903], ) (R1)

OPTIONAL READING:

Luft, “Otto Weininger’s Vision of Gender and Modern Culture”, from Luft (2003, 45-88) (R2)

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR THE MID-TERM EXAM MADE AVAILABLE IN CLASS.
Week 7

Freud on infantile and female sexuality

HAVE READ:
Freud, Three Essays on Sexual Theory (1905), from Freud (2006, 118-153)(R2)

OPTIONAL READING:

Week 8

MID-TERM EXAM IN CLASS.

Adolf Loos on modern design and urban lifestyle.

HAVE READ:
Loos, “Ornament and Crime” (1908) (R1)

OPTIONAL READING:
Colomina, “City”, from Colomina (1994, 17-73) (R2)
Colomina, “Interior”, from Colomina (1994, 233-280) (R2)

Week 9

Finis Austriae and Ludwig Wittgenstein on language, science and value.

OPTIONAL READING:
Sayer, “Modernisms and Modernities”, from Sayer (2000, 154-220) (R2)

HAVE READ:
“Wissenschaftliche Weltfauffassung: Der Wiener Kreis” (1929) (R1)

OPTIONAL READING:
Janik and Toulmin, “The Tractatus Reconsidered: An Ethical Deed”, from Janik and Toulmin (1973, 167-201) (R2)
Week 10

Georg Lukács on Marxism and totality, Karl Mannheim on ideology and utopia.

HAVE READ:

Lukács, “Class Consciousness”, from Lukács (1971 [1922], 46-86) (R1)
Mannheim, “The Utopian Mentality”, from Mannheim (1929) (R1)

OPTIONAL READING:

Lukács, “Introduction”, from Lukács (1974 1911) (R2)
Lukács, “Metaphysics of Tragedy”, from Lukács (1974 1911) (R2)
Congdon, “The Tragic Sense of Life: Lukács’s ‘The Soul and the Forms’”, from Nyiri (1981, 43-74) (R2)
Gluck, “The Sunday Circle”, from Gluck (1991) (R2)
Eagleton, “From Lukács to Gramsci” (2007, 93-123, esp. 93-106, 107-110) (R2)

Week 11

Karel Teige on Art and Architecture.

HAVE READ:

Teige, “Constructivism and the Liquidation of Art” (1926), from Teige (2000, 331-340) (R1)

OPTIONAL READING

Švácha, “Scientific and Emotional Functionalism” (1995, 240-301) (R2)

TOPICS FOR THE FINAL PAPER AND STUDY QUESTIONS FOR THE FINAL EXAM MADE AVAILABLE IN CLASS.

Week 12

Sigmund Freud on religion and civilization.

HAVE READ:

Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, from Freud (2002 [1930], 3-82) (R1)

OPTIONAL READING:

Deigh, “Freud’s Later Theory of Civilization: Changes and Implications”, from Neu (1991) (R2)

Week 13

FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS, FINAL EXAM IN CLASS.
Selected Bibliography in English:
Asterisked books are available from the CERGE Library.

Primary sources:


The dates in the square brackets indicate the first edition in the original language.

**Secondary sources:**


