

**Charles University, Faculty of Arts
East and Central European Studies**

Summer 2016

Reading Prague: Literature, Architecture, and Cultural History

CUFA LIT 314

Instructor: Hynek Zykmond
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Office hours: by appointment
Classes: Tue, Wed, Thu 3.15– 6.00, J1 (Jindřišská 27, Prague 1)

Course Description

The course will survey Prague's history, focusing on the lives and aspirations of its multinational inhabitants as they metamorphosed in the course of the last twelve centuries.

It proposes to read the city as a text and to treat literature and architecture as both expressions and symptoms of its evolution. Throughout the course, literature and architecture will be explored through a critical reading of the motivations, techniques and achievements which are at play therein.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

The aim of this course is to introduce the students to selected works of modern Czech fiction within the frame of Czech history and architecture of the city of Prague.

Required Readings

- Paul Leppin: *Severin's Journey into the Dark*. Prague: Twisted Spoon, 2001.
- *The Prague Golem: Jewish Stories of the Ghetto*. Prague: Vitalis, 2005.
- Bohumil Hrabal: *Too Loud a Solitude*. London: Abacus, 1993.
- Ladislav Fuks: *Mr. Theodore Mundstock*. New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1991.
- *Course package*.

Recommended Readings

Peter Demetz: *Prague in Black and Gold: Scenes from the Life of a European City*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1997.
Derek Sayer: *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.
Jaroslava Staňková, Jiří Štursa, and Jaroslav Staněk: *Prague: Eleven Centuries of Architecture*. Prague: PAV publisher, 1992.

Classroom Procedures

Active participation, regular attendance, and timely arrivals are considered a necessary prerequisite for successful completion of the course. Students are asked to keep their cell phones off during the class.

Assignments and Grading Policy

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|---------------------|-----|
| Midterm Test | 25% |
| Final Test | 25% |
| Class Participation | 10% |
| Final Essay | 40% |

Grades based on letters A through F will be given. ECES does not provide courses with pass/fail grades.

Attendance

Regular and punctual class attendance is mandatory for all students. Absence of 180 minutes is allowed. Three or more absences (90 minutes each) lower the grade automatically (A to A-, A to B+ in case of 4 absences etc.). Students must attend at least 70 % of the course. If a student attends less than 70 % of the class meetings, he or she will receive the final grade 'F' on their transcript.

Presentation Policy: Missing the presentation will result in an F (when applicable). If the student wants to switch the date, he/she must find someone to do it and both students must confirm the change in e-mails to the professor at least 10 days in advance. If the student is sick and has a medical note, then the professor must agree with the student on how the work will be made up for.

Final Test or Paper Policy: Completing the final test or paper is required. Failure to submit the final test or paper according to the deadline will result in a letter grade F for the entire course.

For further details, please see the Attendance Policy at the ECES website under “Academic Policies and Procedures”: <http://eces.ff.cuni.cz/>.

Student Responsibility and Code of Conduct

Standards of study and conduct in the ECES Program are set and maintained. You are subject to the general standards and requirements of Charles University in regard to attendance, examinations, and conduct, as well as to specific requirements of the program. The student is expected to assume the initiative in completing all requirements at the time specified.

It is the responsibility of the student to be informed concerning all regulations and procedures required. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because a student pleads ignorance of the regulation or asserts that he/she was not informed by an advisor or other authority.

Charles University expects all students to adhere to the highest standards of ethics and academic integrity. Students certify that all work (whether an examination, research paper, research project, form of creative expression, or any other academic undertaking) submitted for evaluation, presentation, or publication meets these standards.

All forms of academic fraud are strictly prohibited. An automatic grade of F will result for the entire course if a student is found guilty of academic misconduct. These include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism
- Cheating
- Falsification
- Violation of professional ethics
- Misrepresentation or research data

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Slavic Settling of Bohemia and Myths of Legitimization; Czech History as Re-Interpretation; The Plight of the Other: Jews in Prague

Reading:

Alois Jirásek: from *Old Czech Legends*; short stories by Jan Neruda and Gustav Meyrink (course package); *Jewish Stories of the Ghetto*

Week 2

The Rebirth of a Nation; Czech and German Prague; The Fall of the Monarchy and the Rise of the Republic; The City as a Text

Reading:

Paul Leppin: *Severin's Journey into the Dark*

Jaroslav Hašek: from *The Good Soldier Svejk* (course package)

Week 3

The Interbellum Period; The Holocaust and Its Representation; The Reality of Socialism

Reading:

Ladislav Fuks: *Mr. Theodore Mundstock*.

Heda Margolius-Kovaly: from *Under a Cruel Star* (course package)

Jan Hřebejk: *Divided We Fall* (a film)

Week 4

Culture and Survival; The Velvet Revolution and the Rebirth of Time

Reading:

Bohumil Hrabal: *Too Loud a Solitude*

Jáchym Topol: *A Trip to the Train Station* (course package)