Charles University, Faculty of Arts
East and Central European Studies

Summer 2016

Shaping Central Europe
The historical forces which defined Central European History

CUFA HIST 205

Instructor: Dr. Gaëlle Vassogne, PhD
Email: vassogneg@yahoo.fr
Office hours: by appointment
Classes: Mon, 12:00 – 2:45, Tue, Thu 3:00 – 5:45, J2 (Jindřišská 27, Prague 1)

Course Description
The course will focus on the history of Central Europe through the study of the major phenomena that shaped it. The main themes studied in the course will be the impact of the Habsburg dynasty on the region’s politics and culture, the rise of nationalism in the 19th century and its consequences for post-WW1 Central Europe. We will then analyze the impact of World War II on the region, the disappearance of Central Europe as a political and cultural entity under Communist rule and its rebirth at the end of the 20th century. We will also explore the significance for the region of its specific Jewish history. Each theme will be illustrated by a field trip and/or a documentary.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives
The aim of the course is to achieve an understanding of the history of the different national and cultural entities that now constitute the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland and also Germany and a comprehension of their complex interaction. At the end of the course, students will possess a solid knowledge of the factors which shaped Central European history and the impact of this history on today’s Europe. Moreover, this class will provide a new perspective on Prague and the Czech Republic, wider than the often limited approach which concentrates on the Cold War.

Assignments and Grading Policy
Class participation/attendance: 20%
Presentation: 30%
2 short quizzes: 10% each
1 paper (5-10 pages long): 30%

Each student will chose the topic of his/her paper with the help of the instructor and use the lectures, the readings (and eventually other material) as a basis for his/her research. Format of the paper: Times New Roman 12, spacing 1.5, margins 2.5 cm.
Grades based on letters A through F will be given. ECES does not provide courses with pass/fail grades. The final paper or reading summaries are a required component of the course. Failure to submit them according to the deadline will result in a grade F for the entire course.
**Reading**
A course reader will be available online at the ECES program website.

**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.


**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: THE HABSBURGS, THE MOST POWERFUL FAMILY IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Day 1 (Monday, June 20): The creation of a Central European Empire
Introduction: What is Central Europe?
The origins of the Habsburg dynasty
Maximilian I’s marriage policy
The Battle of Mohács and its consequences
A double threat: Reformation and the Ottoman Empire
The Thirty Years War
Readings
Jacques Rupnik: In Search of Central Europe.
Michael G. Roskin: Caught Between Empires.
Lonnie R. Johnson: The Bulwarks of Christendom.
Chambers, Grew et al.: Reformations in religion (1500-1570).

Day 2 (Tuesday, June 21): Maintaining the Power
Enlightened absolutism
The rivalry with France, from Louis XIV to Napoleon
The fight for Germany: the Habsburgs and the rise of Prussian power
The multinational structure of the Empire: integration, domination or autonomy
Readings
Piotr S. Wandycz: The Seventeenth-Century Crisis.

Day 3 (Thursday, June 23): Habsburg Prague
Guided tour: How did the different Habsburg reigns shape the history and architecture of Prague?

WEEK 2: NATIONALISM AND ITS CONSEQUENCES: CENTRAL EUROPE FROM 1848 TO WORLD WAR II

Day 1 (Monday, June 27): Nationalism in the 19th century
What is nationalism?
The Revolution of 1848: causes and consequences
World War I and the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire
Self-determination and the redrawing of the European map
Readings
Benedict Anderson: Introduction.
Ernest Gellner: Definitions.
E. Garrison Walters: History, 1848-1914.
Woodrow Wilson: Fourteen Points.

Day 2 (Tuesday, June 28): Central Europe in the Interwar period
Political instability and the failure of democracy
The place of the new Central European countries in the concert of nations
The rise of fascism
World War II and the end of Central Europe
Presentations: Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary in the interwar period

Readings
Michael G. Roskin: East Europe and World War II (1939-1945).

Day 3 (Thursday, June 30): Alfons Mucha – The Slav Epic
A guided viewing of Mucha’s masterpiece at the Prague National Gallery

WEEK 3: FROM ONE OPPRESSION TO THE NEXT – COMMUNISM IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Day 1 (Monday, July 4): What is Communism? Central Europe under Communism
Documentary: People’s Century – Brave New World
Communist ideology
Allied Conferences and the redrawing of the European map
The disappearance of Central Europe
The Communist takeovers in Central Europe
Communism in Central Europe
Presentations: Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, East Germany
Readings
Archie Brown: What do We Mean by a Communist System?
Michael G. Roskin: The Communist Takeovers
Piotr S. Wandycz: The Hard Road to Freedom (1945-1989)
Michael G. Roskin: The Gorbachev Factor.

Day 2 (Tuesday, July 5): The end of Communism
Documentary: “People’s Century – People Power”
Civil society and dissent in Communist Central Europe
The fall of 1989
The rebirth of Central Europe and the European integration
Documentary: “Vaclav Havel – Prague, Castle”
Readings
Archie Brown: Why Did Communism Last So Long?
Archie Brown: What caused the collapse of Communism?

Day 3 (Thursday, July 7): Swastika, Hammer, and Sickle
Tour of all the most important sites of Nazi and Communist oppression in Prague

WEEK 4: JEWISH HISTORY IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Day 1 (Monday, July 11): From the settlement to emancipation
Poland as a refuge
Messianism, Hasidism, and Haskalah
The failure of emancipation and the birth of Jewish politics
The different forms of Jewish nationalism
Documentary: “A Yiddish World Remembered”
Readings
Moses Mendelssohn: The Right to be Different.
Day 2 (Tuesday, July 12): The road to the Holocaust and its Aftermath
Jewish life in Central Europe between the two world wars
Nazi Germany and the “Final Solution”
Jewish life in Central Europe after the Holocaust: from one antisemitism to another
Documentary: “People’s Century – Master race”

Readings
Ezra Mendelssohn Introduction.
Adolf Hitler Mein Kampf.
Yehuda Bauer Protocols of the Wannsee Conference.
Bernard Wasserstein Is the Holocaust Explicable?

Day 3 (Thursday, July 14): Jewish Prague
Guided tour of the Jewish Quarter
Reading list

Recommended readings
There is no required book for this class. The instructor will provide each student with recommended readings according to the subject of their presentation and research paper. However, recommended books for this class are:


Required readings
The required readings are to be found in the reader, which will be available online at the ECES program website at the beginning of the semester. The following is a list of the reader’s content. The instructor will provide the students with a list of reading questions which will serve as basis for class discussions.

Week 1 – The Habsburgs (until 1848)

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Week 2 – Nationalism and Its Consequences (1848 – 1945)

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### Week 3 – Communism in Central Europe

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### Week 4 – Jewish History in Central Europe

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