



CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course Title:	The Rise and Fall of Central European Totalitarianism
Course Code:	POLI 3003 PRAG
Programs offering course:	CES, CNMJ
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. Semester Credits:	3
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Summer 2019

Course Description

Today liberal democracy seems to be the obvious winner of the ideological struggle of the twentieth century. It is therefore hard to understand why the two main alternatives to liberal democracy – Nazism and Communism – exercised such a power over the lives and minds of people of Central Europe throughout the larger part of the twentieth century. This interdisciplinary course aims at explaining this conundrum through systematic study of totalitarian practices. First, it will provide a basic theoretical outline and criticism of the term “totalitarianism”. This will be followed by analysis of the ideologies of the “Totalitarian Twins”, i.e. Communism and Nazism, which both grew from a perceived crisis of liberal democracy. The main focus of the course will be on methods by which the two regimes ruled over their citizens going beyond the obvious themes of fear and terror and looking at the role of economic policy, propaganda, leader’s cult, and media and art in securing the conformity of the citizens. By studying these methods the course touches upon the challenges ahead for liberal democracy in the current political situation. The course will also study the often overlooked issue of environmental destruction especially under communism and the consequent rise in the environmental consciousness and movements, which contributed significantly to the eventual fall of communism. The course will use a “Prague perspective”, i.e., it will study the experience of the Czechs in the twentieth century as an example of a nation dealing with the two dictatorships.

Although the Nazi and Communist dictatorships are over, their residues remain in the collective memory, which influences everyday lives. It is possible to understand the mentality only with a historical background. During this course we will undergo the journey to the minds of people who lived in these two destructive dictatorships and try to understand them.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester students will be able to:

- Understand the methods of totalitarian rule;
- Use critically the concept of totalitarianism and see its advantages and disadvantages for analyzing political regimes;

- Outline the historical development of dictatorships of twentieth century Central Europe, particularly in the Czech Lands;
- Explain the key principles on which the totalitarian regimes were built, such as the “banality of evil”, “atomisation”, and “working towards the Führer”;
- Analyze and interpret the key ideological texts of both regimes, such as the *Communist Manifesto*;
- Decode and deconstruct the propaganda of the totalitarian regimes (films, posters, songs) and compare their respective propagandistic efforts;
- Contrast the economic policies of Communism and Nazism;
- Understand the relationship between the communist theory (and practice) and the environmental devastation of Central Europe;
- Explain the reasons for the failure of the totalitarian regimes in Central Europe.

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

The course is based on the active participation of students. It will combine lectures with PowerPoint presentations with interactive tasks, videos, and collaborative practices.

Besides the in-class lectures there are five fieldtrips scheduled (see below). Students will visit several places in Prague connected to communist history, which help them understand Czech mentality in a broader perspective. They will have the great opportunity to meet people who not only suffered during the time of Communism, but people who are in leading positions of the Communist Party Czech and Moravia nowadays as well.

Guest speakers are scheduled for the course.

Trips and Excursions:

Strahov Stadium, Prague

Students will visit the stadium used for mass gymnastics events during the interwar period and Communist period as well

Goal: Understand the goals of mass gymnastics events

Archive of Security Services, Prague

Students will visit the most important archive for studying the totalitarian past in the Czech Republic.

Goal: Show the archive and archive materials; discussion with Czech historians.

Communist Prague

Students will be shown the most important places from the Communist past in Prague



Goal: Learn about the places which play an important role in Czech mentality and remembrance; explain the role of place in the commemoration.

Department of Communist Party Czech and Moravia (KSČM), Prague

Students will meet the representatives of the contemporary Communist Party, who will provide them information about the Party history and about contemporary politics.

Goal: Discussion about the narrative of representatives of KSČM.

One day trip to Vojna Memorial

Students will visit the museum Vojna Memorial near Příbram where was built a labor camps for prisoners in 1950s.

Goal: Learn about the conditions in uranium labor camps in 1950s; meeting a political prisoner and discussion about his life story and life in the camp; discussion about the narrative of the political prisoners.

Assessment and Final Grade

Active participation 20%

Research paper 15%

Presentations 20% (10% each)

Tests 45% (15% midterm and final test, 5% each history test - 3)

Attendance is mandatory.

Course Requirements

Active participation in the discussion during the class.

Student have to be prepared for each lecture, read all assignments and prepare additional homework. During the lecture she/he have to demonstrate the knowledge of the text by active participation in discussions.

Research paper

Students should demonstrate that they can critically use scholarly sources and compare different perspectives and be able to form their argument and support it by relevant sources. 8 pages on one of the essay questions listed below. Students have to submit an outline of the paper and list of sources they plan to use.

Research paper Topics

The concept of “totalitarianism” is a controversial one. Why?

What were the historical conditions under which totalitarian regimes emerged?

What is wrong with capitalism according to Marxism?

Is Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* only a heap of nonsense?

Is war inevitable for the totalitarian regimes?

What are the principal similarities and differences between Stalin and Hitler?

What is the meaning of the term “banality of evil”?



How does Orwell describe working of the propaganda machine? Compare with example(s) from totalitarian practice.

What is the ideological message of Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*?

What were the consequences of communist policies for the environment?

What is the essence of social contract called goulash socialism or normalization?

Was the Velvet Revolution a revolution?

Is totalitarianism dead?

Presentations

One 10-minute presentation on a selected feature movie or documentary dealing with totalitarian regimes. Students should select films from the collection of CIEE library and use also the film literature available there. The presentation should have a form of a film review outlining the plot, main characters and contextualizing the work in a broader historical and theoretical framework. The relevance of the film for the course subject should be also discussed. Also, one 10-minute presentation of the required reading. Student has to outline the main ideas and prepare the discussion among students.

Students should demonstrate that they can analyze the documentary or movie from different perspectives, contextualize the documentary or movie and bring new ideas and views, understand and explain the main outcomes of the reading, and show the ability to lead a discussion among students

Tests

Each history test consisting of 5 open-ended questions testing the knowledge of historical events in Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union and Central European countries in the years 1918-1945.

Two in-class tests (midterm and final test) consisting of 10 open-ended questions testing the ability to analyze and contextualize the main issues of totalitarianism as well as the knowledge of the required reading.

CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy

Assessment of students' participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Participation is valued as **meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom**, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed, in advance of each class session. This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-



to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor’s or other students’ line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.

Class participation also includes students’ active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor.

Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks.

CIEE Prague Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursions or events, as well as Internship.

Excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students will be marked absent.

Persistent absenteeism (students with unexcused absences exceeding 10% of the total course hours, or violations of the attendance policy in more than one class) will result in a written warning and a possible notification to the student’s home school.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

<i>Percentage of the Total Course Hours Missed</i>	<i>Equivalent Number of 90-minute / 180-minute Semester Classes</i>	<i>Minimum Penalty</i>
up to 10%	two 90-minute classes one 180-minute class	participation grade affected as per class requirements
10–20%	three to four 90-minute classes two 180-minute class	participation grade affected as per class requirements; written warning
more than 20%	five 90-minute classes three 180-minute classes	automatic course failure and possible expulsion

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Missing more than 20% of the TOTAL class hours (excused and unexcused combined) will lead to a **course failure, and **potential program dismissal**.**



Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

If missing a class,

- students are responsible for any material covered in class during their absence.
- students will only be entitled to a make-up assignment, test, exam or delivering his/her presentation if the absence is excused by the Student Services Coordinator (SSC).

An absence in a CIEE course will only be excused provided the two below conditions have been met:

- The reason for missing a class is of a serious medical nature that could not be treated outside of the student's course hours,
AND
- the student submitted a local doctor's note within 24 hours from the class missed. Doctor's notes may be submitted via e-mail or phone (a scan or photograph are acceptable), however, the student must ensure that the note is delivered to the SSC.

Should a **truly extraordinary situation** arise, the student must contact the SSC immediately. The SSC decides the course of action for all absence cases that are not straightforward. **Always contact the SSC with any inquiry about potential absence(s) and the nature thereof.**

Personal travel (including flight delays and cancelled flights), handling passport and other document replacements, interviews, volunteering and other similar situations are not considered justifiable reasons for missing class and absences incurred in this way will not be excused.

Course attendance is recorded on individual Canvas Course Sites. Students are responsible for checking their attendance on a weekly basis to ensure the correctness of the records. In case of discrepancies, students are required to contact the SSC within **one week of the discrepancy date** to have it corrected. Later claims **will not** be considered.

CIEE staff does not directly manage absences at FAMU and ECES, but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

CIEE Academic Honesty Statement

Presenting work of another person as one's own, failure to acknowledge all sources used, using unauthorized assistance on exams, submitting the same paper in two classes, or submitting work one has already received credit for at another institution in order to fulfill CIEE course requirements is not tolerated. The penalty ranges from failure in the course to dismissal from the program. The Academic Director should be consulted and involved in decision making in every case of a possible violation of academic honesty.

Daily Schedule

Day 1	<p>Introduction Mutual introduction of the students and the teacher - Outline of the course, introduction to class Theory and Critique of Totalitarianism Comparative Politics - Classification of political systems - Classical theory of totalitarianism - Totalitarian theory or Cold War propaganda – Revisionist historiography <i>Reading: Hannah Arendt, <i>The Origins of Totalitarianism</i>, vol. III, pp. 460-479.</i></p>
Day 2	<p>Ideology of Communism Role of ideology – Key ideas of the Communist Manifesto - Further development of Marxism - Socialist utopias – Class struggle – Socialist revolution – Dictatorship of proletariat <i>Reading: <i>The Communist Manifesto</i></i></p> <p>Nazism as a form of Fascism – Race struggle – Anti-Semitism – Struggle for “Living Space” <i>Reading: Adolf Hitler, <i>Mein Kampf</i>, 1925, pp. 389-405, 438-455.</i></p>
Day 3	<p>Bolshevik Revolution and Soviet Russia Elitist Bolshevik party – October “revolution” – Soviets – Civil War – Revolutionary propaganda – Famine – Death of Lenin and rise of Stalin <i>Reading: Leon Trotsky, <i>The Revolution Betrayed</i> (Chapter 5: The Soviet Thermidor), 1936.</i></p> <p>HISTORY TEST 1 – The Soviet Union</p> <p>Fall of Weimar Republic and the Rise of Hitler, The Great Economic Depression – Crises of the middle class – Far right and far left – Role of Big Business – International Context <i>Reading: Edgar Feuchtwanger, ‘Why did the Weimar Republic Fail?’</i></p> <p>HISTORY TEST 2 –Weimar Republic and Nazi Germany</p>
Day 4	<p>Central Europe between Nazism and Communism in the 1920s and 1930s Failed Bolshevik revolutions – Rise of fascism in Central Europe – Geopolitical tensions – Czechoslovakia: An island of democracy? <i>Reading: Wandycz, Piotr S. <i>The price of freedom</i>, pp.201-227.</i></p> <p>HISTORY TEST 3 –Central European Countries</p> <p>Field Trip to the Archive of Security Services</p>

	<p><i>Reading: Bouška, Tomáš and Pinerová Klára, eds. Czechoslovak Political Prisoners. Life Stories of 5 Male and 5 Female Victims of Stalinism. (Praha, 2009). – Introduction</i></p>
Day 5	<p>Soviet and Nazi Economy Economic policies of Communism– New Economic Policy – Command Economy – Nazi Economic policy <i>Reading: Aslund, A., “What Communism Actually Was,”</i></p> <p>Nazi Terror Function of terror – Image of the Enemy – Holocaust – Mechanism of genocide – Functionalism versus intentionalism – “Banality of evil” <i>Reading: Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil. New York, Viking Press, 1963, pp. 21-35, 135-150.</i></p>
Day 6	<p>Communist Terror Gulag and Great Famine – Show trials – Revolution devours its children – Denunciations <i>Reading: Sheila Fitzpatrick, Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary life in extraordinary times. Soviet Russia in 1930s. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 190-217.</i></p> <p>Midterm exam</p>
Day 7	<p>Leader’s Cult Charisma and cult – Leader and masses – Hitler and Stalin in comparison – “Lazy Dictator” – Death of the leader <i>Reading: Ian Kershaw. Hitler, pp. 163-187.</i></p> <p>Field Trip – guest lecture (Petr Roubal) Field trip to the Strahov Stadium, the largest stadium in the world, where political/sporting mass rallies took place <i>Reading: Roubal, Petr. “Politics of Gymnastics. Mass gymnastic displays under communism in Central and Eastern Europe,” Body and Society 9, no. 2 (2003): 1-25.</i></p>
Day 8	<p>Propaganda Methods of propaganda – Propaganda in Education – Rewriting History – Newspeak – Propaganda Songs <i>Reading: George Orwell, Nineteen eighty-four (Part I., Chapter IV)</i></p> <p>Totalitarianism from Below - Resistance Response of the individual to the terror and propaganda – New man – Survival strategies <i>Reading: Jochen Hellbeck, “Fashioning the Stalinist soul: the diary of Stephan Podlubnyi, 1931-9”</i></p>

<p>Day 9</p>	<p>Field trip – Communist Prague – Sightseeing and Visiting Important Places for Communist Czechoslovak History</p> <p>Failed reforms in Central Europe 1956 in Hungary and Poland – Prague Spring of 1968 – 1968 in the West – Socialism with human face – The third way – Soviet military intervention(s) <i>Reading: Wandycz, Piotr S. The price of freedom: A history of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the present. London: Routledge, 1993, pp. 236-265.</i></p>
<p>Day 10</p>	<p>Goulash socialism New social contract after 1956/1968 – Post-totalitarianism – Everyday experience of late socialism – Duality of public and private – Communist consumerism <i>Reading: Holy, Ladislav. The Little Czech and the Great Czech Nation, pp. 16-33.</i></p> <p>Field Trip to Prague Department of Communist Party of Czech and Moravia – discussion with today’s leaders of Communist Party <i>Reading: William Mishlera and Richard Rosea, “Trust, Distrust and Skepticism: Popular Evaluations of Civil and Political Institutions in Post-Communist Societies”</i></p>
<p>Day 11</p>	<p>Dissident movements – guest lecture Guest lecture: Dissident movements in Central Europe and their impact on the case of Václav Havel <i>Reading: Havel, Václav. “The Power of the Powerless.”</i></p> <p>Role of media in Czechoslovakia Media and civil society – cleansing – media as a propaganda – TV series and socialist life <i>Reading: Bren, Paulina: The Greengrocer and his TV : the culture of communism after the 1968 Prague Spring</i></p>
<p>Day 12</p>	<p>Revolution Defining revolution – Causes of revolutions in Central Europe – Logistics of the revolutions – Opposition movement and opposition demonstrations – Revolutionary power: Civic Forum(s) <i>Reading: Ash, T. G. “Prague: Inside the Magic Lantern.”</i></p> <p>Dealing with the Communist past today Changing narratives – totalitarianism versus revisionism in the Czech Republic – historians, media and laws as a catalyst of history Guest lecture: Michal Louč – Law of Anti-Communist resistance and narrative</p>

Course Materials

Required Reading:

- Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, vol. III (New York: Harcourt, 1951).
- Aslund, A., "What Communism Actually Was," in his *Building Capitalism: The Transformation of the Former Soviet Bloc* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- Ash, Timothy Garton. "Prague: Inside the Magic Lantern," in his *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of 89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague* (New York: Random House, 1990).
- Bouška, Tomáš and Pinerová Klára, eds. *Czechoslovak Political Prisoners. Life Stories of 5 Male and 5 Female Victims of Stalinism*. (Praha, 2009).
- Feuchtwanger, Edgar. "Why did the Weimar Republic Fail?" in *Modern History Review* Sept. 1997.
- Fitzpatrick, Sheila. *Stalinism: New Directions* (New York: Routledge, 2000).
- Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary life in extraordinary times. Soviet Russia in 1930s*. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000).
- Havel, Václav. "The Power of the Powerless," in his *Open Letters: Selected Writings 1965 – 1990* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992).
- Holy, Ladislav. *The Little Czech and the Great Czech Nation. National identity and the post-communist transformation of society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- Kershaw, Ian. *Hitler*. (New York: Longman, 1991).
- Kozlov, Vladimir A., "Denunciation and its functions in soviet governance," In Fitzpatrick, Sheila. *Stalinism: New Directions* (New York : Routledge, 2000).
- Mason, T.W. "Internal Crisis and War of Aggression, 1938-1939," in his *Nazism, Fascism and the Working Class* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
- Orwell, George. *Nineteen eighty-four* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).
- Roubal, Petr. "Politics of Gymnastics. Mass gymnastic displays under communism in Central and Eastern Europe," *Body and Society* 9, no. 2 (2003): 1-25.
- Sontag, Susan, "Fascinating Fascism," in her *Under the Sign of Saturn* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991).
- Wandycz, Piotr S. *The price of freedom: A history of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the present*. (London: Routledge, 1993).

Required Primary Sources:

- Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 1925.
- Karel Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, 1848
- Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*, 1936

Recommended Reading:

- Agnew, Hugh. *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown* (Hoover Institution Press, 2004).

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (revised edition) (London: Verso, 1993).
- Banac, Ivo and Katherine Verdery, eds. *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe*. (New Haven: Yale Center for International Area Studies, 1995).
- Bonnell, Victoria E. *Iconography of Power: Soviet Political Posters under Lenin and Stalin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
- Burawoy, Michael. *The Politics of Production. Factory Regimes under Capitalism and Socialism* (London: Verso, 1985).
- Crampton, Richard J. *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century - and After*. (London: Routledge, 1997).
- David Crowley and Susan Reid, eds., *Socialist Spaces. Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* 2002.
- Davies, Norman. *Europe: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
- Day, Barbara. *The Velvet Philosophers* (London: The Claridge Press, 1999).
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977).
- Garros, Veronique et al. eds., *Intimacy and Terror: Soviet Diaries of the 1930's* (New York: New Press, 1995).
- Griffin, Roger. *The Nature of Fascism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991).
- Groys, Boris. *The total art of Stalinism: avant-garde, aesthetic dictatorship, and beyond* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).
- Havel, Václav. "The Garden Party." In *Selected Plays 1963-1983*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1993).
- Havelkova, Hana. "Women in and after a Classless Society." In *Women and Social Class – International Feminist Perspectives*. eds. C. Zmroczek and P. Mahony, pp. 69-82. (London: Taylor and Francis/UCL, 1998).
- Hayek, Friedrich. *The Road to Serfdom: Text and Documents— The Definitive Edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007)."
- Hellbeck, Jochen. "Fashioning the Stalinist soul: the diary of Stephan Podlubnyi, 1931-9," In Fitzpatrick, Sheila. *Stalinism: New Directions* (New York: Routledge, 2000).
- Hrabal, Bohumil. *Closely Watched Trains*. (Simon and Schuster, 1971).
- Johnson, Lonnie R. *Central Europe: Enemies, Neighbors, Friends*. (Oxford University Press, 2001).
- Kafka, Franz. *The Castle*, in *The Complete Novels*. (New York: Vintage, 1992).
- Kenez, Peter. *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917-29* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
- Kershaw, Ian and Moshe Lewin (eds.) *Stalinism and Nazism: Dictatorships in Comparison* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- Kolakowski, Leszek. *Main Currents of Marxism: Its Origins, Growth and Dissolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).
- Kotkin, Stephen. *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
- Kundera, Milan. *The Joke*. (New York: HarperCollins, 1993).
- Milosz, Czeslaw. *The Captive Mind* (New York : Knopf, 1953).

McDermott, Kevin and Matthew Stibbe, eds. *Stalinist Terror in Eastern Europe: Elite Purges and Mass Repression* (Manchester, 2010)

Pipes, Richard. *Communism, a History* (New York: Modern Library, 2003)

Popper, Karl Raimund. *The open society and its enemies* (London: Routledge, 1945).

Rupnik, Jacques. *The Other Europe: The Rise And Fall Of Communism In East-Central Europe* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989).

Taylor, Richard. *Film Propaganda. Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany* (London: 1988).

Tormey, Simon. *Making sense of tyranny: interpretations of totalitarianism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

Tickle, A. and J Vavrousek (1998) 'Environmental politics in the former Czechoslovakia'. In *Environment and Society in Eastern Europe* (eds. A Tickle and I. Welsh). Longman, Harlow, pp. 114-145

Weber, Max. "The Types of Legitimate Domination," in Max Weber, *Economy and Society*. Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), pp. 212-45.

Zamyatin, Yevgeny. *We* (New York: Modern Library, 2006).