Course title: The Holocaust in the Films and Literature of Arnošt Lustig
Course code: FILM 3002 PRAG
Programs offering course: Central European Studies, Communication, New Media, and Journalism
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring 2021

Course Description

To acquaint the students with the history of, and testimony about, the greatest genocide in human history - the Holocaust aka Shoa - this hybrid course centers on the narrative fiction, non-fiction and films by an eminent Holocaust survivor, the Nobel Prize-nominated author and screenwriter, Professor Arnošt Lustig. It introduces students to the Holocaust, and to some of its most relevant sites in Central Europe, with the goal to provide students with a historical, philosophical and anthropological introduction to the catastrophe. In the course of the semester, the students continue independently examining some of the key portions of Arnošt Lustig's Holocaust testimony encapsulated in his 21 novels and collections of stories (of which half have been translated into English, in addition to other 22 languages). Eleven of these narrative texts were turned into feature-length screenplays and short films, and four became theatre plays, performed on two continents. By combining classroom instruction, commented film screenings and visits to some of the most relevant Holocaust sites in Central Europe, students in this experiential course learn to place the Holocaust within a larger historical, philosophical and cultural context, and gain a deeper insight into the catastrophe known as Holocaust/Shoa.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- critically discuss the history of the Holocaust and the phenomenon of Holocaust employing personal experience from the key Holocaust sites;
- analyze the ontology and epistemology of the Holocaust;
- employ a variety of methodologies to study the Holocaust;
- evaluate the narrative and ideological underpinnings of the various Holocaust testimonies;
- analyze and compare several literary works by Arnošt Lustig or literary works and their film adaptations to critically discuss a specific Holocaust-related theme.

Course Prerequisites

This course is of interest to students of literature, film, theatre, Jewish studies, social sciences and politics, philosophy, religion, the arts, and business.

Methods of Instruction

This hybrid, experiential course combines classical instruction with discussions, travel, site visits and imaginative self-directed study utilizing literature and audio-visual media. The goal of this course is to place the phenomenon of the Holocaust on a continuum of knowledge, personal and academic (not touristic), to be continually explored.

Field Trips:

- Week 1: Jewish Museum in Prague: Maisel and Klausen synagogues – independent visit.
- Friday, Week 2: Heydrich’s Former Residence in Panenské Břežany; National Memorial to the Heroes of Anti-Nazi Resistance; visit Hana Hnátová-Lustigová, a Holocaust survivor, in her home.
- Fri-Sun, Week 4: three-day excursion: Terezín former concentration camp; Auschwitz-Birkenau former concentration camps, Krakow Jewish Quarter and Oskar Schindler’s Factory

Guest Speakers:

- Helga Hošková, artist and Holocaust survivor
Assessment and Final Grade

1. Test 15%
2. Reflection on Oral Testimony – Holocaust Survivors 10%
3. Reflection on Sites (concentration camps) 10%
4. Reflection on Holocaust-related Museums 10%
5. Comparative Paper 25%
6. Presentations 10%
7. Class Participation 20%
TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Test

The in-class test will assess students’ knowledge of the relevant history of the Holocaust (chronology, places, names, causes and effects, connections and interrelations) and their interpretation thereof. The test will consist of open-ended questions and the assessment will include factual information as well as students’ application of covered notions.

Reflection on Oral Testimony – Holocaust Survivors

Students will submit a reflection on two meetings with Holocaust survivors, Helga Hošková and Hana Hnátová-Lustigová. The reflection should be 500–1000 words long and focus on connecting their testimonies to the covered class material.

Reflection on Sites (concentration camps)

Students will submit a reflection on the visited concentration camps, Terezín, Auschwitz and Birkenau. The reflection should be 500–1000 words long and focus on connecting the sites to the covered class material.

Reflection on Holocaust-related Museums

Students will submit a reflection on some of the visited Holocaust-related, former residence of Reinhard Heydrich, Memorial to the Heroes of Anti-Nazi Resistance in St. Cyril and Methodius Church, Terezín, Auschwitz and Birkenau. The reflection should be 500–1000 words long and focus on connecting the sites to the covered class material.

Comparative Paper

The Comparative Paper will compare a set literary works of Arnošt Lustig and their film adaptations. Students will explore a body of prose written by Arnošt Lustig and examine its form in film (e.g., a novel and a feature film; a collection of short stories and a feature film), employing relevant notions and terms presented through class instruction and readings, and other sources found independently.

Students will first submit the paper topic, an outline (ca 250-300 words) and relevant bibliography for approval by the end of Week 8 (5% of the total grade). During subsequent weeks of the semester, students will explore their topics and are encouraged to consult their research and work with the instructor via Canvas. The Comparative Paper is due on December 19, midnight Prague time via Canvas course site.

Presentations

Class Participation

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS: Attending classes, site visits and excursions on time and for the full duration of the session/site visit/excursion; participating without distractions (phone, tablet, computer); timely and thorough completion of reading/viewing assignments (prior to class meetings/excursions); thoughtful and attentive engagement in class discussions. Participation grade will be divided into three partial grades:

- Preparation for and activity during in-class instruction Students are required to complete assigned readings (as specified in the Weekly Schedule) prior to the respective in-class lessons. The instructor will also assess students’ engagement in class discussions, the depth and relevance of their comments on the readings, films and lectures.
Preparation for and activity during excursions. Students are required to complete assigned readings (as specified in the Weekly Schedule) prior to each overnight class excursion. The instructor will also assess students’ engagement during visits and guided tours to the visited Holocaust-related sites. Students are expected to take notes during the excursion as all information and experience related to the excursions will be subject to testing and is expected to be reflected in students’ responses during in-class discussions and, if relevant, also in their papers.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program.

If you will miss a class for any reason, notify the Program Coordinator and your instructor beforehand via Canvas. You are responsible for any materials covered in class during your absence, and except in the specific cases listed below, credit will not be granted for missed assessments.

Excessive absences will result in a notification letter, and finally a warning letter, sent to you and your home school, based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of course hours missed</th>
<th>Number of CIEE classes</th>
<th>Minimum penalty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10%</td>
<td>One to Three 90-min. classes; or One 180-min. class</td>
<td>No penalty</td>
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<tr>
<td>10% - 20%</td>
<td>Four 90-min. classes</td>
<td>Written notification* to the student, followed by a warning letter to the student and home school; 3% reduction in the final grade</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five 90-min. classes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Two 180-min. classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>More than 20%</td>
<td>Six 90-min. classes; or Three 180-min. classes</td>
<td>Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion with notification to the home school</td>
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As the table shows, missing more than 20% of any class (e.g., due to undocumented illness, travel delays, flight cancellations, over-sleeping, etc.) results in automatic failure of the course.

If you miss an assessment in class due to an absence, you will be able to make it up in the following instances:

- You provide a relevant doctor’s note from a local medical professional to your Program Coordinator within 24 hours of your absence (a scan or photograph sent via e-mail are acceptable)
- A CIEE staff member verifies that you were too ill to attend class.
- You provide evidence of a family emergency to your Program Coordinator.
- You have an approved absence related to the observance of a religious holiday from the Academic Director based on a request submitted before you arrived onsite.

Please note: Absences incurred due to documented illness, documented family emergency or the observance of a religious holiday approved before arrival onsite do not count towards the total of absences. Students may self-certify one absence due to illness without providing a doctor’s note as long as they notify the Program Coordinator within 24 hours of their absence by e-mail or a text message.

Other attendance-related policies

If you transfer from one CIEE class to another during the Add/Drop period, you will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of the new class provided you were marked present for the first session(s) of the original class.

If you are over 15 minutes late for a class, the instructor is required to mark you absent.

In case of class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips and make-up classes), always contact the Academic Department to decide the appropriate course of action.

Please remember to track your attendance on the Canvas Course Sites and report any errors in the record to the Academic Department within one week of the discrepancy date, as later claims may not be considered.

These attendance rules also apply to any required co-curricular excursion, activity, or event, and to for-credit internships.

CIEE staff does not manage absences at partner institutions providing direct enrolment classes (FAMU, ECES and FSV), but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.
N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**

**Class:** Ontology of the Holocaust

**Class 1**
Placing the Holocaust in the context of the world history

**Class 2**
Defining the Holocaust

**Readings due:**
- Bruchfeld & Levine 2012, 6–50

**Week 2**

**Class:** Epistemology of the Holocaust

**Class 1**
Witnesses

Bearing witness to the Holocaust 1

**Readings due:**
- Bruchfeld & Levine 2012, 51–115

**Class 2**
Witnesses

Bearing witness to the Holocaust 2

Readings due:
- Lustig 2001 – upon a sign-up during Week 2, Class 1
- Cargas 1993

**Student presentations of an Arnošt Lustig essay and/or interview**

Class 3 – **FIELD TRIP led by the instructor: Friday**

Witnesses, Messengers, Documents

We will explore the history of Anti-Nazi resistance and its relation to the Holocaust:

1. visit to the Former Residence of the Reich’s Protector Reinhard Heydrich in Prague-Panenské Břežany;
2. visit to Cyril and Methodius Church, National Memorial to the Heroes of Anti-Nazi Resistance;
3. visit Hana Hnátová-Lustigová, a Holocaust survivor

**Recommended reading:**

**Week 3**

**Class:** Axiology of the Holocaust

**Class 1**

History Test

Introduction to values and ethics of the youth in concentration camps
Readings due:
- Lustig: Return
- Lustig: Stephen and Anne

Class 2
Literature and the Holocaust

Readings due:
- Aristotle, Poetics, Ch. 5-8, 24-25
- Sherwin & Ament (1979). Holocaust Literature I: Short Stories and Novels, 267-305

Week 4
Class: Anthropology of the Holocaust

Class 1 – GUEST LECTURE
Helga Hošková, artist and Holocaust survivor

Class 2
Film and the Holocaust

Readings due:
- Lustig: White Rabbit
- Lustig: The Second Round
- Sherwin & Ament (1979). The Holocaust and the Film Arts, 351-382

Recommended reading:
- Petrie (2008), Ch. 13 – Film Adaptation

Class 3 – 3-day excursion led by the instructor:
Friday: Visit to the former concentration camps in Terezín
Saturday: Visit to the former concentration camps Auschwitz and Birkenau
Sunday: Visit to the Jewish Quarter and Schindler’s Factory in Krakow

Readings due:
- Lustig: Michael and the Other Boy
- Lustig: The Lemon
- Lustig: Colette (last chapter of the novel)

Recommended reading:

Week 5
Class: No class sessions

Assignment due:
Reflection on Oral Testimony – Holocaust Survivors by Sunday, midnight Prague time

Week 6
Class: No class sessions

Assignment due:
Reflection on sites (concentration camps) by Sunday, midnight Prague time

Week 7
Course Materials

Readings

Aristotle. POETICS. (Any edition; available on the Internet.)

Bruchfed, Stephane and Paul A. Levine. TELL YE YOUR CHILDREN (available electronically to course participants).*

Cargas, Harry James. VOICES FROM THE HOLOCAUST. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1993. (relevant text available electronically to course participants).*

Lustig, Arnošt. ESSAYS; available electronically to course participants.


ibid. CONFESSION (available electronically to course participants).*

ibid. COLETTE (available electronically to course participants).*


ibid. LITERATURE OF ARNOŠT LUSTIG (Essay, available electronically to course participants).*


**Recommended Readings**


NOTE: All required and recommended texts and films are available on loan at the CIEE Library, or electronically to course participants.

**Online Resources**

Reading and Films are noted by *

**Media Resources**

* A Bite to Eat (director Jan Nemec, Czechoslovakia, 1960) – TBA
  * Colette (director Milan Cieslar, Czech/Hungarian/Slovak, 2013)
  * Diamonds of the Night (director Jan Nemec, Czechoslovakia, 1962)
  * Dita Saxova (director Antonin Moskalyk, Czechoslovakia, 1968) – TBA
  * Eternal Jew (Der Ewige Jude) (director Fritz Hippler, Germany, 1940) *
  * The Precious Legacy (director Dan Weissman, USA, 1984)
  * The Prayer for Katerina Horovitzova (director Antonin Moskalyk, Czechoslovakia, 1965) (VHS)
  * The Shop on Main Street (director Jan Kadar, Czechoslovakia, 1965)
  * Transport from Paradise (director Zbynek Brynych, Czechoslovakia, 1962)
  * White Rabbit (director Dusan Klein, Czechoslovakia, 1961) – TBA
  * Why We Fight: The Nazis Strike, Battle of Russia (director Frank Capra, USA, 1943) *