

Urban Anthropology of Central European Cities

Lecturer: Lucia Stefankova, PhD
Email: lucia.stefankova@cerge-ei.cz

Course Description

The goal of the course is to introduce main concepts of urban anthropology, emphasizing the urban life and culture of Central European cities. Central European cities have been undergoing rapid social and economic change, which has had major effects on their physical outlook. It also has affected the ways in which people, urbanites as well as non-urbanites perceive these cities and urban life in general. This course wants to investigate how, in the post-communist context, city dwellers perceive, define and use this rapidly transforming urban space, as well as how they try to shape and appropriate it. We will focus on the urban experience in the post-communist period, and contrast it with the communist period, i.e. the ways people have lived their urban lives and how they have lived through the changes. Other topics the course will deal with are urban landscape, urban culture, property issues, social cleavages, class divisions, city migration, and transnationalism. Drawing from essential anthropological studies, students learn how to look at cities through an anthropological lens and do field projects analyzing some aspect of city behavior. We will look at the strategies people use to cope with the demands posed by urban environments. The approach will be comparative, drawing on research mainly focused on Central and Eastern Europe.

Requirements

Students will be required to have completed the required readings by their assigned date and be ready to discuss them in class. Students should endeavor to critically engage the readings for class discussion and papers.

Grading policy

Class participation/attendance: 30 %
Mid-term exam: 30 %
Final paper: 40 %

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A	93-100	Outstanding work
A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	Good work
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	Acceptable Work
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	Work that is significantly below average
D	63-66	
D-	60-62	
F	0-59	Work that does not meet the minimum standards for passing the course

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 Lecture Series

Lectures and site visits on subjects of history, culture, politics, and the economies of the Czech Republic and Central Europe in order to establish a common interdisciplinary background and vocabulary for all courses.

Week 2

Characteristics and Typology of Cities in History. Cultural Role of the Cities.

Required reading:

Wirth, L. *Urbanism as a Way of Life* (1938). IN: *Urban Life*, p. 101-119.

Redfield, Singer: *Cultural Role of the City*, 1954. In: *Chicago Journals*, p.53-73.

Week 3

Development of Urban Anthropology in the US (Chicago School), Europe (Manchester School) and in Central Europe.

Field trip: Žižkov Tower

Required reading:

Kemper, Foster: *Anthropological fieldwork in the City*. In: *Urban Life...*, p.5-20.

R. Redfield: *Cultural Change in Yucatan. Folk-urban continuum. Fieldwork in Yucatan Peninsula*.

Blanka Soukupová: *Anthropology of the City: A Social Viewpoint, Main Tendencies, Perspectives and National Traditions of Research. An example of Czech Urban Anthropology*. In: *Urban people* 12, 2 010, 2, p. 249-267.

Week 4

Multiculturalism, Ethnicity and Identities Formation of Central European Cities. Examples of Bratislava and Cracow.

Movie: I served the King of England (J. Hrabal/J. Menzel)

Required reading:

Buzalka, J.: *Multiculturalism and National Cultures in Eastern Europe*, 2008.

Salner, P.: *Peeling the Bratislava Onion* (Collective Memory in Incomplete Communities).

Wood, N.: *URBAN SELF-IDENTIFICATION IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE BEFORE THE GREAT WAR: THE CASE OF CRACOW*. *East Central Europe/ECE*, vol. 33, 2006, part 1–2, pp. 11–31.

Week 5

Migration as an Urban Topic: Migrants in CEE Cities.

Required reading:

Sykora: *Gateway Cities in the Process of Regional Integration in Central and Eastern Europe. Case of Prague.* Charles University, 215-242.

Beer, Deniz, Schwedler: *Berlin: urban, social and ethnic integration – an urban policy challenge*, p. 1-9.

Week 6

Field Trip 2: Vietnamese market place SAPA

Week 7

Mid-term exam (to be specified during the course)

Week 8

Cities in the Socialist Era and Transition to Post-socialist era. Urban Change and Transformation of the Cities in Central Europe.

Required reading:

David Crowley, Susan Emily Reid. *Socialist spaces: Sites of everyday life in the Eastern bloc.* p. 1-23.

Bren, P.: *Weekend getaways: The chata, the Tramp and the Politics of Private Life in post 1968 Czechoslovakia.* IN: *Socialist Spaces*, p. 123-141.

Week 9

Culture of Poverty. Rising Inequalities in CEE City.

Field trip: Národní on Anniversary of Velvet Revolution

Required reading:

Oscar Lewis: *Culture of Poverty.* In: *Urban Life*, p.175-184.

Adrian Smith, Stennin, Rochovská, Świątek: *The Emergence of a Working Poor: Labor Markets, Neoliberalisation and Diverse Economies in Post-Socialist Cities.*

Sykora, L.: *Processes of Socio-spatial Differentiation in Post-communist Prague*, 1999, p. 680-700.

Week 10

Field trip: DOX Gallery

Week 11

Globalization and Urban Sprawl. Suburbanization of Central European Cities and Tendencies of Future Growth.

Required reading:

SÝKORA , L., OUŘEDNÍČEK, M.: *SPRAWLING POST-COMMUNIST METROPOLIS: commercial and residential suburbanisation in Prague and Brno, the Czech Republic*, p.1-26.

Markin, P.: *The Role of Urban Space in Berlin's Transformation into a City of Culture after Reunification. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. European Forum Center for German Studies*, 2010.

Week 12

Popular Culture and Consumerism of CEE Cities.

Movie: "Czech Dream".

Required reading:

Coulter R. A., Linda L. Price, Lawrence Feick: *Rethinking the Origins of Involvement and Brand Commitment: Insights from Postsocialist Central Europe. 2003 by JOURNAL OF CONSUMER RESEARCH*, Vol. 30.

Tamás Tófalvy, Trever Hagen: *Popular Music and Society in Central Europe – An Introduction*.

Week 13

Presentation of Final Papers.

Weekly schedule might change during the course. The changes will always be announced ahead.

Recommended Readings

Gmelch, George and Walter P. Zenner. 2010. *Urban Life: Readings in the Anthropology of the City, 5th edition*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Low, Setha M. (ed.). 2002. *Theorizing the City. The new urban anthropology reader*. New Brunswick.

Crowley, David and Susan Reid (eds.). 2002. *Socialist spaces: Sites of everyday life in the eastern bloc*. Oxford.

Tsenkova, Sasha and Zorica Nedović-Budić (eds.). 2006. *The urban mosaic of post-socialist Europe. Space, institutions and policy*. Heidelberg.