**Course ID**

**Urban Crossroads: Budapest**

**Units: 4**

**Term: spring 2023**

COLT 395w

**Location:** Budapest, Hungary

**Faculty Accompanying Students**

Prof. Anikó Imre

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**Course Description**

This course will allow you to get immersed in the vibrant urban space of Budapest, capital of Hungary. The focus will be on the different “crossroads,” or sites in the city where past and future, public and private memory, marginalized and dominant social groups, official and grassroots cultures, and different traditions meet. Through literature and film, walks in the city, conversations with local students, artists, journalists, curators and academics, we will explore the issues that form the backbone of social debate today concerning democracy and citizenship in Hungary, and are in the center of conversations around the globe, including the United States: the divide between liberal and illiberal visions of governance, the uses of history and memory (including the legacies of imperialism, the Holocaust, the Cold War and state socialism,) the consequences of European Union membership and the rise of neoliberal authoritarianism, as well as lessons about the recurring appearance of censorship, surveillance and propaganda. We will learn about efforts at reclaiming the city space for the homeless, about the situation of the Roma, of LGBTQ and other marginalized groups; and the postsocialist transformation of the cultural industries with a special attention to media entertainment and journalism. In every encounter, whether a formal lecture, a city walk or a spontaneous observation, we will put in comparison and evaluate the global implications of the recent transformations of economic, political and cultural life familiar from the United States. These include the vast income gap, changes in the state’s role, the advance of nativist nationalism, the datafication of life, fake news, the resonances of the #metoo and Black Lives Matter movements in Eastern Europe, and efforts at establishing diversity and inclusion infrastructures across various industries.

During the first two weeks of the course, which will take place at UPC, we will do preparatory work for the trip, reading literature and essays, and watching films that guide us through the cultural and political history of the city, and learning some basic Hungarian. Together these readings and films, discussed in class, allow students to form an understanding of the history and culture of the city and its surrounding country and region. In the third and fourth weeks, classes will be conducted on site, and will be accompanied by the immersive experiences described above.

We will visit Hungarian institutions such as the Central European University, Eötvös Lóránd University, the National Arts Gallery, MÜPA (“The Palace of the Arts”) and the Ludwig Museum, tour one of the movie studios that make Budapest a European center of film and TV production, the historical Jewish quarter, and the gentrifying 8th District that is home to a large Roma population, spend time in the famed “ruin pubs,” in community cultural centers, and the many historical sites, and perhaps go to a concert, take a nice hike in the Buda hills, and experience one of the famous thermal baths.

The course will be conducted in English and will feature lessons in conversational Hungarian.

All locations are in Budapest Hungary. Students will be housed in single rooms in a centrally located hotel reserved for them by the program organizer. Students will move from their hotel to venues using public transportation.

List of locations: Eötvös Lóránd University, Social Sciences Faculty; National Arts Gallery, MÜPA (“Palace of the Arts”), Ludwig Museum; Auróra, Kossuth Square, Gellért Baths, Buda Castle and Hills, Béla Restaurant (opening lunch), Kiadó Kocsma (closing dinner), and other historical sites.

**Learning Objectives (including rationale for the trip)**

• Engage in a cross-cultural inquiry that allows you to learn more about Hungarian/Eastern European and American cultures and develop a critical, historical understanding of contemporary Hungarian culture, including cinema.

• Provide you with interpretative skills necessary to critically analyze art, popular media, film, literature and music in an international, comparative context.

• Immerse you in a culture and language vastly different from your own, which will force you to confront some basic assumptions about citizenship, human rights, racial, gender and sexual equality, freedom of speech and the media, and democracy. You will be forced to process grave differences but also some surprising similarities; and experience how cultural immersion can increase mutual understanding and bridge differences amid great ideological and geopolitical conflict.

**Prerequisite(s):** no prerequisites

**Co-Requisite(s):** no co-requisites

**Concurrent Enrollment:** no

**Recommended Preparation**: Watch documentary film/travel journal: “Orbán, my dad, and me” by Guardian journalist John Domonkos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mLDcENOyog>

András Török, *Budapest: A Critical Guide* (Park, 2011). There is an earlier edition (2000), which is also fine as a second option.

*---. The 500 Hidden Secrets of Budapest* (Luster, 2018) (this book is optional, but could be helpful for you in further exploring the city)

**Contact Hours – (4 units course, requires 50hrs meetings in 4 weeks)**

Wk 1 & Wk2 = 12 hrs/each (24hrs total) -- will meet Mon-Thurs from 9:30am-12:20pm (UPC) Wk 3 & Wk4 = 20 hrs/each (40hrs total) – will cover presentations, discussions, and visits in Hungary\*

\* In Hungary, you will have presentations, discussions and visits Mon-Thur for about 5 hours a day (5 hrs meetings - 4 days/wk). Friday - Sunday you will have the chance to do some research for your essay and participate in some optional cultural/leisure activities. (Some modifications to this schedule are possible, and students will be promptly notified, while we are in Hungary, due to the complexities of organizing presentations, visits, and walks.)

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

**Texts (required) for weeks 1-2 (available for purchase at the bookstore unless otherwise indicated)**

Imre Kertész, *Kaddish For an Unborn Child.* Trans. Tim Wilkinson. Vintage, 2004. (Selections)

Magda Szabó, *The Door.* NYRB Classics, 2015.

select stories from Krisztina Tóth, Pixel. Seagull books, 2019. (handout)

select poems from *New Order: Hungarian Poets of the Post 1989 Generation.* ARC, 2010. (handout)

**Films you will be required to watch and we will discuss during weeks 1-2 (on reserve at Leavey Library):**

Áron Gauder (dir.), *The District* (2004)

Mária Takács (dir.), *Secret Years* (2009)

Roland, Vranik (dir.), *The Citizen* (2006)

Lili Horvat (dir.), *Preparation to be Together for an Unknown Period of Time* (2020)

Ibolya Fekete (dir.), *Bolshe Vita* (1996)

Ildikó Enyedi (dir.), *On Body and Soul* (2017)

*Budapest Noir*, dir. Éva Gárdos (2017). Available on Kanopy

**Description and Assessment of Assignments**

The assessment will be based on a minimum of four weekly, substantial reflections on your experiences, readings, conversations and screenings to conclude each of the four weeks of the course. These can take a narrative form but may also be supplemented by photos and other images, links to articles, videos, or voice memos. These will be shared on a class blog. Each post will be worth 25 points.

**Additional Policies**

This is a compressed and thus intensive course. Try to not miss class barring emergencies. Please come and talk to us if you’re facing difficulties.

**Course Schedule/Itinerary:**

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|  | **Topics/Daily Activities (contact hours)** | **Readings and Homework** | **Due Dates for Assignments/Deliverables** |
| **DAY 1**  | Introduction: Traveling in Hungary Today(current events, culture). Budapest Medea: Monuments, Cinema, Literature and the urban space of Budapest, lecture and discussion | Students should consult works listed in preliminary readings (Domonkos & Török) |  Keep taking notes of your experiences |
| **DAY 2** | The Interwar years: their memory today. minority cultures in mainstream culture: Jews in Budapest | Watch: *Budapest Noir*, listen to interview with director Éva Gárdos; Hartocollins article, NYT; Donadio article in NYT; Török, 197-202 | Scan Török’s *Critical Guide* to find places relevant for Jewish cultural presence in Budapest |
| **DAY  3**  | minority cultures in mainstream culture: Jews in Budapest  | Read selections from *Kaddish*; Török, 249-279 | Take notes  |
| **DAY  4** | Writing against Censorship before and after 1989; the symbolic dimensions of Communism and post-communism: Monument to the victims of the German Occupation, Imre Nagy Monument | *Read first half of The Door*; Read, Veszprémi, “Monuments on the Move”; watch video (in article) of protest performance following the removal of the statue from Szabadság Square (adjacent to the Parliament); selections from *Retroactive Justice*.  |   Readings and notes |
| **DAY  5** | Women, Animals, and Servants: Hidden Lives in the CityVisit to Shoah Archives | Read second half of *The Door* | Notes |
| **DAY  6**  | Minority cultures before and after 1989 (LGBTQ) | Watch *Secret Years* ( dvd on reserve at Leavey) |  Blog post on first week due |
| **DAY  7**  | Diversity in the City | Watch *The District*; read select stories by Tóth |  Readings and notes |
| **DAY  8**  | “The city belongs to everyone”: poetry and music | View *Bolshe Vita* (Fekete) |  |
| **DAY  9**  | **FIRST DAY IN BUDAPEST (student arrive by previous day)** Morning: Meet at hotel, travel to center and walking tour of Gellert Hill. Opening lunch at Béla RestaurantAfternoon: cultural history of Budapest: Central Market Hall, Kálvin Square |   |   |
| **DAY 10**  | Morning: Imagine Budapest, Guided City Walk “Walk of Change” or Monument Park, Buda CastleAfternoon/Evening: Jewish Quarter, food and music at ruin pub Szimpla Kert    | Students are asked to read Török’s *Critical Guide* for finding information on relevant sites in the city |  Blog post on second week due |
| **DAY  11**  | Morning: Public and Private Memory: “Living Monument”—lecture by sociologist Mária Heller, ELTEAfternoon: Visit to Kossuth Square, Living Monument, and meeting with students in Koleves restaurant | Students write down and bring to the meetings their ideas on the working of public and private forms of memory in the US context |  |
| **DAY  12**  | excursion: Szentendre, Gellért Baths, National Gallery (hike in the Buda Hills) | Read the history of baths (especially Gellért) in *Critical Guide* |   |
| **DAY  13**  | Morning: ELTE, lecture by Balazs Varga, ELTE. Afternoon: Kugler Roma Art Gallery, private tour and lecture on Hungarian independent theater scene | Watch (screening): *Preparation to be Together for an Unknown Period of Time*  | Week 3 blog post due |
| **DAY  14**  | Morning: Imagine Budapest: Statues in the Shadow of Censorship, Guided Tour of House of Terror MuseumAfternoon: Visit visit with Telex independent news platform editorial office  |   |  Notes and observations |
| **DAY  15**  | Morning: National Gallery, Buda, guided tourAfternoon: Auróra Community Center and Walking tour of the 8th District |   |  |
| **Day 16**      | Morning, Afternoon: Ludwig MuseumEvening: closing dinner |  | Week 4 blog post due |

**Transportation**

Students will be responsible for purchasing their airfare from Los Angeles to Budapest. In Budapest, they will use public transportation to get from hotel to the classroom and to the various meeting points in the city.

**Lodging**

Students will stay in a hotel. The director of the program will arrange the hotel.

**Cost**

Airfare: appr. $1200

Hotel: $700-1200

**Health and Safety Issues**

Students will fill out the Travel Release Form, Medical Treatment Authorization Form, information regarding inoculations, safety precautions.

**REMINDER:  USC LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

USC requires certain documents (e.g., Travel Release Form, Medical Treatment Authorization Form) for all students studying overseas, and also requires a roster of students which must be provided a minimum of 7 days in advance of departure. Further details are available at the website of Student Support and Advocacy, Division of Student Affairs [studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/ssa-overseas](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/ssa-overseas/) or call (213) 821-4710.

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct:**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

**Support Systems:**

*Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call*

[engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call*

[engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086*

[equity.usc.edu](https://equity.usc.edu/), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

*Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421*

[studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776*

[dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu/)

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

*USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710*

[studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101*

[diversity.usc.edu](https://diversity.usc.edu/)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/), [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu/)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/)

Non-emergency assistance or information.