

An Open Access Platform for East and West

sdvig press is a not-for-profit association founded in Geneva, Switzerland. Its core mission is to support the dissemination and linking of knowledge in the Humanities between Eastern, Central and Western Europe. It carries out its goals by re-issuing and translating significant works of scholarship from the 19th and 20th century, publishing and translating contemporary research, as well as providing a multilingual on-line repository of relevant sources and assorted digital curation tools.

The fall of the Berlin Wall twenty-five years ago raised the hope of an intensification of academic exchanges between Europe's Eastern and Western confines and a much broader, differentiated and inclusive understanding between intellectual traditions that had been either oblivious or deeply suspicious of one another for about half a century. Such a process has indeed happened but to a much more limited extent than one could have hoped for initially. In effect, many thinkers and theories from Eastern and Central Europe have sadly remained at the periphery of mainstream Western discourses or have continued to be subjected to some of the ideological distortions of the Cold War.

This state of affairs is particularly disappointing when one considers that the substantial and excellent research that has been carried out on this topic over the years has repeatedly, consistently and convincingly underlined the seminal role played by Eastern and Central European thinkers in the development and blossoming of some of the essential paradigms and movements of European thought in the 20th century - phenomenology and structuralism foremost among these.

As such, it is clear that the neglect of Eastern and Central European thinkers and theories has not only been a loss for these traditions themselves, but that it has adversely affected our understanding of the closely related Western traditions as well. Indeed, it is not only a renewed chance for a productive dialogue between East and West that has been generally squandered up to now, but also the double opportunity to reclaim a lost intellectual context of inclusive, cross-cultural and pan-European exchanges on the one hand and to reforge a truly encompassing approach to European intellectual history on the other.

One reason stands out in particular to explain this situation: the lack of ready access to large corpora of significant texts from Eastern and Central Europe in almost all the fields of the humanities and the social sciences. True, prominent thinkers (Jakobson, Lukács, Ingarden, Bachtin, Vygotskij or Lotman) have received plenty of editorial attention and their work is widely known. But, even in the case of these titans, large parts of their work have been overlooked and they are often considered outside of their historical context. In their shadow, moreover, one finds an endless list of lesser known figures whose work was often only published in small print runs in their native country and has never been translated into languages such as English, French or German.

An obvious task facing Eastern and Central European studies is thus to provide a much better and easier access to its rich corpora of texts. Simply put, sdvig press's mission is to take advantage of new digital resources and media to carry out that task. It will do so through the realisation of a vast publishing programme destined to lift texts and authors out of oblivion and to promote their study by the large scholarly audience they deserve.



Selected Projects

Prague as a Center of European Modernity

Horizon 2020 project (proposal stage) coordinated by Charles University Prague, with the participation of KU Leuven, Eberhard-Karls Universität Tübingen, Université Paris-Sorbonne, Università Cattolica Milano, University of Tartu, Karl-Franzens Universität Graz, Universiteit Gent and further partners.

Through the implementation of digital resources and practices and the recourse to new media in research and scholarly communication, the project aims to support, coordinate and disseminate the results of an international research programme on the emergence and influence of Prague as a center of European cultural and intellectual modernity in the 20th Century.

The envisaged research programme will emphasise in particular Prague's role as a crossroads between (at least) Czech, German, Austrian, Jewish, Polish and Russian cultural and linguistic spheres, as an exceptional space of exchanges and experimentation in science, the arts, literature and politics, and thus as the harbinger of a cosmopolitan, reflexive European identity.

Book Series



Open Commons of Phenomenology

A community-led academic project that aims to host in open access the full corpus of public domain or otherwise openly licensed source texts of phenomenology, to provide an exhaustive, harvestable bibliographical database of phenomenological literature (primary and secondary), and to provide digital curation tools such as advanced search, bibliometric analysis, annotations, social sharing, etc.

sdvig press is the main infrastructural partner and initiator of this project, initiated in February 2015. The Open Commons will be organised as a fully autonomous association with its own statutes and governance charter, all ratified by its institutional and individual members.

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