

ANDRÉ BRETON AND THE MAGICAL CAPITAL: AN AGONY IN SIX FITS

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While few would nowadays dispute Prague's claim to be "the second city of surrealism" after Paris, the popular notion that there is an intrinsic affinity between the Bohemian capital and the surrealist worldview – as first asserted by André Breton in 1935 – is far more problematic. This article debunks the myth of "surrealist Prague," arguing that the coming together of former Czech poetists and French surrealists in the mid-1930s owed far more to the unique political circumstances of the time than to anything in the city's *genius loci*. If there is anything that makes Prague a fitting object of a surrealist sensibility it is the city's modern history, not its mythologized "magical" past.