

CET Syllabus of Record



Program: CET Prague

Course Title: Modern History of the Jews in East Central Europe

Course Code: PR/JWST 250

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Jewish Studies / Central European Studies

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites/Requirements: none

Description

This is a required course for the Jewish Studies concentration. The geographical focus of the course rests upon the territory associated with the Habsburg monarchy and its successor states as well as upon some parts of Eastern Europe, such as Poland and Russia (during the era of 1772-1917).

Starting with the reforms launched by Joseph II in the 1780s, this course aspires to cover both the policies of relevant governments regarding their Jewish population(s) as well as the developments and intellectual innovations coming from inside the Jewish communities themselves. This course aims to explain the causes behind the respective governmental policies, highlight the profound changes taking place in Jewish community life during the era under scrutiny, illustrate the complexity of Jewish-Gentile relations and emphasize the importance of migration and demographic changes. Students examine the nature of the Jewish experience in Central Europe by comparing the differences among the individual Habsburg lands (Bohemia, Lower Austria, Galicia, Hungary) in the era prior to WWI. Then, particular attention is devoted to the treatment/status of the Jewish minority by/in the newly created nation-states in Eastern Central Europe after the WWI, both in the era between the world wars, as well as after 1945.

The course is designed for students of Jewish studies, Central European history and general history as well as for all those interested in Jewish patrimony of the region. By using recent critical secondary sources as readings in the classes, the students have the opportunity to confront many cultural stereotypes.

Objectives

During this course, students:

- Achieve understanding of the causes behind the governmental policies toward the Jews during the era in question
- Examine the acculturation of Jews, comparing the processes in the Habsburg monarchy to Western Europe and Imperial Russia
- Question how the communal and political life of the Jews during the era in question was shaped by the political and cultural factors of the time
- Compare the pace of acculturation and progress of Jewish nationalist politics in various post-WWI nation states

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Course Requirements

Participation & Attendance

Students are required to read all assignments before each class session. Readings average 50 to 100 pages per session. A portion of each class is devoted to discussion of the issues and students are expected to participate in discussion actively. On occasion, students submit weekly response papers wherein they question and engage with the material ahead of time.

Students are expected to abide by CET's Attendance Policy.

Midterm Exam or Project

Students take either a comprehensive midterm examination, or complete a midterm oral project in class on a topic of their choice. Projects may involve conducting research, preparing a book review, or doing a group presentation. Students are encouraged to be as creative as they would like, but all projects must be approved by the instructor in advance. Oral projects must be 15 to 20 minutes in length.

Final Writing Assignment

Students complete a final writing assignment that comprises either two book reviews of about 5 to 7 pages each or a review essay of 10 to 12 pages. For the book reviews, students must read each book and present in lucid and cogent writing a discussion and evaluation of its thesis. Use of other secondary sources is encouraged. For the review essay option, students should see the instructor. For this assignment, use of secondary sources is required and students should not only assess the book but also elaborate on his/her own ideas about the topic in question.

Final Exam

Students take a comprehensive final examination consisting of multiple-choice and essay questions.

Traveling Seminar

CET Prague's Traveling Seminar is a required, credit-bearing, field-based component of the course. Students are expected to complete required reading and written assignments related to the Seminar, which are factored into the final grade as outlined below.

Methods of Evaluation

The final grade is determined as follows:

Participation	15%
Traveling Seminar assignments and weekly response papers	15%
Midterm examination or oral presentation	20%
Final written assignment(s)	20%
Final examination	30%

Primary Texts

Biale, David (ed.). *Cultures of the Jews. Volume 3: Modern Encounters*. (New York: Schocken Books, 2006.)

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Efron, J. et al. *The Jews: A History*. (New York: Prentice Hall, 2008)

Karady, Victor. *The Jews of Europe in the Modern Era: A Socio-Historical Outline*. (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004)

Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Reinharz, Jehuda. *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995)

For the Traveling Seminar:

Jan Gross, Selections from *Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz*, pp. 31 – 80, course reader 268 – 293.

Robert Szuchta “From Silence to Recognition: The Holocaust in Polish Education since 1989,” pp. 305-317, course reader 29 – 35.

Supplementary Texts

Cohen, Gary. “Jews in German Society: Prague, 1860-1914.” In *Central European History* 10 (1977): 28-54.

Judge, Edward. *Easter in Kishinev: Anatomy of a Pogrom*. (New York: New York University Press, 1995).

Kieval, Hillel. *The Making of Czech Jewry: National Conflict and Jewish Society in Bohemia, 1870-1918*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988) pp. 36-63.

Kieval, Hillel. *Languages of the Communities*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 65-94.

Klier, John Doyle. *Russia Gathers Her Jews, 1772-1825*. (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), pp. 21-52.

Levin, Nora. *The Jewish Socialist Movements, 1871-1917*. (London: Routledge, 1971), pp. 301-320.

Marcus, Joel. *Social and Political History of the Jews in Poland, 1919-1939*. (New York: Mouton De Gruyter, 1983), pp. 293-313.

Martin, Sean. *Jewish Life in Cracow, 1918-1939*. (London: Mitchell Vallentine & Company, 2005), pp. 121-149.

McCagg, William. *A History of Habsburg Jews, 1670-1918*. Bloomington 1992 (pbk), pp. 47-64.

Mendelsohn, Ezra. *Jews in East Central Europe between the World Wars*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp.i-viii.

Mendelssohn, Moses. *Jerusalem or on the Religious Power and Judaism*. (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1983), pp. 77-139.

Nathans, Benjamin. *Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 201-256.

Orla-Bukowska, Annamaria. “Shtetl Communities: Another Image.” *Polin* 8 (1994): 89-113.

Rechter, David. *The Jews of Vienna and the First World War*. (London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2001), pp. 16-66.

Rothkirchen, Livia. *The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), pp. 26-62.

Rozenblit, Marsha. *The Jews of Vienna, 1867-1914: Assimilation and Identity*. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), pp. 127-146.

Rozenblit, Marsha. “The Struggle over Religious Reform in Nineteenth-Century Vienna.” *AJS Review* 14.2 (1989): 179-221.

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Tomaszewski, Jerzy. "The Role of Jews in Polish Commerce, 1918-1939." In: Gutman, Y. (ed.), *The Jews of Poland Between Two World Wars*. Hanover 1989, pp. 141-157.

Wasserstein, Bernard. *Vanishing Diaspora, The Jews of Europe since 1945*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 206-226.

Wodzinski, Marcin. *Haskalah and Hasidism in the Kingdom of Poland: A History of Conflict*. (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2005), pp. 154-179.

Zouplna, Jan. "Revisionist Zionism: Image, Reality and the Quest for Historical Narrative." *Middle Eastern Studies* 44.1 (2008): 3-27.

Outline of Course Content

Note: Students cover approximately 1 topic every week.

Topic 1 – A History of the Jews in Bohemia and Moravia up to the 1780s

From the beginnings to the 13th century

Decentralization of the 15th and 16th century

Golden age of Bohemian Jewry (late 1560s- 1648)

Jewish policy of Charles VI and Maria Theresia

Differences of Jewish settlements in Bohemia and Moravia

Topic 2 – Enlightenment and Emancipation

Mendelssohn, Wessely and Haskalah in the "West"

Haskalah in Eastern Europe (Galicia, Congress Poland, Russia)

Topic 3 – Jews in Austria, 1780s-1848

Joseph II and the policy of Toleration patents

Austrian policy of neutral identity

Topic 4 – Jews in Bohemia, 1780s-1848

Social and economic emancipation

First signs of Czech-Jewish rapprochement

Anti-Jewish disturbances of the 1840s

Topic 5 – Jews in Bohemia, Moravia and Austria, 1848-1914

Impact of the full civic emancipation of 1867

Social mobility, migration and integration in *Cisleithenia*

National conflict in Bohemia, Hilsner Affair, Jews and Czech national politics

Topic 6 - History of the Habsburg Jews in Galicia and Hungary, 1840s-1914

Galicia, the endless human reservoir

Between periphery and the center--Kulturkampf in Hungary

Topic 7 – Traveling Seminar. An introduction to the Jewish Community in Poland and Austria. Polish-Jewish Relations and Responses to Neighbors. Holocaust Memorialization and Education.

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Topic 8 – Jewish Communities of Prague & Vienna: A Comparison of Cultural & Economic Impact

Prague: demography, history, people, sites

Vienna: demography, history, people, sites

Extra information about Budapest

Topic 9 – Jews under the Reign of Imperial Russia, 1772-1855

Initial policies of Catherine the Great

Statute of 1804

Policies of Nicholas 1

Topic 10 – Jews under the Reign of Imperial Russia, 1855-1882

Reforms of Alexander II and the policy of selective integration

Russian-Jewish rapprochement of the 1850s and 1860s

Topic 11 – Jews in Late Imperial Russia: Ambiguous Experience of Persecution and Integration Pogroms of 1881-1884

Temporary rules of 1882 and other restrictions

Jewish life outside the Pale

Topic 12 – Politics of Imperial Russia:

OPE

Diasporic nationalism (Bund, Seymists and other secular political parties)

Topic 13 – Zionism: Intellectual Origins and Political History

Zionist movement prior to WWI

Zionist idea of the 1860s-1880s

T. Herzl and the concept of Zionist Organization

Trends and political factions prior to WWI

Zionist movement of the 1920s and 1930s

The Weizmann-block

The Labor Zionist movement and its intellectual origins

The Revisionist Zionist movement - the initial phase

Topic 14 – Jewish Life in Interwar Poland

Demography

Territorial concentration

Economic structure

Social status

Shifts in policies of the Polish state (1919-1926, 1926-1935, 1935-1939)

“Sunday Law”

Numerus Clausus and the “Jewish benches”

Cultural institutions and language orientation

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Scope of autonomy

Regional differences and the extent of acculturation

Jewish political parties

Topic 15 – Jews in Other Countries of Interwar Eastern Central Europe

Patterns of political tolerance, social integration and/or self-autonomy - Czechoslovakia & Lithuania

Times changing from bad to worse - Austria, Hungary, Romania

Topic 16 – Jewish Communities of Eastern Central Europe after 1945

Topic 17 – Jewish existence in Eastern Central Europe since the Collapse of the Soviet Block