Kateřina Čapková
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Office hour: before class (or by arrangement)

Modern Jewish History in Europe
Tue, 1:30-4:20
Location to be confirmed.

none

“One hundred and fifty years ago all Jews had three things in common: every Jew prayed in Hebrew, he submitted to God’s commandments and awaited the coming of the Messiah. Today Jews have only one thing in common – every Jew asks what it means to be a Jew.” These are words of David Ben Gurion after the Second World War. Even though Ben Gurion simplified the Jewish experience during the 19th and 20th centuries, his quote expresses well some of the enormous dynamics of Jewish history in this period. What are the reasons for such radical changes? Were there differences between the development in Western, Central and Eastern Europe? How did the changes affect Jewish religious, cultural, linguistic and political identity? How can the knowledge of history help us to understand recent Jewish politics and religious disputes? These questions build the core of this course.

We will combine lectures and discussions, we will however also visit an exhibition, use film documentary and analyze interviews.

General overview of modern Jewish history in Europe with special focus on Central and Eastern Europe

Critical analyzes of primary and secondary historical sources

Participation is a vital component in determining your final grade. You are required to complete each session’s reading assignment and to come to class with ideas, insights, and/or questions for the group. The success of the class depends upon everyone arriving prepared, remaining open to other’s ideas, and offering arguments based upon on a thorough understanding of the assignments and lectures. During semester you can collect 100 points which correspond with the percentage of your success.

**Presentation:** max. 20 points

**Leading discussion in two sessions:** max. 20 points

**Midterm test:** max. 20 points
essay based on at least three interviews: max. 10 points

active participation in discussion over the reading: max. 30 points

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

In detail:

Presentation: max. 20 points

The topic of a presentation can be either chosen from the list of recommended topics or it can be a topic of your choice. The aim of the presentation is to show the ability to find sources for the topic, to master the necessary knowledge of the material and to transmit the knowledge in a clear and comprehensive way to classmates.

Duration of the presentation: 20 – 30 minutes

5 points for a draft shown to professor in advance (at least a week before)

- draft should include the suggested structure of the presentation, sources collected and read for the topic, ideas for the best transmission of the topic to the colleagues
- you can either meet professor or send her your draft by email

5 points for the handout and material distributed to students

10 points for the presentation – student can use Power Point presentation, maps, photos, short videos, interpretation of crucial text (an example of up to 3 pages can be distributed and analysed in class)

Leading discussion in three sessions: max. 20 points (10 points x 2)

(You will be expected to read the text carefully, find any necessary additional information for understanding the text and for putting it into the context. Please, contact me if you need any help. You will receive 5 points for a well structured and clear handout with the main arguments of the text and with questions and 5 point for successful leadership of the discussion. Duration of your introductory summary of the text should not exceed 20 minutes.)

Midterm test: max. 20 points

(Three topics will be given out of which two will be chosen by the student to write a page about each. A list of topics, which could appear in the test, will be distributed to students two weeks in advance. 10 points for each question (5 for the main arguments, 3 for the clear structure of the text, 2 for clear formulation, wording, spelling of names and concrete dates)

essay based on at least three interviews (after visiting the MALACH centre): max. 10 points

(approx. 1000 words)

active participation in discussion over the reading: max. 30 points

(3 points for each class with reading assignments)
Grade conversion

A=94-100
A-=90-93
B+=87-89
B=84-86
B-=80-83
C+=77-79
C=74-76
C-=70-73
D+=67-69
D=65-66
F=below 65

Attendance Policy

Each unexcused absence will result in your final grade being reduced by 3%. Absences only for medical reasons will be excused. To obtain an excused absence, you are obliged to supply either a doctor’s note or corroboration of your illness by a member of the housing staff (either an RA or a Building Manager). Absences due to travel will not be excused.

Late Submission of Work

Late submission of the essay will cause reduction of points – each day a point.

Plagiarism Policy

According to the Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook, plagiarism is defined as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work as though it were one’s own. More specifically, plagiarism is to present as one’s own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from another writer, a paraphrased passage from another writer’s work; facts or ideas gathered, organized and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing. Since plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student’s intention, it is crucial that acknowledgment of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.

The College of Arts and Science’s Academic Handbook defines plagiarism similarly and also specifies the following:

“presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written), writing a paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else’s idea without a reference to the source of the idea, or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both teachers have given their permission in advance).

Receiving help on a take-home examination or quiz is also cheating – and so is giving that help – unless expressly permitted by the teacher (as in collaborative projects). While all this looks like a lot to remember, all you need to do is give credit where it is due, take credit only for original ideas, and ask your teacher or advisor when in doubt.”

“Penalties for plagiarism range from failure for a paper, failure for the course or dismissal from the university.” (Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook)

Required Text(s)

see the reader, a copy can be borrowed in the library

Supplemental Texts(s) (not required to purchase as copies are in NYU-P Library)

There are two copies of the book Heda Margolius-Kovaly, Under a Cruel Star. A Life in Prague, 1941-1968 (Holmes and Meier 1997) in the library which we will discuss in the first week of May. You can either plan to read the book in advance, or buy the book. It is really worth of having it in your personal bookcase.

For additional information about people, terms, events discussed in the course, please see:
http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/
http://www.bjeindy.org/resources/library/access-to-encyclopedia-judaica/

http://www.britannica.com/

http://www.ushmm.org/

http://www.yadvashem.org/

Additional Required Equipment: none

**Session 1**
Tuesday, Feb 4

Introduction to the topic

**Jewish Life in the Pre-modern Age**

**Session 2**
Tuesday, Feb 11

**Jewish Migration**

**Session 3**
Tuesday, Feb 18

**Emancipation in Western and Central Europe**


**Haskalah**


**Session 4**
Tuesday, Feb 25

**East European Jewry – Jewish experience in Poland and Russia**

- David Assaf, Hasidism. Historical Overview
  [http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Hasidism/Historical_Overview](http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Hasidism/Historical_Overview)

- Joseph Dan, Hasidism. Teachings and Literature

- Louis Jacobs, Hasidism. Everyday Life,

- Marcin Wodzinski, How Modern Is an Antimodernist Movement? The Emergence of Hasidic Politics in Congress Poland, AJS Review, Vol. 31, No.2 (Nov. 2007), 221-240


**Session 5**
Tuesday, March 4

**Religious movements – Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, Ultra-Orthodoxy**

**Session 6**  
Tuesday,  
March 11

**Jewish Nationalism**

- The Jew in the Modern World (Bilu – X/1, Herzl – X/2, Mizrachi – X/7, Ahad Haam – X/5, Borochov – X/12, Balfour declaration, Jabotinsky – X/28) bund

**Session 7**  
Tuesday,  
March 18

**The Rise of Modern Antisemitism**


**Session 8**  
Tuesday,  
March 25

**Nazism and Holocaust**


**Session 9**  
Tuesday,  
April 1

**Mid-term test**

Film The long way home

**Spring Break**  
April 7-11

**Session 10**  
Tuesday,  
April 15

**The post-war reality**


**Session 11**  
Tuesday,  
April 22

**Visit of the Centre of Visual History MALACH, Malostranské náměstí 25**

- Branch of USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education, University of South California
- Each student will choose a topic in advance (e.g. Jewish survivors of Gulag, Jews in the Red Army) and will have to analyze three interviews connected to this topic. Essay of approx. 1000 words is due to November 30.

**Session 12**  
Tuesday,  
April 29

**Polish – Jewish relations**


**Session 13**  

**Jews under Communism, Slánský Affair**
Tuesday, May 6

There are two copies of this book in the library.

Recommended:

Session 14
Tuesday, May 13 (last day of classes)

Jews in post-Communist societies


Each student will choose a post-Communist country (except of Russia) and prepare a 10 minutes talk about the recent situation of the Jewish community in this country based on at least 3 articles from newspapers/internet.

Session 15
Tuesday, May 20
Final exam

Suggested Co-curricular Activities

I will arrange individual meetings with each of you to discuss your results.

Colloquia on Modern Jewish History organized by Jewish Museum in Prague and the Institute of Contemporary History